

Orange

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by [emmagrant01](#)

Summary

Set the morning after the wedding. John and Mary are leaving for their honeymoon, but they stop by 221B first.

Notes

I am emotionally compromised. This is how I cope. Huge thanks to Drinkingcocoa for her quick and insightful commentary very late last night.

Sherlock opened his eyes.

Taxi cab engine idling just outside on the kerb; door opening; door closing; another 2.3 seconds before the sound of a key turning in the lock on the street door below. No need to wait for the familiar sound of two sets of footsteps on the stairs. No further confirmation necessary.

He leapt to his feet and crossed to the kitchen, where he'd started an experiment around 3:00 am. It was nothing vital, not even something he was particularly curious about, but it was better than doing nothing. There was nothing to do now: no more planning or thinking or smiling or writing speeches or folding a million fucking serviettes until every surface in the flat was covered with them and even Mrs. Hudson gave him such a look of pity he'd end up shouting at her.

No, there was nothing else to do, *nothing*, except to keep his mind occupied for the next week and the week after that and the 34.17 weeks after that until he became nothing more than a footnote in John's and Mary's lives as parents, when John would be too tired from changing nappies in the middle of the night to go on cases, and Mary would think it too risky for her baby's father to chase down criminals in dark alleys.

No, it wouldn't do. Even he knew it would all come to an end, but he would find a solution. There would still be cases to solve, and he'd get used to working on his own again. It was less efficient, but he'd done it before. He could always—

The door opened, creaking slightly because the third hinge was off by 3 millimeters and one of these days he was going to take the damned thing down and fix it. On second thought, no, he probably wouldn't; it was a marginally useful, if annoying feature of the door.

"Sherlock?"

He didn't turn around to face them. "You're going to miss your flight. You should already be on the train to Heathrow."

"The taxi's waiting downstairs and Paddington Station is ten minutes away. We'll be fine." John's patient tone was infuriating.

"Yes, well, no reason to keep the meter running. You ought to start saving your money now." He fitted his safety goggles over his eyes and leaned over to examine the array of glassware on the table.

"We didn't want to go without saying goodbye." Mary's voice was soft and full of feeling, and Sherlock couldn't stop himself from turning to look at her. Her eyes were gentle, hopeful, and they saw too much.

He swallowed and looked away again. "Yes, well. Now you've said it. Obligation fulfilled."

"Why did you leave so early last night?"

Sherlock pursed his lips. She never took the bait, never allowed him to evade the issue the way John did. Well, not never, perhaps, but she was particularly skilled at choosing her moments.

"I had things to do."

"Things?"

"Yes." He gestured vaguely at the counter in front of him. "This is time sensitive, and I wanted to get a head start on it, have it all wrapped up by the start of the week. Monday is the busiest day for clients, after all. So many mysteries pop up over the weekend."

She lifted her eyebrows, and he sighed. It was pointless lying to her; she was far too proficient at reading him. Damn her. He pushed the goggles up on his forehead.

"Besides, isn't it customary for the happy couple to spend their wedding night alone?" His eyes narrowed at her. "You're practically glowing. Three orgasms, really? Well done, John."

John rolled his eyes. "We were worried about you, you idiot."

"Yes, well, you needn't have been. I am completely capable of taking care of myself, as should be obvious by now."

Mary stepped forward and put a hand on his arm, and he couldn't help staring at the shiny gold band on her finger. "Yes, of course you are. And you were right, you know."

"Yes, of course I was right." He smiled tightly, and then paused, rewound. "Sorry, which bit are you referring to, specifically?"

She pulled her other hand out of her jacket pocket and held out a slender white plastic stick, and grinned.

Sherlock wrinkled his nose. "Exactly what I wanted to see first thing in the morning: a piece of plastic you've urinated on. Well then – congratulations, hope you don't vomit on the plane, meter's running, best be on your way."

"You daft arse," she said, and threw her arms around him. He was startled for a moment, but when it became clear she wasn't going to let go, he slid his arms around her waist and pressed his nose against her hair. She smelled like John. He closed his eyes.

She shifted in his arms and he thought for a moment that she was pulling away, but then her lips pressed against his, soft and cool for a fraction of a second before she put a bit of space between them again. Her eyes were wide and blue and warm, and he was struck again by how comfortable she always made him feel, in a way no other woman did.

"I know you're afraid, Sherlock. So are we. I'd be a fool if I thought this baby wasn't going to change things. I know it will, and only time will tell how much. But I want you to know – *we* want you to know – that just because your name isn't on the license, it doesn't mean you aren't part of this marriage. You know that you are, and how much you mean to me, and especially to John. All right?"

He swallowed, nodded, tried not to let the implications of that statement spin too wildly in his brain. "All right."

She stepped back and straightened her jacket. "I'll have none of this moping about the day after my wedding. The moment we get back to London, I expect you to take John on a case. And keep him overnight, please. I'll be a bit sick of him by then, I'm sure." She winked at Sherlock and turned to a bemused John before stepping back and giving him a light push towards Sherlock. "Your turn. I'll wait in the taxi."

They both watched her walk out of the door and were silent until her footsteps disappeared from the stairs. John cleared his throat and rubbed at the back of his neck with one hand – nervous, but not uncomfortable, and not uncertain.

"I wanted to say thank you," John began, and seemed to force himself to look up at Sherlock. "For everything you did yesterday. And for what you said."

"This is completely unnecessary, John. Just go. Tell her we had a bit of a cuddle in the kitchen and you can probably catch the next train."

"No, I—" John sighed and shook his head. "This is me, all right? She hasn't put me up to it." He inhaled, exhaled again. "Mary knows how important you are to me. She loves you too, and it means the world to me that the two of you get on so well."

"Yes, we all love each other madly. This really can't wait a week?" All of this ridiculous declaration of emotion was rapidly approaching unbearable. He was going to shove John out the door in one minute.

"Oh, for fuck's sake, will you let me finish? What she said about you being part of our marriage – do you know what she meant?"

"Of course."

John's eyes narrowed slightly. "You don't, do you?"

"Yes, of course I do. It's quite obvious."

John's lips turned up into a smile. "Is it? Well then, tell me what you think."

Bluff called. Sherlock groaned. "I think the two of you are going to miss your flight and I'll have to put up with the both of you in shit moods for a week, and I'm horrid at being pleasant under those circumstances."

John laughed that quick, hearty laugh that always made its way deep into Sherlock's chest, and Sherlock ducked his head for a moment and smiled, let the sensation of it fill him. God only knew when he'd hear it again. He looked up after a moment, and John's expression was unlike anything Sherlock had seen directed at him before.

"What?" Sherlock asked, and John took a step closer, still holding Sherlock's gaze, and pulled him into an embrace.

There was a sound of surprise and pleasure, and it was a moment before Sherlock realized it had come from him. This, *this* -- the feeling was still new, this sensation of full body contact that was warm and comforting and surprisingly pleasurable. They'd never been like this, had never done, and it was even better the second time around, perhaps because they were alone or perhaps because of the way John was pressed against him so tightly, lips against Sherlock's ear.

"I'm rubbish at talking about these things. Best just to do it this way."

And then there were lips pressed against his and a hand sliding around the back of his skull and warm breath against his cheek, and *oh, God*. He couldn't think, couldn't process -- all he could do was feel and breathe and moan softly at the sensation of John's tongue sweeping across his lips, and oh, *oh* -- Mary had once said John was a rather skilled kisser, and yes, this was -- how was it so -- oh, *yes*, closer, fuck, *more*.

John's mouth pulled away and his forehead pressed against Sherlock's shoulder, and Sherlock became suddenly, horribly aware of his own arousal. John was generally as observant as a potato, but he couldn't have missed the sensation of an erection forming against his abdomen.

"Right," John said, face still buried in Sherlock's dressing gown. "So that was what I wanted to tell you."

"Oh," Sherlock said, and then, "Oh. Oh, God." He tried to shift his hips away from John's body, desperate to hide the evidence of his pathetic arousal, but John's hands moved to his waist and pulled him close again, and yes -- yes, he definitely knew.

John looked up, his cheeks flushed and his lips still wet, and Sherlock had to resist the urge to kiss him again. Mary was waiting down in the taxi, and though she knew exactly what was happening right now, had practically pushed their heads together and said *now kiss* on her way out the door, and—

Oh.

"So when she said I should keep you overnight—"

"Yeah, that's what she meant." John's expression softened. "But only if that's what you want. I know this is new for you and completely out of the ordinary, so if you don't want to, with me -- it's fine. I'll understand if you—"

"No, I... I do. I suppose I've never gone in much for ordinary, anyway."

"I suppose not." John's relieved smile spread across his face, but there was something more there as well: longing, nervousness, and barely contained arousal. His gaze raked down Sherlock's body and lingered on the still-obvious tent in Sherlock's pajamas.

Sherlock pulled his dressing gown around himself more securely. "So why now? After all this time?"

John sighed. "Yesterday was... a big day. My priorities were reorganized a bit, I suppose." He paused and pressed his lips together. "When we realized you were gone last night, we both panicked. I texted you and you didn't answer, and we were ready to hail a cab and go hunt you down before Molly said she'd seen you leave. And it... it wasn't the same without you there. You're always there, you know?"

"Yes, but—"

"No, let me say this while I'm still sleep-deprived and high on endorphins." Sherlock couldn't help smiling at that, and John took a deep breath before continuing. "There are only two people in this world that I've been madly in love with, and for some reason, I am lucky enough to be able to have them both in my life at once. And they adore each other and know how much the other makes me happy, and both are willing to toss convention out the window in order to make me the happiest man in the world. I'd have to be a fool not to let them."

"Yes, you would."

They stared at each other, the tension between them nearly palpable. Sherlock took a step backward, overwhelmed. It was new and strange and completely unexpected, and he was grateful to have a week to get used to the idea.

As always, John understood. He shoved his hands into his pockets and nodded his head toward the door. "I should go. Meter running and pregnant wife waiting in the taxi and all."

"Yes, of course." Sherlock ran a hand through his hair and looked at the floor.

"Are you—"

"Yes, fine, sorry. I'll probably go have a wank the moment your taxi leaves." He tried to wink at John and failed miserably.

John laughed and his cheeks went a bit pink, to Sherlock's surprise. "That's quite an image to leave me with."

"Is it?"

"You've no idea how much I've thought about this."

"About sex with me?"

"Yes."

"No, I didn't." He'd missed it, somehow. How had he missed something as straightforward as sexual attraction? He'd been distracted, of course, and so certain of what his position was in John's life that it hadn't occurred to him to expect more. He'd resigned himself long ago to taking what crumbs he could get. Sherlock took a deep breath. "I don't know how to do any of this, John."

"None of us do. But it feels right. Doesn't it?"

Sherlock generally didn't put much stock in *feelings*, but in this case, it seemed the most reasonable course of action. He stepped forward and took John's face in his hands and kissed him, and John's eyes fluttered closed and his breath huffed out against Sherlock's cheek, and he seemed almost to melt in Sherlock's hands.

Sherlock broke the kiss and pressed his lips against John's forehead before stepping back again. "It's probably just as well that I'm not going on the honeymoon with you."

"We considered asking you, but we thought you'd say no." John's smile was unusually content, but there was also relief and joy and pride and exhaustion and affection and a clear intention to join the Mile High Club later today. Sherlock raised his eyebrows, but John was already turning for the door. "I'll text you when we get back next week. Try not to get arrested while I'm gone."

Sherlock snorted and turned back to his experiment. "Flight attendants take their jobs very seriously, John."

"No idea what you're on about," John called from the stairs.

Sherlock waited for John's footsteps to recede on the stairs, for the door to close, for the taxi to pull away. He turned and leaned back against the table for a moment before crossing to the desk to open his laptop. He had a week to learn everything he could about sex. John's expectations were high, and this was at least one area in which research was feasible.

He pressed his fingertips against his lips and smiled.

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