

# The habit with the sheet

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## Kapitel 1: End of a day

Eventually we would end up as a couple. Everyone could see it. Clearly. Well not quite everyone. One had indeed trouble reading the signs. But can you blame him? Can you blame me?

After all one of the first things he said to Mrs. Hudson was: "I am not gay!"

And you have to admit, it was never one of my best features to understand human nature. With all my observation skills I still fail to get behind all the sentiments.

I had a clue though. After the Fall. Maybe I even started to hope. Maybe this was the reason I kept myself alive all the time and worked so hard on clearing the network.

I mean. His mumblings when he approached me while I was lying on the ground. It sounded to much like "Boyfriend" to me. But then again it might have been the tense of the situation, the blood running heavily through my ears and the rustling of the people around me that fooled my ears.

No it wasn't. I heard what I wanted to hear.

And so I started to hope. Hope that maybe after my return, things might get into a different direction. But to be honest. Let the word be boyfriend or just friend. It made my heart stop for a moment in the same way.

But anyway I was mistaken again, it seemed.

Has he not settled down with a woman after I disappeared? Even proposed to her.

And there I missed to read the signs again. Even though I saw that she was a lot like me.

But I don't want to defend myself. People who know me might be able to explain that to you in a better way. And they won't even wonder about it taking so long. For us. For me.

But then things went great.

Not so much for John in the beginning. Losing his wife and child. It almost broke him. Brought him to the edge of sanity. But not as much as me jumping of that building of course. That would have been a greater loss. Lucky him it was just a play.

Now, good thing Mrs. Hudson persuaded him to move back to 221b Bakerstreet. On my behalf of course, but he must not know that.

It has been over a year now and we are back to solving crimes together again. And whilst we are out on the street Mary seems almost forgotten at all.

It is at night that he still misses her. How do I know? Well even one who's not getting behind the mystery of sentiments, knows what it means when people cry into their pillow at night. It doesn't happen every night anymore but every now and then I can still hear him sobbing in his room.

Of course I feel sorry, yet not guilty. It wasn't my fault after all, that he lost her. Little did I understand at this point. And some things are still a mystery to me, now that we are a couple. Sort of.

This one evening. Or rather night.

We were sitting in our chairs, breathing heavily and laughing. Mrs. Hudson was confused. After we entered the flat like we've been chased by killers it must have had a strange touch seeing us giggling like school boys. Of course she did not understand that those moments made our friendship. Escaping danger that close and enjoying the fact that we just almost died. Together.

"You boys madden me. How can you be so careless? I always fear the day, you don't make it back.", she was mumbling while leaving us alone.

"That won't happen, Mrs. Hudson.", John yelled hardly moving his head to the door. His eyes were fixed on me and he was still trying to calm his breath.

"Not as long, as I have you as my backup.", I added rather in a low voice and smiled pleased.

"...and vice a versa of course."

This moment he almost jumped out of his chair, his face in terror. He left for his room without a further word, closing the door tightly. Even though I could hear him break down, I was too startled to move to his door and demand entry. I did not understand. This might have been one of the rare moments, where Johns head was working way faster than mine.

In this night.

Our night, as I like to call it now. It gives us both a bitter smile.

It felt strange. I sat there and my mind was simply going nowhere. Usually I run through my mind palace but this time was different. I felt like stuck in front of a wall. I even surprised myself when I found my face in front of his room door. I can't remember when I left my chair, nor do I know how long I've been standing there without saying a word. Just with my hand on the doorknob. I could not hear him anymore. No sobbing, no rustling clothes. Not even the door made a sound, when it swung open under my hand. He did not lock himself in. Why should he? I usually don't follow him.

Thinking about it now just seems like a very strange dream. Me being totally out of character. But I guess that's what happens when you really like someone. It changes you without yourself even noticing.

So he was there. Lying on the floor. He must have fallen asleep. Our day was quite exhausting after all. I was relieved somehow. Maybe because he did not see me following him. I left the room again. Actually I did not enter it at this point. I went to the bathroom and took a shower. There was nothing to worry about, right?

Wrong.

I was so wrong and I knew it. Still I was confused that the picture of him lying there on the floor, all dressed and with clear signs of tears in his face did fill my entire mind. Somehow it was agitating. The longer I knew he was lying there, the worse I felt. Again I have no idea how much time passed with me in the shower. I just know that in the end I jumped out of it, wrapped myself in a sheet and went back to his room.

## Kapitel 2: One night, one bed.

He had not moved a bit and it freaked me out. Tiptoeing I entered his room, closing the door behind me very carefully. I checked his pulse and breathing for no reason. At least I don't see the reason behind this behavior but in that moment I was clearly out of my mind. As I said, the day was exhausting. And believe me my next move was even stranger for I doubted myself in this very situation. I carefully lifted him up and onto his bed and, after I took off his shoes, I put myself to sleep next to him.

Not a second did I think about leaving the room again. I knew I was right where I wanted to be.

Again I doubted myself, when I woke up.

I am not sure if I really fell asleep that night, but when the sun came up and I had the urge to leave the bed, I found Johns arm wrapped round me softly. His head was resting next to mine, his nose almost disappeared in my dark curls.

I must admit it felt comforting.

But I have my habits and urgently needed to figure out what was wrong with him. Or with me. So I tried to slip away under his grip, when he murmured something in a sleepy voice.

"Please don't leave yet, ...Sherlock."

It sounded so gentle, so soft. It made me smile and I lay back again.

"Okay..."

I felt like I had to reply something yet I think it might have been a mistake.

His eyes opened wide in shock the next second.

"SHERLOCK?!", he gasped in surprise and left my in total confusion.

"What are you doing here?"

"You asked me not to leave you."

"B-bu...but in the first place? How do you get he-..."

His eyes where flying from my face over the sheet and back again, before he drew his arm back.

"Did you just sleep next to me, naked?"

There was silence in the room for a second but neither of us made an attempt to move away from the other.

"I wear a sheet."

Again not the best answer but in that moment I could not think of anything more reasonable than that. In fact I could not think of anything reasonable at all. I could see his pupils widen, as he looked at me, felt the pulse on his arm that was just slightly touching mine between us and of course I did notice the red on his cheeks that darkened even more when he took a second gaze. Yes, I saw the facts and still this one time I was doubting my own principles.

John could not possibly have any deeper feelings for me.

And yet.

I have eliminated the impossible and whatever remains, no matter how mad it might seem, must be the truth than.

"How did I get into my bed?"

"I carried you"

"Why?"

"You can't walk while sleeping."

"No, I mean why did you enter my room to do this?"

I hesitated for a moment even though the answer popped up in my mind in an instant.

"I was worried."

He laughed shortly and turned his head towards the ceiling. I like it when he laughs. It makes me happy in a very strange way. But this time was different. His laughter sounded so full of questions. And when he looked back at me I felt very uncomfortable. Almost insecure.

"What did I do wrong?", I asked slowly but he just shook his head and kept on looking at me.

There are many people who keep their habits and nature a secret even before my eyes. But John had never been one of them. I could always read him. When all deductions failed, looking at him was usually the proof that I still have my abilities. But in this very moment his face was a mystery to me. And yet this situation was strangely familiar.

"What?"

I demanded an answer. An explanation but all he did was wrapping his arm around me and closing his eyes again.

"Never change, Sherlock. Will you do that for me?"

It was not really a question. It turned out to be more of a promise. But for that moment I kept on being confused.

## Kapitel 3: the morning after

I did not move until he finally lifted himself on his elbow. I had my eyes open anyway so I immediately caught his look.

"You still don't understand, do you?", he asked in a mocking tone. His look was fixed on me when he slightly shook his head.

He was right.

I did not understand.

Ever since Moriarty appeared, disappeared and reappeared I was distracted. I had only few moments where I was bored enough to maybe think about feelings. He kept me in this world of unsolved crimes in a very pleasant manner. Pleasant for me alone since I misread all the signs John or other friends carried towards me. But there was one place where the consulting criminal could not reach me.

It hit me like a train on full speed. The answers to a lot of questions. Why did John behave that way? Why didn't I notice earlier? Why does the matter of Moriarty did not reach me here? Not in the arms of my dearest friend?

Now it was me closing my eyes smiling and leaning back into the pillows. It was not really that I did not know. I did. But it was until now, that I kept that particular door in my head closed. The door that I slammed behind me, when I shoot Magnuson. When I closed my own case, before I had solved it. All this years I was ignoring the facts. And in fact saving myself the pain.

I felt a kiss on the forehead and after that John leaving the bed. I took a deep breath when I turned to se side, pressing my nose into the pillow.

"You know, the thing with the sheet can be quite disturbing."

He saw it in an instant. That I started to understand. John wasn't stupid after all.

"Going for a shower now. I feel terrible. I might get to old for the chasing-criminals-game."

He earned himself a soft laughter. He wasn't to old, nor was he in bad shape. I guess he just needed an excuse to leave me alone. Or rather to be alone. I did not follow him, but got myself out of bed and into my chair in the living room. Without changing from sheet to clothes. When he came out of the bathroom he looked way more relaxed. His hands were sort of fighting with the edge of his jumper while a couple of water drops let themselves fall from his hair. But his face seemed very calm. So did his eyes even when he looked at the sheet again.

"How are we going to do this now?"

It was me asking that carefully while he was entering the room.

I was looking right in his eyes, trying to catch every change in his face, but it did not help me understand. Again. The lack of sentiments was my handicap in this particular game.

"What?"

He tried to sound casual and sat down opposite me. For a moment he grabbed a cup of tea, changed his mind and set it down again without taking a single sip.

"Oh don't try to fool me. I got it now."

"Do you?"

He lowered his eyebrows and cleared his throat. Then his eyes met mine again. Something in his look was saying "The game is on" but for some reason I had the feeling that it was not my kind of game.

"Don't make me say it."

"I won't. I just thought you still might have some questions."

"I just asked one."

"Yes, right. How. Shouldn't it be IF? Are we going to do it?"

Now it was me, looking at him in a rather challenging way and John turned his look down in embarrassment.

"T-that is not what I meant. Not now. I mean... I was... bloody hell."

He rose out of his chair and was pacing down between chair and coffee table. I wasn't watching him anymore. My own thoughts caught me again and while I was starting to think things through once more, he did come to a complete different solution.

"Look John, I don't know what was wrong yesterday night. I was just worried and did not wish to leave you alone. Clearly something I said reminded you of Mary. I was careless. Chose my words-..."

"Shut up, Sherlock!"

He threw himself back in the chair and leaned towards me. His eyes were as clear as they could be. No sign of fear, insecurity or hesitation. Not even grief.

"But..."

"Shut up!"

I looked at him and saw his smile. A gentle smile that was in clear conflict with his very words. He did not want me to shut up entirely but to only speak, when I figured out what to say. So I shut up and we sat there for half an hour without him changing position or facial expression.

"This was not about Mary, wasn't it?"

"Not at all."

"When did it stop?"

"I can't tell. It was more of a development than a sudden change."

"I see..."

"No you don't"

I grinned at him. He was right. Obviously. Just buying myself time again. And maybe he would let another clue slip his lips.

"Then why the crying?"

"Well it is sort of hard to realize how blind you were and slowly seeing all the signs. Especially if you see them way to late."

"The signs?"

"Your signs"

"My?"

A dry laughter slipped his lips and he leaned back in his chair again. Maybe this conversation was a little ridiculous. But then it fit perfectly with the two of us. Passing each other those looks, giggling together always careful to not let other see and still try to get caught.

"Anyway I figured it might not be to late after all."

His voice stopped my thoughts and I looked up to find his gaze not fixed on my face but rather scanning my body. It was me now, clearing my throat looking for words to say.

"So it's official now?"

His eyes met mine.

"Well, we might give it a try before announcing anything."

"I mean, you are gay."

A very heavy silence filled the room for a moment. The moment before the both of us

burst out with laughter. I have to admit I did not feel that light for a long time. It reminded me of our first case. When we were standing in the dark in front of that crime scene, giggling at each other and almost running off into the streets, so no one would overhear our following conversation. Solving this first case together. Just him and me. It felt like that, when we finally laughed together.

Things are improving really fast since that night. Since we sort of talked things over. And since... well...

After we finished laughing he looked at me in a very undefined way. I could not help myself but smile at him. No words were in my mind that could possibly explain myself. I am still not used to sentiments or expressing feelings. But John always found a way. And to finally prove to me, what exactly was going on, he just leaned forward out of his chair. Standing in front of me, he leaned slightly down. But this time he did not aim for my forehead. He had the courage to do something I was very long afraid of. Even now in the moment of understanding. But he had that courage to start it. It. Our new adventure.

When he aimed for my lips to kiss.