Our Man in Havana

by mydogwatson

Summary

In a bar in pre-Revolutionary Cuba, two men meet.

Notes

Another piece to prove my thesis that in any time and in any place, Sherlock Holmes and John Watson will always meet and always bond.

See the end of the work for more notes.

The stink of corruption and decadence hung over the room so thickly that he could almost see it. But none of it was really his business and so he just ordered another rum punch and let the noise of the Havana bar insulate him.

These days, John Watson liked to think of himself as being a soldier-of-fortune. That sounded so much better than admitting to being nothing but an ex-soldier and battlefield surgeon with absolutely no prospects beyond this barstool. He couldn’t even remember how he had ended up in Cuba drinking far too much and telling war stories to anybody who would listen. Some of them were even true.

On this particular night, however, there was no one willing to listen to him except for a weary prostitute and she would charge. He’d rather have another drink.

He swivelled the bar stool around and surveyed the crowd. Sometimes it felt as if the universe had
somehow tipped planet Earth so that all the wastrels and losers and schemers had landed in an Havana hovering on the edge of something unknown. It should have been exciting and John wanted nothing more than a little excitement. But instead, he was only bored.

Well, at least there was a new face in here tonight.

The tall, slender man wore an unruffled white linen suit and had extremely ruffled dark curls over cheekbones that looked as it they could draw blood. John shook his head and swallowed rum, wondering why he had even noticed those things. Or the restless eyes.

And suddenly that gaze landed on him. There was a long moment and then the stranger was moving through the crowd looking rather like a misplaced ballet dancer, heading straight for John. Reaching the bar, he stopped. Close-up the eyes were grey-green and certainly no less compelling. “Korea or Cyprus?” he said. Ah, another Brit.

“Sorry?” John mumbled.

The man looked impatient. “Never mind,” he said. “It was Cyprus. The tan lines prove that.”

John eyed him for a moment. “Lots of sun here,” he said almost teasingly, because it was, after all, Cyprus.

“Different tan lines,” was the snappish response. He took out a silver cigarette case and engraved lighter. John just watched as the man ignited the Sobranie and took a long drag. It was pretty much the most interesting thing he had seen in quite a while. “And you were obviously a soldier before your injury.”

“And a doctor,” John added.

The silvery graze swept over him again. “Oh, of course. I always miss something.”

“Still brilliant,” John said, hoping he didn’t sound too much like a smitten young girl.

The man blinked. “You think so?”


With only the briefest pause, his hand was grasped and shaken. “Sherlock Holmes.”

“What’s your pleasure, Sherlock Holmes?” There was a question john would like to have answered.

Once Holmes had a gin and tonic in hand, John spoke again. “So what brings you to Havana?” he asked.

“Oh, just doing a boring job for my brother. Some weeks he fancies himself the British government and so he loves to meddle in other people’s business.” Holmes leaned a bit closer and that was fine. “I’m actually following that rather stupid looking fellow in the yellow shirt.”

John followed his gaze. “He has a gun in his pocket,” he said quietly.

Holmes gave him an almost-smile. “Good to know before I follow him into a dark alley.” His mouth practically touched John’s ear. “And you have a gun tucked right here.” His fingertips touched John’s lower spine.

At that moment, the man in question turned and started for the door. “Are you really going to
follow him into a dark alley?” John asked. “And are you armed?”

“Probably. And only with my intelligence.” Sherlock raised a brow at him and then moved towards the door.

John followed without even thinking about it. Maybe the planet had shifted again, this time dropping him next to Sherlock Holmes. Seemed about right.

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End Notes

Title from: Our Man in Havana by Graham Greene

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