

Coming Home

Author: CK

Rating: PG

Summary: There were a thousand thoughts racing through his mind, a million feelings tearing through his body. - implied Johnlock

Disclaimer: Leave it all to the BBC, Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat. I'm actually quite happy with them having it - even if the BBC could be a bit quicker with passing it on to us.

Author's Note: Inspired by the "John faints in Sherlock's arms" manip that's been going around the net (the one that looks like it's been taken at Setlock), as well as lovely user thirty-seven-universe on Tumblr revealing to me that my theory regarding the pic (I had then no idea was a fake) is pretty close to book canon, where Watson actually faints after Holmes' return from the dead.

Bit OOC I think, but to my mind it still doesn't exclude that happens what we all think happens, thanks to BBC's newest trailer ;) (because we all know Sherlock has a knack for messing it up :D)

"I was alone, too, before you came into my life. But never as alone as I've been since I left. I'm sorry, John."

The voice was so familiar, long unheard, never forgotten.

It had become a habit. He didn't know why he did it, but it nevertheless had turned into a routine long ago. A routine of memory; of punishment even.

221B Baker Street had been unoccupied ever since he had moved out three years ago. Ever since he knew his best friend wouldn't come back to live with him.

Ever since Sherlock had died.

For reasons he couldn't fathom he returned; every now and then he visited the flat, just for a few minutes, just to look around. Maybe he expected something to change; maybe he expected something to leave him. Or maybe he expected something to come back.

Someone.

Nothing ever happened.

Till this day, this late November eve when the cold, wet outside world had once again brought him here, to the one place he'd always felt at home, safe and welcome.

It was here where the deafening silence that surrounded his life was broken by this voice; this voice he'd heard so often in the past years, faint and indistinctive, a soothing sound in the deadly quiet he'd once again fallen back into. It was here where the voice became clear, a warming embrace in a bitter world. It was here he also believed his eyes betrayed him; tortured him.

John couldn't even begin to understand what was happening; he barely heard Sherlock's words, or grabbed their meaning, his mind too busy wondering whether this was real. It was as if he'd seen a ghost, and for all he knew, the man standing before him was just that. A ghost from the past. A ghost that would forever invade his present, too, and his future.

This was his best friend he'd buried a good three years ago. This was the man who'd given him his life back, a sense of living in a bleak existence that never seemed to have a chance to end. And it was the man who'd taken exact same life, together with his own.

John stared at Sherlock, his familiar form and face, standing there like a statue of memories that had suddenly come to life, like an echo of all the things he had been missing so sorely for three dreadfully long years; things he had never been so naive to believe would come back to him, as much as he'd pleaded with every God he knew. Now he faced the reality of dreams and nightmares, of sleepless nights and days barely awake; an image that had ever since this one grey afternoon refused to fade.

Deep down, he knew it was real. Deep down he knew that the man he'd seen die, he'd seen lying on the pavement, broken, taken from him, was *real*. This was real; but it shouldn't have been. For the sake of his sanity, and his battered and bruised heart and soul, this had to be his still-grieving mind playing tricks on him.

But it wasn't. There was no deception this time, nothing imagined what would never be true.

Sherlock Holmes was alive.

There were a thousand thoughts racing through his mind, a million feelings tearing through his body, and the sum of it all seared and smoldered his very core, made him want to scream, to laugh, to cry, to curse the world and at the same time embrace it. It was too much to bear, too much to not drive him into madness, and as he felt his heart beating faster than it had ever beaten, and his world turning, spinning, dancing, he willingly succumbed to the blackness that called for him to allow him a moment of quiet and calm.

He awoke to a heartbeat elevated and hopeful, and so *alive*. Minutes, maybe longer, he needed to realize that he was still standing where he had been before, but was now supported by Sherlock who had his arms around him, holding him fast and steady and *so close*. John felt the rough yet soft fabric of the coat on his cheek, inhaled this unique mixture of scents he'd never been able to forget, and soon matched the breathing rhythm of the man keeping him on his feet, both literally and figuratively.

It took him a long while to dare and ask his legs to carry him on their own again, and to look up, right into Sherlock's eyes; into bright steel-blue and green-tinged orbs, filled with sadness and gentleness, with countless apologies and the desperate plea for forgiveness; so unusual that John almost started to doubt the truth of this situation again.

"I'm sorry, John," his friend said, and John remembered having heard the words before, earlier this hour but ages ago, and swallowed, his lips, his whole body trembling when he saw the red rimming the eyes of a man so aware of the pain he'd caused. But when he once again repeated his apology, heartfelt and more honest than anything John had ever heard, in his whole life, all the hurt lost its importance.

Because Sherlock was home.

FIN