

The Rules of Fair Play Do Not Apply

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/264149) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/264149>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Sherlock - Fandom
Relationships:	Jim Moriarty/John Watson , Sherlock Holmes/John Watson
Characters:	Jim Moriarty , John Watson , Sherlock Holmes , Irene Adler , Lestrade (Inspector)
Additional Tags:	Humor , Romance , Love Triangle , Competition
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2011-05-09 Words: 10,449 Chapters: 5/5

The Rules of Fair Play Do Not Apply

by [orphan_account](#)

Summary

Fill for [this](#) prompt (spoilers for fic). Basically, only the first hostage in TGG happened, because Sherlock called Jim and then they decided it would be more fun to keep each other entertained. Jim starts hanging out at the flat, and begins to think John is pretty interesting. Sherlock and Jim begin competing over John and trying to ruin one another's attempts to woo him

Notes

This was written for a Livejournal prompt. Only the first hostage in TGG happened. Sherlock called Jim, figured out who he was, and now Jim comes to harass the consulting detective at 221B when they're both bored.

Sheep's Clothing

"Oh, hello. Jim from IT, right?"

"James Moriarty actually. Hi!"

John froze. "Sherlock! Why is there a criminal mastermind in our living room?"

"Because we're bored," the detective called back

John took several moments to think things over. Several long moments. "Is anyone being hunted by a mad cabbie or a Chinese crime syndicate at the moment?"

"Not that I'm aware of," Jim offered.

"Right then. Don't blow up the flat."

Pertinent questions settled, John turned his attention back to the shopping. "Is there anything that would bother me in the fridge?" he yelled in the general direction of Sherlock's room.

Jim didn't quite know how he felt about that. He'd been expecting fear, shouting, at least an attempt to inform someone else. Not mild irritation followed by calm acceptance.

Sherlock, strolling out of his bedroom, took one look at Moriarty's face and quirked his lips. "Yes. He's always like that." Throwing himself down onto the couch, he turned his attention to John. "Define bother."

"Things that would send a sane person running and screaming."

"Yes, there are quite a few items in the fridge that would 'bother you'."

"Right then. Is there anything in this fridge that will kill me upon its opening or poison food placed nearby?"

"If you stay away from the top shelf, you should be fine," Sherlock remarked. As John started putting the shopping away, he turned his attention to more interesting matters. "You repeated yourself. You're creative enough to come up with something better than botulism, at least the second time."

"Second time. Wait, second time? Moriarty's the bomber?"

"Obviously," Sherlock replied.

John poked his head back into the living room, wearing the expression Sherlock had learned meant he was trying to figure something out. "I'm not complaining, mind, but there were five pips on that message. I thought that meant that I'd have to convince Sherlock to give a damn about four more people."

"Too predictable," Moriarty offered.

"No. That's not it. Genius needs an audience. You don't mind being just a whisper, but you're too good at what you do. You wanted acknowledgement. In the end, you decided that playing with Sherlock, entertaining each other, was better than eliminating interference. You decided he was more useful than irritating." John looked at Moriarty's expression, nodded to himself in satisfaction, and then went back to unpacking the shopping.

Jim just stared after him, shocked. Sherlock took in the familiar expression and then smirked. Jim shot him a sharp look, eyebrow raised in inquiry.

"Wolf in sheep's clothing," was all he offered on the subject.

Silence reigned for awhile before Sherlock interrupted again. "Ian Munkford and the Lost Vermeer make four. Was the missile plans five?"

"I had nothing to do with those. I could get them anywhere, if I wanted to. No, five was where I killed you." Jim shrugged, and then smiled. "This is more fun," he said, staring in the direction of the kitchen.

Moriarty turning up in the flat was becoming such a regular occurrence that John had started brewing enough tea for three.

John passed Moriarty a cup, placed one on the coffee table Sherlock had a bad habit of walking over, and sat at the table by the window across from the consulting criminal.

"Sherlock's not in at the moment. I think Lestrade finally managed to drag him in for a statement," John informs him, shaking open the day's paper.

"Why doesn't this bother you?" Jim asked, his head tilted and eyes intense as he considered the most puzzling person he had encountered in decades.

"If you're here, he's entertained. You're also not out killing people. If I can keep an eye on both of you I know you're not off...I don't know...blowing up a public building or taking over the world or giving LSD to control groups because you think it's funny. It keeps you both entertained and keeps me sane. Well, mostly sane. If I was ever sane to begin with. Anyway, I think it's a very good system."

Filing away the LSD comment for a rainy day, Jim looked at John Watson for the first time. Really looked, not just the cursory "figure out your life story" glance. Short, sandy hair smattered with grays. Deep, dark blue eyes that had seen too much yet wanted to see more. Eyes surrounded by laugh lines and underlined by dark circles. Steady hands that could take life just as easily as save it. A contradiction.

Jim had to admit, he really, *really* liked what he was seeing. He wanted to see more. But that stupid woolly jumper was in the way. Jim didn't care for the sheep's clothing – he wanted to see the wolf underneath.

Jim began eyeing his tea speculatively. It wouldn't be too challenging to ensure John thought it was an accident. The difficulty was to spill just the right amount. Too much would soak through to the undershirt, and then John would go upstairs and change instead of just removing the wool monstrosity. Too little and John would just dab at it and ignore it. Two tablespoons should do the trick.

Jim had his calculations right; a stain about the size of a handprint bloomed across John's jumper. The door opened downstairs, and Jim could tell from the stride that it was Sherlock, but he had better things to concentrate on at the moment.

John waved off the apologies that Jim had only just realized he should start forming, excusing himself to go change.

"Why? Why not just take of the jumper?"

"Since *someone*," a pointed look here, "blew up the block of flats across the way, and consequently blew out our windows, it has been far too cold to sit about without at least three layers." The door to the flat opened and John lips twitched into a small smile that seemed almost instinctual.

It makes Jim want to overthrow a country. A continent, really. Australia, perhaps? If he gave it to John, would he receive the same smile? Or was an evil mastermind offering Australia to someone whose favor he wants to curry too cliché?

"Oh good. Sherlock, you and Jim keep each other entertained while I go change."

"Why do you need to change?" Sherlock asked, eyeing the stain on John's jumper. "The angle is all wrong for you to have spilled it on yourself." His eyes rested on Jim's teacup, then Jim before growing cold and hard. "Ah. I see."

As soon as John was out of sight, Jim was out of his chair and Sherlock was looming above him, trying to look impressive and dangerous in his charcoal coat. Jim wasn't intimidated.

"He is *mine*," Sherlock hissed. "He is good, and broken in all the right ways and *you are not to touch him again*."

"He's not yours. Not yet," Jim responded, voice filled with an ice-cold fire that sends other criminal masterminds cowering.

"Well, he certainly won't belong to *you*."

Jim had killed men, women, and children without remorse to get what he wanted. One little consulting detective, brilliant and entertaining as he may be, wasn't going to stop him. Playing with Sherlock had been fun, but he had always intended to crush him in the end.

Oh. *Oh*. Was that a wonderful idea if he ever thought of one.

"Sherlock, would you like to play another game?"

The terms of engagement were straightforward. They may each kiss John once and may use any excuse to touch him, but all other advances must be made by Dr. Watson. The first one who John confesses he loves is the winner. To the victor will go the spoils. The loser can sod off.

John returned from upstairs, now clad in a generic green button up that didn't fit right and a patched coat. It wasn't quite what Jim had hoped for, but it was a marked improvement over the jumper. Jim made a mental note to have the windows at 221B fixed and to rig the heating. Also – find plausible excuse for destruction of all John's clothes, particularly jumpers, and convince the man to allow the purchase of designer replacements.

"One point on which we are entirely in agreement," Sherlock commented, having no trouble following Jim's thought process. "The first half should be accomplished with relative ease. It might take our combined efforts to achieve the second, however."

"Fine," Jim said sharply, thinking. He needed to come up with a complicated crime that he could use to completely humiliate the detective and impress John. No murders then. Pity, Jim had a flair for those. Elaborate embezzlement scheme? Counterfeiting, maybe?

John glanced back and forth between the two consultants. "Have you two had a row?"

Sherlock shot him an icy glare. "I do not," he said seriously, "have 'rows'." He sniffed, insulted by the very idea.

"Fine, started a feud or whatever you want to call it."

"We've decided to play another game," Jim offered. He knew from his surveillance that John hated it when Sherlock kept things from him, and he felt John would appreciate the effort to keep him informed.

A long pause while John thought. "Is it going to negatively affect anyone outside this flat?"

"No," Sherlock responded.

"Well, you two have fun then."

Sherlock made his first move that afternoon while John was at the surgery. Jim stuck around, knowing it would backfire spectacularly and wanting a front row seat.

John, looking tired and haggard, trod slowly up the stairs to his room. There was a long pause, and then the footsteps returned with force to spare. John's usually expressive, emotive face was perfectly blank – the way nature stands absolutely still before a natural disaster.

Jim had to fight incredibly hard not to grin like the madman he was. He didn't think he'd ever been this excited about anything since he first got started in the criminal world. This was so much better.

"Sherlock," John said, voice soft and calm. "Would you kindly explain why *my room looks as if it has been set ON FIRE?*" His volume increased on every word.

"Because it has," the consulting detective replied as he tuned his violin.

"Why? And so help me, if you say it was an experiment I am going to wring your scrawny little neck, Mycroft be damned." Sherlock said nothing. "Do you have any idea how much this is going to cost to fix? Everything I owned was in there, Sherlock. *Everything*. Where the hell am I supposed to sleep?" A long, deep sigh.

"You could sleep in my room," Sherlock offered, expression carefully blank. John's glare quickly shut down that idea.

"I need some air. And I'm kipping at Sarah's tonight. Don't wait up."

John slammed the door behind him.

Sheep's Clothing

Jim made an appointment at the surgery the next day, taking care with the disguise he chose. He could be suitably threatening without John having to know exactly who was meddling in his life.

Jim and Dr. Sawyer had a nice chat. Talked about her relationship and where she thought it was going. Talked about her work too, about the benefits to a private practice in the country close to her mother, because wouldn't it be just awful if she had an accident and Sarah was so far away and hadn't been able to say goodbye?

Jim found John later that night in a local pub, staring down at his glass, depressed. His face had a reddish tint, he was slightly less articulate than was typical, and he was having more trouble with small physical tasks than usual. John was drunk – which went a long way towards explaining why he was delivering a monologue to the bartender.

"Sarah, my girlfriend...she's moving to Devon. Wants to be closer to her Mum. Said someone made her an offer it was impossible to say no to."

"Sorry to hear that, mate."

"The thing is, I'm not really that upset about Sarah. More upset about what it means. She was a convenient explanation for what was going on. Did you know that I haven't had sex in almost three months? I haven't had a dry spell this long, well...ever. No. I, John 'Three-Continents' Watson, didn't sleep with someone when I had the chance. I haven't had sex since I got back. I think...I think I'm a little less bi than I thought I was. Or at least, I think what I really need right now is sex with a man."

The bartender (mid-twenties, university student with bills to pay, long-term girlfriend he will propose to within a month) just nodded, apparently familiar with John's drunken ramblings.

"And I can't go back to my flat. I just...well, I can't. 'Cause my flatmate? He's gorgeous. Completely gorgeous and totally uninterested. And he's got this new friend." A pause and a chuckle. "Well, I say friend. Also fantastic, but in a different way. Only he's sort of a tiny bit evil, and that just isn't on. At least, it shouldn't be on, and I really can't be making those sorts of decisions while I'm plastered. If I go back, I'm ninety-eight percent sure I'll end up jumping one of them. I'm also 100% sure that it wouldn't end well, especially since alcohol tends to lead to performance issues on my part."

Jim took this newfound information under consideration, trying very hard to quell the urge to pin the doctor to the counter and use his mouth to convince him just how on being evil really was. But if he was going to break the rules of his and Sherlock's game in such a spectacular fashion, he was going to wait until it would be worth it.

What he *did* do was send John the address of his closest safe house as an alternative to the flat. Then Jim went home, took a long cold shower, and has a wet dream for the first time in sixteen years.

It took Jim a week to get everything set up to his satisfaction. In that time, Sherlock apologized to John, took him to increasingly intimate restaurant where he always asked for a candle (albeit when John wasn't around to protest), grabbed his hand on chases far more often than before, and lost what little sense of personal space he had in regards to Doctor Watson. He also serenaded him on a daily basis with his violin, which always put a small smile on John's face.

In short, Jim was not happy. Not happy at all. Still, he had planned this perfectly. It would humiliate Sherlock, allow John to feel intelligent and useful, and show John that Jim wasn't *all* bad – just mostly.

Lestrade called Sherlock when the virus crashed his computer. Jim sighed as he sat back in chair, ready to enjoy the show, his attention on two of the screens before him. One showed exactly what Lestrade, Sherlock, and John were seeing on the DI's computer. The other showed Sherlock, Lestrade, and John. The MET really needed better security. It had been pathetically easy to get in, hack the computer, plant several cameras, and get out. All within five minutes.

"Why am I here, Lestrade? I hardly think your computer troubles need my particular brand of expertise."

"Oh, I think it really does," the DI said, gesturing at his computer.

Hello Sexy ;)

*I got you a present. It took some time, but I think it was worth it. Anyway, I hope you enjoy!
-Your friendly neighborhood criminal mastermind*

"He does know that if he hurts anyone, I'm going to..." John trailed off, glancing at the DI.
"Well, he won't be drinking any my tea for a very long time. Let's just leave it at that."

The doctor looked positively *lethal* as he glared at the computer screen. It sent shivers down Jim's spine in all the right ways. It *was* a little upsetting though. No more murders. At least, not until their sixth month anniversary, at which point he was fairly sure he'd be able to negotiate something.

Jim looked to the other screen, watching the footage now playing on Lestrade's computer.

"That...that's my case. The case from three days ago. It was supposed to be a bust, but things went south. MI5 got involved. The guy they had on the inside got shot. They had to shoot the bloke they were after. I had to escort a crooked bank manager out of the firefight."

Sherlock looked as if he couldn't understand what could possibly be interesting about the situation. John on the other hand, started laughing.

"Oh my God. Oh my God. That is *brilliant*. Absolutely bloody *brilliant*." He was short of breath, arms wrapped around his diaphragm. Sherlock glared daggers at the monitor.

"Explain," Sherlock said curtly. What he really meant was '*you are only permitted to notice that I am a genius, and your infidelity has offended me. Also, you are not allowed to figure anything out before me. I shall now sulk for the remainder of the month.*'"

"The man who was shot? Is he the counterfeiter you asked for help with a few weeks ago? The one Sherlock thought was too dull to bother with?" Lestrade nodded. "MI5 had you bring him in so they could get him to turn on his partner in whatever he was doing."

"Yes, and?" Lestrade asked, getting impatient as John began cackling again.

"*The Sting*. It's *The Sting*. Killer Evans and Rodger Prescott aren't dead, and you were never working with MI5." John laughed again, leaning on Lestrade's desk for support.

Jim typed the commands that would relinquish control of the DI's computer, grinning at everyone's expressions – Lestrade's barely restrained frustration, Sherlock's nearly homicidal glare at the camera, and John's completely unrestrained mirth.

He was waiting for them at 221B by the time they returned. When John entered, he stopped just inside the doorway, and then began clapping slowly. Jim stood and took a small bow.

Sherlock was glaring daggers at him, and he had a hand possessively wrapped around John's shoulder, but Jim didn't care. Because John was smiling at him. He was smiling that bright beautiful smile reserved for when Sherlock was being especially clever. Only it was aimed at him.

Jim's heart did a funny little fluttering thing it had never done before, and he felt himself returning John's expression. Not the fake smile he used to put people at ease or the predatory one he used to make them afraid. This was something else. Something new.

The fluttering feeling in his chest became his constant companion whenever John was around, or might be around, or when Jim was thinking about John. It was distracting and ridiculous, but Jim couldn't quite bring himself to feel upset about it. He didn't understand it, and the contemplation gave him something to do when seized by a fit of boredom that would usually be filled with a murder or terrorist plot.

His answer came two weeks later after John had fetched the post.

"Jim, would you happen to know why the Red Cross is under the impression that I donated 1 million pounds? Or why various hospitals have invited me to various galas to thank me for the various amounts of money they believe I donated for the care of war veterans? Or why these various amounts happen to total just under 8 million quid, which is-coincidentally, I'm sure-exactly the amount of money Evans and Prescott managed to con out of that banker?"

"What are you suggesting, Doctor Watson?" Jim asked, one eyebrow raised.

"I'm *suggesting* that you are coming to these galas with me. As the one responsible, you should have to suffer with me. Also, I'm suggesting that you pay for my dancing lessons so I don't make a complete fool of myself." John was smiling that subconscious smile. It turned out Jim didn't need to give him a whole continent. Just spend 8 million on charities.

His heart did that fluttering again, and Jim couldn't help but think it felt rather like how authors of ridiculous romance stories described characters reactions when they were in lo...

The revelation felt rather like a two-by-four being smashed directly into his chest. And really, all Jim's usually multitasking brain could come up with was: *Oh, bloody fucking hell.*

Jim needed to talk to someone about this. He needed to be certain he was in...he needed to be sure so he could take the proper precautions. People with this condition had a propensity for extreme idiocy and making massive mistakes.

His first choice would have been his mother, but she had an "accident" when Jim was twenty, seven years after she had walked out on Jim and his brother. James was in the middle of a complicated operation in the Congo that Jim had spent *months* putting together that couldn't be easily interrupted, and Jim very much doubted his younger brother would have anything useful to offer. Sebastian was the only one of his employees he could count on to be honest with him, but there was no way Moran had any experience with Jim's probable problem. There really was only one solution.

"Jimmy!" The Woman crowed on the other end of the line. "What can I do for you?"

"Irene, I find myself in need of your advice."

"If you're calling about what I think you're calling about, I can't really help you. I've already tossed my hat into the ring on the other side."

"I don't need *that* sort of assistance. I'm not as incompetent and hopeless as he is. I was merely hoping to inquire about..." Jim trailed off, not quite sure how to phrase his request.

"About?" the American asked, sounding obscenely cheerful.

"If I were to describe a set of symptoms, would you be able to identify the emotion at the root of the matter?"

"Symptoms"? Emotions aren't a disease, Jimmy."

"Just answer the question," Jim responded through gritted teeth.

"Yes, yes I would be able to *diagnose* what emotion you have been *afflicted* with." He could practically hear her rolling her eyes.

"When I am around a certain individual, my smile is not a ruse or a tool to intimidate – I suspect it might be genuine. I endeavor to make the person in question smile at me, and find myself pleased when he laughs, especially as a result of anything I have done. I've taken a hiatus on murders because it would make him think poorly of me – I care about his opinion, for some incomprehensible reason. Also, my heart keeps attempting to beat its way out of my chest whenever he so much as crosses my mind."

"Do other people being close to him make you jealous?"

"I ran his former partner out of town and have planned at least four different murders for everyone I have seen touch him who isn't me. Does that count?"

"Yes, that counts. I take it you have considered the possibility that you are in love?"

"Yes," Jim ground out.

"And what did that feel like?"

"It felt like taking a two-by-four to the chest."

"That's very specific. Sherlock just said 'blunt force trauma'."

"Holmes has had this conversation with you?" Jim asked, bringing his total number of ways to murder the detective up to forty-two, seventeen of which could be accomplished without John's knowledge.

"Yes, and I'm going to tell you exactly what I told him – you are well and truly fucked."

"What?"

"Yes, Jimmy. Yes. You love him."

"*Bugger.*"

"Like I said. Anyway, thank you for settling an internal debate for me. I just *have* to meet this John Watson if he's managed to land both my geniuses without even trying. Expect me in London by this time tomorrow."

Jim looked down at the now disconnected phone with a mounting sense of horror. What had he done?

The Woman

Jim quickly handed control over to Moran, instructing him in what threats to make in various situations and the list of circumstances under which Jim was to be contacted. It was a huge amount of responsibility, more than Jim would ever give him under normal circumstances, but Jim trusted Sebastian with his criminal network much more than he trusted Adler with his John. He trusted Holmes with John more than Adler.

He gave his driver stern directions and found himself outside of 221B in a matter of minutes. Jim unlocked the door with the key he made after picking Holmes' pocket a few weeks ago. Jim froze when he saw the tableau in the sitting room.

Holmes had an arm around John's shoulder, his hand running carefully, gently through John's hair. John was asleep, his head resting against Holmes' chest. Jim was sorely tempted to remove Holmes from the couch in as painful a manner as possible, but Jim didn't want to disturb John, he looked so peaceful, and frankly it was probably better that John was not conscious for this conversation.

"Can I help you, Moriarty? I'm a little busy at the moment, so if this is a social visit it will have to wait," Holmes said, not looking away from John.

Jim reigned in his temper. Killing the best friend of the man he was trying to court would not go over well, no matter how many plausible and reasonable justifications he came up with to explain it.

"We may have a small emergency that needs delicate handling. *Immediate* delicate handling."

"We'?"

"Yes, *we*. It affects both of us."

"What could possibly fall under that category?"

"The Woman."

Sherlock's spine stiffened and he looked at Jim for the first time since the criminal consultant since he had entered the flat. His ice-blue eyes were cold. "What did you *do*, Moriarty?"

"I called her for a consultation on an issue in her area of expertise. She gave me the answer I was expecting." And there was the 2x4 again. Why did people describe being in love as pleasant? So far, it had only been painful. "Apparently, after our discussion, she decided to pay a visit to London. Specifically, she decided she needed to pay a visit to a certain doctor."

Holmes recited a string of impressive and rather inventive French epithets. "I can ask Mycroft to take preventative measures. Knowing Adler, it won't stop her for long, but it might delay her long enough to buy us some time." A deep sigh. "I'm going to owe him a favor. I *loathe* owing Mycroft favors."

"I'll sabotage a government project in a way that requires a man on the ground. He should call you to deal with it," Jim offered while Sherlock texted one handed, careful not to jostle John.

"When did this conversation occur?" Sherlock asked, staring at his screen waiting for a reply.

Jim looked at his watch and swore (Romanian was his romance language of choice). "Half an hour. Odds are she's already on her way here."

"Surely she couldn't have..."

"It's Irene. Of course she could have. And she did."

A beep from Sherlock's phone. "So she did. However, Mycroft's men appear to have been relatively competent for once. Adler has been detained, and they should be able to hold her for twenty-four hours."

The two decided that all future planning could be done electronically, as Sherlock was tired of looking at Jim, and Jim was uncomfortable with how long he'd left Moran alone. It seemed quite the reasonable plan at the time – they knew they had at least twelve hours before they had to work something out.

Sherlock and Jim, as was typical when they dealt with Irene, were wrong.

The call woke Jim from one of his infrequent nights of sleep. He glanced at the clock, bleary eyed. 8 AM. *Everyone* knew not to wake Jim before 10 on days he managed to sleep. It made him grumpy. *No one* was happy if Jim was grumpy.

He contemplated ignoring it, putting a hit out on the caller, and then going back to sleep, but then the ring-tone sunk in. "The Boy is Mine"

Holmes was calling. There was only one reason Sherlock would ever willingly call Jim, and the reason was named John Watson.

"You need to come to Baker Street. *Now*," Sherlock ordered sharply before disconnecting.

Jim didn't waste any time on getting dressed, and was on the doorstep of 221 Baker Street in his flannel pajamas fifteen minutes later. He let himself in and once again froze when he saw what, or rather, who, was on the couch.

"*You!*" he hissed.

"Me," Irene said cheerfully, ankle propped up on a series of cushions. "I did tell you I'd be here in the morning"

Sherlock was sitting on his chair in the corner by the fireplace, tuning his violin whilst muttering the incompetence of his brother and his brother's minions.

"Morning Jim," John said, emerging from the kitchen with a package of frozen vegetables (peas) wrapped in a dishtowel. "Sorry about the delay, Ms. Adler, but I had to navigate around some frozen items I wasn't expecting."

By the glare he gave Sherlock, Jim would have bet almost anything that the frozen items were body parts. Judging by John's subconscious fiddling, Jim would say that they had been ears.

"Miss, actually. And please call me Irene," she said, flashing him her most charming smile.

Sherlock visibly bristled, and Jim knew he's expression probably wasn't much better. The detective spoke first, however.

"Irene, if you don't leave now, I'll be forced to take drastic action."

"*Please*," Irene rolled her eyes. "The last time you and I went head to head, you ended up handcuffed naked to a headboard. Did you know that the maid sent me a thank you note?"

Sherlock sputtered indignantly, his tuning becoming slightly more violent. John raised his eyebrows, blushing slightly as he placed the improvised cold compress on Irene's ankle.

"And don't you even start, Jimmy. The score was 5 to 1 last time I checked and I still have that photo of you from university."

Jim shut his mouth. It was 5 to 2, in actuality, but he wasn't willing to correct her while she still had that picture. He'd sent one of his people in disguise to hire Sherlock to get it back a few years ago. It had not ended well.

"You know Jim, too?" John asked, turning to look at the man in question, taking in his attire for the first time. "Ah, Jim?"

"Yes, John?"

"What's left of my clothes are in Sherlock's room. I don't have much after that experiment, but you're welcome to help to help yourself to what's there. You'll probably need a belt and the shirts will be a bit baggy, but at least they'll fit. Mostly."

Jim considered protesting for the sake of his pride, but he thought it through. Wearing clothes that smelled like John. Covering his body in items that had touched John's bare skin. Having a chance to induct (the proper term, thank you) what each stain meant, piece together John's life from the clues within the fabrics. In short, *yes*.

"You need more clothes," was all Jim offered after walking out of Sherlock's room. It was all he could manage without risk of beaming, what with his being surrounded by smells and tactile sensations that were so clearly John.

"I don't really have the cash to being doing that for at the moment," John said, looking rather embarrassed about it. He was also staring fixedly at Jim, seemingly mesmerized by the sight of the man in his own clothes. The dilation of his pupils, change in breathing, and increased blood flow indicated his was aroused by the image.

Irene, watching John and Jim and Sherlock, broke into a wide smile. "Oh, I'm seeing it. I totally see it." She ignored the glares from both consultants. "Johnny, please allow me to take you shopping to thank you for helping me today. Sherlock's treat, of course, what with him being the one responsible for the destruction of your wardrobe. Although," she said, peering around the couch for a better look, "judging by what you have on and what Jimmy's wearing, he might have done the world a favor."

"About that Irene, what exactly is Johnny being thanked for?" Jim asked. "And what happened to your ankle?"

"It was awful. I was walking down the street when some muggers attacked me, and I tripped and fell during the process. Johnny here not only got my purse back, but he carried me up to his flat to doctor my ankle. Imagine my surprise when it turned out he happened to be the flat mate of my dear friend Sherlock."

"Arch-nemesis," Sherlock muttered. "Not friend. And if you were surprised, I'm a poodle."

"Well, with that hair..." Irene began smiling.

"Sherlock," said John attempting not to roll his eyes, "you can't have three archenemies. It's in the definition of the word. You only get one. You'll have to pick."

"Regardless, Irene, you can't take Johnny shopping with your injury," Jim added smugly. Jim had wanted to be the one to do that, damn it.

Irene hopped up off the couch. "Oh, look at that. All better! Come on now, Johnny. I promise you're in good hands. If you want examples of my former work, look at your boys over there." Noting John's look, she elaborated. "You don't think they dressed themselves like that when I met them? Heavens no! They had to be taught."

"Oh, bloody hell," said John, eyes widening. "I have to deal with three of you now, don't I?"

Irene giggled, dragging the reluctant, protesting doctor out the door behind her.

To the saleswoman in the store, the woman with the dark hair and mocha skin and the blonde man with the charming smile and impressively blue eyes were clearly a couple. The familiar touches, the laughter, the exasperated looks and sharp questions.

The saleswoman was an idiot of course, almost everyone was, but Jim could see how she could have made the mistake. He might have made it himself had he not been so close to the situation. The thought made his blood boil. Sherlock he could understand. Sherlock he could accept. But *not* the woman. *Never* the woman.

"Jim," Sherlock whispered sharply beside him.

Jim glanced at Sherlock, who looked pointedly down at the phone in Jim's hand. The consulting criminal followed his gaze and was mildly surprised to discover he had cracked the display.

"If we were to, hypothetically of course, murder someone for touching our John, would we want to leave the body as a message, or ensure it wasn't discovered?" Sherlock asked through gritted teeth as Irene's hands ghosted over John's hips and arse.

"In my professional opinion, the hypothetical body should be placed somewhere the types we would be concerned about frequent, but was outside the public eye."

"So, The Three Garridebs, for example, might serve as an ideal location? Hypothetically," (AN 3 Garridebs=seedy criminal bar place in this verse) Sherlock offered as Irene took the tape measure from the tailor and measured him herself. "Of course, while we do have to be concerned with the more mundane criminals, there are the larger syndicates to consider. In my experience, those require far more subtlety to be suitably intimidating."

"I find, with the right touch, incendiary devices can be very subtle."

"John wouldn't approve," Sherlock said, eyeing Jim cautiously. "I assume that's the only reason I'm still alive, given the conversation that brought Irene here. I know that I personally have calculated at least eighty-three ways to kill you and dispose of the body with no one the wiser."

"Do share. I'm only at seventy-five," Jim said, smiling his Cheshire smile. "I'd have no qualms over the destruction of anyone who was a threat to John. None whatsoever. But I know where you stand; you wouldn't hurt him, not intentionally. And once you had, all bets would be off. I have no such reassurances regarding Irene. Besides, you're distracting and entertaining, whereas Irene is just..."

"Annoying? Meddlesome? Interfering? Intrusive?" Sherlock offered.

"Yes," Jim said, smiling at Sherlock somewhat sincerely for the first time since the whole issue with John had begun.

Jim's phone pinged, and he and Sherlock were forced to duck behind a nearby jewelry counter to avoid detection. Stalking was, they had both learned from experience, not good, at least according to John's unwritten rules. They both glanced at the text message, nearly identical scowls crossing their faces as they read.

If you two are planning on murdering me to make a point, will you at least dump my body somewhere a little more classy? I mean honestly, The Three Garriebs? And when you torture me to death, if you would be so kind as to let my face be, it would be greatly appreciated ;)

The Colleague and The Wolf

Since Irene clearly planned on following John for the duration of her visit (which both Jim and Sherlock were working very hard on ending), Jim found himself in the unprecedented situation of being at a crime scene *after* the crime had been committed.

The Detective Sergeant (Sally Donovan, according to Jim's files) gave the group a long look. "You travel with an entourage now, Freak?"

"Certainly not. That would entail more than one member admire and respect me, would it not?" Sherlock inquired cheekily as he lifted the tape for himself and John.

Sergeant Donovan, noting that Sherlock really didn't want Jim and Irene to come any further, pulled up the crime scene tape, gesturing in an "after you" type fashion. Sherlock glared, Irene smiled, Jim wasn't quite sure what expression was on his face, and John pinched the bridge of his nose and heaved a deep sigh.

Jim paid the body no mind - he was more concerned with exactly how much space was between Irene and John.

"Oy, Sherlock. What's all this? I break enough rules letting you in as it is."

"John, as you well know, is my colleague, friend, and an integral part of my work. Jim is a consultant." Jim waved at the DI, putting on his most non-threatening smile. "Irene, however, has no reason whatsoever to remain here and should be removed promptly." Irene, who had somehow managed to wrap her arm around John in the fraction of a second Jim hadn't been looking, shot Lestrade a blinding smile.

"Did you crash John's date again? Trying to get rid of his new girlfriend?" Lestrade asked, clearly amused.

Sherlock growled. Actually *growled*, and Jim gave the Detective Inspector a glare that was specifically designed to make the mafia run in terror. Irene beamed, but John, seeing the predicament, removed Irene's arm and freed himself from her grasp.

"Don't get your shorts in a twist," John admonished the consultants. "Irene, would you mind keeping Lt. Norton company while I examine the body? Sherlock and Jim need to *calm down*," a glare in their direction here, "and your proximity doesn't seem to be helping."

John was right, of course. Only it wasn't proximity to Jim and Sherlock that had the two agitated, it was her proximity to John. Regardless, his suggestion would resolve the issue.

"Anything for you, Johnny," Irene winked.

Jim made a move towards Irene that was aborted by Sherlock's hand on his shoulder.

"Godfrey is a music lover, tenor in an audition choir, and an avid opera fan. He is kind, fairly bright-comparatively speaking, of course, highly tolerant, and enjoys travel and adventure." Jim allowed that to sink in; he was Irene's perfect match. "John completely brilliant without meaning to be," Sherlock whispered, voice full of awe. Jim was inclined to agree.

"Right," said John, crouching next to the body. "She's only been dead a few hours. Cause of death is..." a pause, followed by careful, thorough examination of the body.

"Any idiot can see the cause of death. She was shot through the head," the forensics officer snapped (something with an A...his affinity for extinct reptiles had been far more memorable than his name). Jim disliked him instantly.

"Yes," Sherlock snapped, back in the proper headspace for deduction and crime solving, "any idiot *would* see that. Any idiot would be wrong.

"What is he on about?" Lestrade asked, turning to John for translation.

"She died before she'd been shot. If there is one thing I know, its gunshot wounds," John said, glaring at the forensics technician. "She asphyxiated. Wealthy, you can tell that from her clothes. Married, but she cheats. You can tell that from the wedding ring, and if you still don't know why then you're as stupid as Sherlock thinks you are. The gun would be easily to plant on someone. It's a cover up, a frame job."

Sherlock bodily dragging John out into the hallway does not go unnoticed by Jim. Approximately half of his brain was completely fixated on the sudden thud from the wall that separates the room from the hallway, the small moan and needy growl.

That half clearly hears John's bewildered "I thought you were married to your work?"

It also hears Sherlock's exasperated "Weren't you listening to anything I said to Lestrade? You're my partner, my colleague. You're part of my work now."

Jim stormed out into the hallway, but it had nothing to do with John and Sherlock. It was because of what the other half of his brain had been fixed on – the body on the floor.

"That's my murder," Jim told Sherlock.

"What?" John asked, straitening his jumper and glaring at Jim.

"That was supposed to be for my next client, but I turned them down once we started playing our game."

"If not you, then who?" Sherlock asked, eyes bright with excitement of more than one kind.

"Sebastian sodding Moran," Jim hissed. "He's gotten too big for his britches. You keep her away from him, and I'm going to go take care of this irritation."

Jim made his way to the closest safe-house, taking stock of the equipment available. If Moran was trying to take over Moriarty's business, Jim would be his next target. It's easy to say you've always been the whisper when there's no one to contradict you.

The door crashes open, and Jim turns around, hands raised in surrender. "Seb, I thought our relationship had a better foundation than this. You shoot people, and I tell you who to shoot and how. It really was an amazing system. And then you had to go and ruin it by thinking," Jim said, hand inching towards his breast pocket and the detonator disguised as a pen that he always stored there.

"No, Moriarty, you had to ruin things. Sherlock Holmes I can almost understand, but his sidekick too? With you off doing god-knows what all the time, I've had to pick up most of the slack. And then I realized something-no one even noticed. Things will run just fine without you Moriarty," he said. Moran fired a shot that grazed Jim's shoulder, stopping him reaching for the detonator. "I know about the pen, Moriarty. I just wanted to thank you for showing me what I could be."

Another silenced gunshot, followed by a thud. "And I want to thank you for being so cliché," John remarked from the door. "I really wouldn't have had time to get here if he hadn't insisted on grandstanding."

John walked over to Moran, blood covering his fingers as he checked his pulse. "Good. No one hurts my geniuses," he said, whipping the blood across his forehead as he moved his fringe out of his eyes.

Jim's brain slowed down a ridiculous amount, seemingly operating through a haze as John removed his shirt to better treat the graze.

John had killed for him. John had killed for him, and was covered in the blood of the man who had tried to end him. And now John was touching his bare skin. It was too much. Overwhelming.

Before Jim really knew what had happened, he had pinned John against the dresser. "You. Are. *Fucking. Amazing.*" Jim whispered in John's ear, nipping at the lobe. "A wolf in sheep's clothing." He kissed his way along John's jaw. "I like the wolf, Johnny. I *fucking love* the wolf. Will you let me take off the sheep's clothing?"

Then Jim kissed him.

John kissed him back. And when John Watson kissed, he *meant* it. There was tongue, and his hands were *everywhere*.

It was Jim who had pull away first. "Fuck. Three continents is right," he said, trying to get his breathing back under control.

John said nothing. He finished bandaging Jim, helped him into a fresh shirt, and then took them both back to 221B without saying a word. It made Jim a little uneasy, but the expression on John's face every time he opened his mouth to break the silence made it clear John needed quiet.

Once they arrived at Baker Street, John left with a simple "I need some air. If either of you," he shot a sharp look at both Sherlock and Jim, "even *thinks* about following me, I will cheerfully beat you to death. I need time to sort everything out."

There were several long minutes of silence before Sherlock asked a question to break the silence. "I take it this Moran fellow didn't manage to kill you, then?"

"No. I'm sure you find that disappointing."

"On the contrary, I'm pleased. If you're going to get yourself killed, I want to be the one doing the murdering. Otherwise it's just a waste." Sherlock smiled, a quick, genuine grin that didn't quite cover the apprehension tightening every line of his body.

"He's out there, making his decision right now." Jim knew that he was stating the obvious, but he still felt it needed saying.

"Yes."

Another long pause. "Did you send someone to clean up the mess?"

If Jim were the sort who smacked his forehead when he forgot something, he'd be putting it through a wall right now. He pulls out his phone and quickly sends the relevant texts. At Sherlock's disgusted glare he shrugged his shoulders defensively. "I was a bit distracted at the time, if you must know."

Sherlock's expression became a cross of irritation and amusement. "Oh, I know. The tongue thing?"

"That and the hands." Jim smiled at Sherlock, and Sherlock smiled back until they both remembered that it was *John* on the line and they really couldn't afford to be friendly with the competition when the loser had to shove off.

Jim is suddenly struck by the thought that he has no idea how this is going to end. There is a very good chance that he might lose. A significantly high probability that he will never see John outside of surveillance again, never taunt Sherlock face to face as the detective tried to work out his puzzles. He'll never get to see that look in John's eyes again.

Sherlock had clearly been caught up in similar thoughts. "If...if John were to...if you were to win, what would that look like?"

"I'd move in upstairs and dump boiling tea on you if you started interfering in my sex life." Sherlock shot him a surprised look. "You're his best friend. I couldn't ask him to give that up if I wanted a prayer of it working out."

"You can move into his room, if you're amiable. If I end up winning," Sherlock offered cautiously.

More silence, a little less strained, but still far from calm. In a fit of desperation to occupy his mind, Jim grabs John's laptop and encrypts it ten ways to Sunday. Sherlock, once Jim has finished, snatches it away and begins hacking. They add a stopwatch, a lighter, and some hydrofluoric acid (diluted, of course. They aren't *that* stupid) to make everything more interesting, attempting to distract themselves from the gnawing anxiety in the pit of their stomachs that neither of them have ever really felt before.

Irene turns up four hours later, lipstick smeared, face flushed, and eyes bright. One glance around the room and she's got it figured out.

"Do you know where he went?" she asked. "I need to talk to him. It might make his life easier."

"We were instructed not to follow on pain of death," Jim offers, eyes intent on the stopwatch as Sherlock's fingers danced over the keys.

"Not an answer to my question," Irene said sharply.

"Regent's Park or his bar, which is about three streets south of here," Sherlock muttered, his eyebrows furrowed in concentration.

It took them about five minutes to realize exactly what it is they have done. It takes fifteen for shit to hit the fan.

They are texted instructions to meet John at a nearby warehouse. Sherlock and Jim mill about inside for a good two minutes before the doctor shows up. His eyes are red, his face is pale, and he looks absolutely *livid*.

"Irene and I just had a very enlightening conversation. She told me that while she wasn't above beating you two again, I shouldn't consider her as a contestant in your game because she wanted to see how things worked out with Godfrey."

Silence.

"You two. Acting like five year olds fighting over a toy. And it was all a game. A *fucking game*. A bloody experiment. "Who can seduce John first?" I really am an idiot, you know. For a few seconds, I thought someone actually gave a fuck about me." A humorless, hurt laugh. "Well, you two can sort out the winner some other way. Because I don't want to play. I'm not going to play."

Another long pause.

"I'll be out of Baker Street by morning. I hope you two are happy together – you really do deserve each other."

Jim and Sherlock stood in complete silence for what felt like hours.

"In retrospect, this was not our best idea." Jim said slowly.

"*Really?* However did you draw that conclusion?" Sherlock asked, voice dripping with sarcasm.

"If either one of us tries to convince him, he'll think it's still part of the game."

More silence, as they both consider the very real possibility that they might lose John forever.

"What if...what if we both tried to convince him? Together?" Sherlock offered. "There would be no reason to do so if it was merely a game."

"Could we though? Could we really share?" Jim asked.

"You don't want to leave, I don't want you to leave, and John doesn't want to choose. We work well together, when it comes to our John."

Their John. The thought sends blood straight to Jim's groin-it sounds *right*.

They're both thinking it, so it's only a few seconds before they press their lips experimentally together, seeing exactly how far this partnership is going to extend. Milliseconds later they pull away, expressions making it clear exactly what they are thinking.

"No"

"*Never again*," Jim agrees, fighting the childish impulse to clean out his mouth with his sleeve.

They make their way back to Baker Street, attack coordinated. John puts up a valiant fight that lasts all of the two minutes it takes to convince him that Sherlock isn't shitting him and neither is Jim. They maneuver him onto the bed and before long everyone's clothes are missing and Jim is memorizing John's vertebrae with his mouth and Sherlock is licking his way along John's ribs, and John has somehow managed to mark both of them with possessive love bites *everywhere* and his hands are doing things that should be illegal, and maybe they are, but that's never stopped Jim, Sherlock, or John before, has it?

Two hours later, they collapsed into a sweaty, sticky satisfied heap, John resting on Jim's chest with Sherlock curled around him.

"Mine," the doctor murmured sleepily, nuzzling into Jim's chest and giving Sherlock a gentle squeeze.

"Yours," they whisper quietly in agreement

Epilogue

Chapter Summary

An epilogue-y thing wherein John Watson's life becomes crazy. Well, crazier.

John blinked his eyes open slowly, listening with a growing awareness to the conversation that had pulled him out of his slumber.

"No! You may not have him every time you become involved in an interesting investigation – you'll redefine the meaning of 'interesting' to include anything that puzzles the police."

"May I have him for all interesting cases on the condition that all time lost will be repaid?"

"With interest," Jim stipulated.

"What are you two on about?" John mumbled, stretching his sore muscles as he sat up.

"Negotiating the terms of our ceasefire," Sherlock explained, pressing a surprisingly chaste kiss to John's temple. "Good morning."

"It is, isn't it?" Jim said, smiling his predator's grin.

Jim's morning kiss was far from chaste. It was downright filthy – all tongue and teeth at John's pulse point.

"Moriarty," Sherlock growled out in warning.

Jim shot him a wide-eyed, innocent look that had John collapsed against the pillows laughing at the irony.

When John had calmed down enough to process what he had heard, he frowned. "As the commodity in question, do I have any say in these negotiations?"

"No," was Jim's simple response. At John's sharp glare, he elaborated in a soft, rational tone of voice. "We'll make it fair – neither of us would settle for anything less than the most we can get. You'll end up happy no matter how this turns out. Your input and proximity would most likely impede the processes."

"In that case, you two work out your bizarrely specific custody agreement while I take a long, hot shower. I'm incredibly sore." He pointedly ignores their smug grins, muttering a half-hearted "piss-off" as he makes his way to the bathroom.

John enjoyed his day, lazing around on the sofa, watching crap telly, trying to figure out what exactly it was that Jim and Sherlock had done to his laptop, interrupted by the occasional outburst around the definition of the word "day" and what suitable conditions for John's return were.

"I'll do bondage, but no pain-play!" John called back. "Also, tattoos may not be administered without my *sober* consent!"

The rules end up being fairly straight-forward. Jim gets Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Sherlock gets Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. They alternate Sundays. Holidays will be shared, and a day starts at 12:01 unless someone is actively having sex. (There was a half-hour debate on the definition of the word "active"). See? Simple.

Overall, nothing much changes. Chip and pin machines now call him "sexy," Sherlock snogs him at crime scenes almost as often as he insults Anderson. On the whole, things are going well.

There were days when he felt like he was living with five-year-old geniuses with the libidos of University students. He had to declare a sex boycott after the first week when Sherlock and Jim decided they wanted to christen every square inch of the flat. Individually.

"I'm not eighteen any more," he told them when they confronted him together (confronting him together was *never* a good sign.) "I am almost forty. I need a break, or *I* am going to break. Four days total, two days each. Is that too much to ask?"

Lestrade was the only one (other than Mycroft, but Mycroft knew everything) who had managed to figure out their bizarre relationship. It had been after the completion of a particularly thrilling case, and Lestrade had been trying to take statements when he saw the familiar look on Sherlock's face.

"For God's sake, just kiss the man already. The unresolved sexual tension is becoming almost unbearable."

Sherlock scowled. "I can't."

"Why the bloody hell not? You two aren't having a row, are you?" the DI asked, looking back and forth between them.

"It's a Friday. If we could hurry this up please, I'm paying interest for this."

"What does it being Friday have to do with not being able to kiss your boyfriend?"

"He's not my boyfriend on Fridays, and if I kiss him on days he's not my boyfriend, it's considered a breach of contract and then Moriarty gets to blow up a building."

"Is that actually in the contract? Please tell me that that isn't in the contract," John said, holding his head in his hands.

"Moriarty? Moriarty *the bomber*, Moriarty," Lestrade asked, voice pitched at a level normal people would have found frightening. "And why is he going to blow up a building if you kiss

John on Friday?"

"Because Jim is John's boyfriend on Fridays," Sherlock explained. "This really isn't that complicated and every minute this case lasts is a minute and ten seconds that I lose on Saturday and it isn't my Sunday, so I *need* Saturday or else I'm not getting any until Tuesday."

"Jim. The Jim you brought to the crime scene three weeks ago? That was *Moriarty*?"

"Give me your phone," John demanded. "I need to make it clear that blowing up buildings will result in no sex and sleeping on the couch for at least a month."

After that, Jim gave Sherlock food poisoning for violating the confidentiality agreement and Sherlock sprained his wrist in retaliation. John had called Irene; things were getting out of hand. There needed to be a punishment for breaking their agreement, and John wasn't the one who could do it. One look, either heated or pathetic, and he was done for.

Rule breaking was now punished by John being confiscated, which he was completely okay with. Godfrey was a decent sort, and spending the day away from his idiot boyfriends was not always a bad thing, and he was fun to watch football matches with.

Then again, John mused as he came to after being drugged while out shopping, spending time with them, even when they were bickering and trying to hurt one another, was preferable to some things.

"No, really. I don't know who you're talking about," John said for what felt like the twelfth time. They were smart, whoever they were. Bound at the shoulders and the wrists, making escape highly improbable.

"Your boyfriend. The man you're shagging. He's pissing me off and I want to send him a message. You're going to call him and repeat exactly what I say, or I'm going to cut off an ear and use that instead."

"I'd be happy to, if you would just tell me who to call," John said, exasperated.

This was the problem with dating two geniuses who had managed to piss off the entire criminal underworld. He never really knew who he was being used to leverage.

"Could you explain *how* he pissed you off? That might help me straighten things out a bit."

"He's interfering with my work," the man in the well fitted suit with the Irish accent offered. Mafia?

That didn't help at all. That could easily be either one of them, albeit in different capacities.

"Tell him that Jack Gallagher says hello, and if he doesn't back off, you'll be saying goodbye," the man ordered as a ringing phone was held to his ear.

"Sherlock Holmes," the smooth baritone echoes from the speaker.

"Oh, *that* boyfriend. Hello, Sherlock."

"John? Aren't you supposed to be at the MET giving a statement right now?" Sherlock asked.

"Yeah. That's where I'm *supposed* to be. Ran into a friend of yours."

"Friend?" Sherlock asked, voice suddenly tight. "Can I put you on speaker phone?"

"Yeah. That's fine."

"Johnny? Who is it? Where are you? Has he done anything yet?" Jim said, voice ice cold.

"Jack Gallagher told me to say hi. And to back off or, and I quote, because I would hate for you to think I've gotten cliché, 'I'll be saying goodbye.' Also, there might have been threats involving my ears. Oh, and I think that's a thug with a baseball bat coming my way."

John really wasn't sure how long they went at him with the bat, or how much Sherlock (and Jim) heard before the phone disconnects. What he did know was that this wasn't his worst kidnapping. The Taliban still had that in the bag. It might have made the top ten, however.

There was a loud crashing sound that John registers in some part of his brain that was still functioning. (He was in shock, had lost a lot of blood, and probably had a concussion. He had his own permission to be a little fuzzy on the details).

"See? Subtle," Jim said.

"The explosives, yes. The door crashing in? No." Sherlock replied.

"Mr. Holmes, how nice of you to join us. Dr. Watson, say hello to Sherlock and his friend."

"Jim," John slurred. "I thought I made my stance on explosives clear."

"Yes, you did. And now Sherlock and I are going to make our stance on the hurting of our doctor crystal clear."

"And you are?" Gallagher asked, irritated.

"James Moriarty. Hi!" His voice was high pitched and faux-friendly in the way that sent shivers down John's spine.

"Moriarty?" Gallagher asked, his voice shaking. "What are you doing here?"

"You took something of ours. We've come to get it back," Sherlock said.

"And send a message to anyone else who is considering taking what doesn't belong to them," Jim added, voice dark and cold as ice.

John passed out somewhere around here, and woke up back in his bed in Baker Street. Jim held one of his hands firmly in his own whilst typing away at a laptop. Sherlock was sitting cross-legged at the foot of the bed staring down at him intently.

"Morning boys," he said, trying to grin.

"Hardly," Sherlock said coldly. Jim nodded in absent-minded agreement.

The schedule was put on hold as John healed, and the three of them sprawled out on the couch and watch *The Princess Bride* and *James Bond* and any other movies John could think of that were relevant for the cultural edification of his boys. He and Jim laughed at Sherlock during *The Princess Bride* and Sherlock pouted. He and Sherlock laughed at Jim during the Bond movies and Jim scowled. Sherlock and Jim laughed at him during *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* for looking like the actor and being vaguely similar to the character Arthur Dent.

John never asked why muggers crossed to the other side of the street while he was walking by, or why when the armed criminals he and Sherlock are chasing saw him they always did their best to imitate Storm Troopers, all their shots comically off target. Sherlock and Jim never told him, and he allowed it to fall under the category of "It's all Fine."

The life John lived with his genius, crazy, idiotic boyfriend was fun and dangerous and beautiful and full of surprises. And John Watson wouldn't have it any other way.

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