The Best Laid Plans

by Wuchel

Summary

This is a companion piece to Lost in Translation, Not Just Another Walk In The Park, Truth and Consequences and Chilly Returns And Warm Welcomes and A Night At The Coronet. I suggest reading those first.

Also, a knowledge of Lucky7's stories The Dog Sitter and A Valentine Encounter may help explain a few things.

Notes

Disclaimer: The characters of Person of Interest don't belong to me. I'm just borrowing them with no intention of gaining any profit.

Acknowledgements: Without my amazing beta my stories would be a grammatical war zone. I bow to you, scully1138!

"Do you have the info about Mr. Harris, Lionel?" John Reese's low, raspy voice suddenly purred into Fusco's left ear. And even though one would think that the detective should have gotten used to the ex-op's stealthy approaches by now, he still jerked in surprise.

Lionel had waited at the allotted meeting point for ten minutes already - longingly eyeballing the inviting looking armchairs behind the panoramic glass window of the café across the street. The people inside looked warm and cozy while he was freezing his butt off outside. He was getting sick of this winter and - seriously - would it be too much to ask for a nice cup of coffee every once
in a while? As a 'thank you' for his troubles?

Daydreaming about savouring the taste of steamy hot coffee, the imaginary smell of freshly roasted beans wafting up his nostrils, and devouring a deliciously moist chocolate cupcake had surely made sneaking up on Lionel Fusco child's play. No need for freakishly stealthy secret agent skills.

Trying his best to downplay his obviously absent state of mind and ignoring John Reese's customary glare, Fusco waved the folder containing the desired information in front of the man's face. "When have I ever let you down?"

Reese shot him a look that could have meant a dozen of things - none too complementary however - plucked the folder out of Fusco's hand without a 'thank you' and took a look inside. "Yah, you are welcome." Lionel said dryly, but not really surprised by the lack of civilities from Mr. Kind-hearted and Friendly.

"You sure know how to pick 'em." Fusco babbled on - never one to enjoy silence for too long. "This Harris guy is as bad as they get. Had his fingers in pretty much any shady kind of enterprise there is, with a rap sheet longer than my arm and apparently with more enemies than friends ..." He trailed off, realizing that Reese was not paying any attention to him whatsoever.

Something - presumably John's phone - had started to relentlessly vibrate inside Reese's dark coat, and Fusco noted with interest that the vigilante's expression had quickly morphed from slightly annoyed to alarmed after the quick glance he threw at the display.

John's head shot up and his ever vigilant eyes immediately started to roam their surroundings, growing wide when they spotted something or someone in the far distance. Fusco turned in the direction Reese was looking at but didn't see anything out of the ordinary. Something had clearly pinged on Wonderboy's radar however.

"I've got to go." Reese said. He slapped the folder shut, executed a swift about-face every drill sergeant would have proudly burst into tears over and - with a pace that bordered on jogging - left the bewildered detective - gaping at the tall man's quickly retreating back - behind.

"Wait! What's going on?" Fusco yelled after him. He'd never seen the ex-CIA agent act anything other than calm, collected and - well - deadly. If Lionel didn't know better, he'd actually say the man looked *spooked*, and he wouldn't admit it out loud but that thought scared the hell out of him. There were only two times that he had seen Reese get unhinged - more than usual, that is. The first time was when that nutty cuckoo's nest had kidnapped the Professor and the second time was when John had gone on a suicidal mission of revenge in the wake of Carter's death.

The detective worried now that the uncharacteristic behaviour had been caused by an unknown threat to someone Reese cared about - which sadly didn't really leave that many options. Lionel was more than ready to help, and he was disappointed when all he received as an explanation was a quick "I'll call you when I need you" thrown over John's shoulder. He watched with increasing bewilderment as the tall man practically jumped inside the cover of the next open store door.

Puzzled, Lionel wondered what in the hell could actually *scare* Mr. Tall, Dark and Fearless enough to warrant this hasty escape - there really was just no other way to describe what he had just witnessed.

Unsure of what to do Fusco pulled out his phone but his fingers hovered over the display. There was no denying it that Reese's behaviour had unsettled him, but ... did he really want to know?

With Mr. Vocabulary, Wonderboy and his Wonder-twin one could never be too worried about
what kind of trouble they had gotten themselves into this time. And even more troublesome? They
tended to pull him right along with them.

Lionel Fusco's thoughts were definitely conflicted. Should he call Glasses? Should he wait on
word, even though it might be too late by then? Should he go after Reese?

Before he could make a final decision however a sound reached his ear; a sound that with its
grating frequency involuntarily made Lionel shudder and he immediately knew - without a doubt -
the reason behind Reese's inelegant, yet effective, disappearing act. *That son of a bitch!*

"Yooohoooo! Detective Fusco!!"

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Startled out of his intensive research into Mr. Harris's amazingly creative bookkeeping by his
ringing cell Harold Finch's look grew puzzled as the Caller ID on its display informed him of who
was calling.

"Yes, Detective?"

"You know," Fusco sounded surprisingly annoyed, which caused Harold to pause in his previous
task altogether. "I really don't care what Wonderboy and you are up to when you are not busy
bringing down every criminal soul in the city - or harassing me for that matter ..."

"Excuse me?" Harold tried to interject, but clearly on a rant the detective continued without
missing a beat.

"...but I just had to listen to a very detailed account of how the two of you went from tying each
other to the bed - and thank you for that mental image by the way - to Wonderboy cheating on
you. And when I say I don't care, I mean I REALLY don't care."

Finch's mouth grew dry as the detective's annoyed words sunk in. "I'm not sure I follow," he
croaked. "Who told you that?"

"That weird dog lady, you know?" If this was going were Harold thought it was he absolutely
didn't want to know. "Annoying voice, has this huge dog and likes to wear pink?"

*Oh God,* Finch thought - his mind not completely able or willing to process the implications of
what the detective was saying. *How on earth did the detective know Bernadette?!*

"Anyway," Fusco continued before Finch was able to collect his thoughts and find out the exact
circumstances of how the detective had come by that unfortunate information. "Wonderboy just
left me to hang out to dry! I admit I've gotten used to being bullied around by your muscle, but I'm
drawing a line at being used as a decoy!"

"Mr. Reese knows you know Bernadette?" asked Finch slightly appalled. The last time John had
run into Ms. Fluffles' owner at the Coronet it had taken some special kind of sweet talking and
writing a "Bernadette-proximity-alert" app on Finch's part to appease the irritated ex-op.

"I don't know," huffed Fusco, "he disappeared faster than I could say 'bat out of hell!' And by the
way, whatever program, app or ... whatever Reese has that alerted him to Ms. Eye-Cancer's
presence I want it, too."
"Certainly. I will transfer the file to your phone momentarily." Finch had no problem in seeing the wisdom of keeping Bernadette as far away as possible from everyone they knew - for her well-being or his own however, he wasn't entirely sure. "And detective, I assure you that whatever impression you may have about Mr. Reese and I ..."

"Ack! I said I don't wanna know. And seriously? You know the weirdest people!"

"Detective?" Finch asked into the air around him, but it seemed the policeman had hung up on him. Harold stared at his screens for a few seconds, not really seeing them. As much as he tried to deny it, this entire situation was slowly careening out of his control. Who was he kidding? He never did have control over it. Slumping his shoulders in defeat Harold rubbed his forehead and sighed. "Oh boy."

Finch looked down at Bear who'd been lying at his feet with his head on his paws - most likely dying of boredom. "What do you think, Bear?" he asked of the dog, who - at hearing his name - raised his head to look at his human. "Should we tell Mr. Reese?"

The Malinois regarded Finch for a few seconds, realized that there weren't going to be any treats or nice, lengthy walks in his near future, and yawned - displaying his impressive set of teeth. He returned his head to his paws to gloomily stare ahead.

"No," Finch said with a grimace. "I don't think so either."

_The End_

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