

Between Strawberry Cake and Coffee

Von DarkRapsody

A white envelope, the paper unusually thick and soft. On the first glance you already notice its importance and the writer wants to probably impress the receiver or already put out a statement with the choice of paper alone.

The sigil shows a simple sign he hasn't seen before, but this peaked his interest even more. There aren't many people that would send him a letter like this, with obvious importance.

Slowly he folds open the paper and it reveals a short letter, written with a soft handwriting Sherlock doesn't recognise either.

My dear friend Sherlock,

I sincerely hope you are doing fine these days. We haven't had the chance to talk for a long time now, and since i have returned from my studies abroad, why don't you join me for some coffee?

The usually place at 3 A:M this afternoon.

I await you eagerly.

Signed, William James Moriarty

"Dear Friend? Who does he think he is?" Sherlock slaps the letter on the small table next to the sofa he has been lounging on until now.

Friend...the word lingers in his mind for a few more minutes, and he just can't seem to point down how it makes him feel inside. Giving up, frustrated the young man picks up a cigarette and lights it up. The nicotine does the rest, calming him down a bit.

But he has no reason to not go to see him, especially now that Liam has returned from his long absence. If John would find out about the invitation, he would probably push him out of the door, reminding him to see his friend and not stay too much inside, brooding over the boring cases he got in over the past weeks.

"Alright then." Sherlock finishes his cigarette and according to the clock he still has a few hours. This might be the perfect opportunity to groom himself a bit and look for a suitable Shirt. Looking too fancy for this would be weird, so it has to be something simple as usual.

There it is, his trusty pair of blue pants and a fresh shirt.

Sherlock feels the anticipation rising, maybe he can squeeze out some information of Liam of what he has been up to so far. But knowing the young dashing man, he already is a step ahead of him and won't tell him too much.

But if he wants to know something, he has to get to the bottom of the mystery and satisfy the urge for knowledge. And this is the perfect opportunity.

Standing in front of the café door, Sherlock feels a bit weird again. Is he already here or should he just sit down? The doorbell rings his arrival to the staff. A waiter comes rushing over, greeting him with a small curtsy and shows him the way to an unseated corner.

Waiting for him is it then.

"Do you want to order something?" asks the waiter, a woman in maybe her twenties. Her hair comes loose and she seemingly has worked for some hours here already, her forcing her posture and facial expression to be friendly and excited.

"It's alright, I'm waiting for a friend."

"Alright then, i´m going to return later again."

Sherlock looks outside the window, on the sidewalk people pass by, chatting and not minding him behind the window at all.

"Hope you haven't had to wait too long." Suddenly a calm voice startles him from behind.

Turning around, a very familiar soft face is smiling at him.

"Good day to you, Sherlock Holmes." Slowly he takes off his hat and sits down in front of him on the small corner seating.

"Your invitation was quite surprising and unexpected." he answers and just can´t help to not look at his face, framed by light blonde hair.

"I just thought about meeting my friends once i returned here, and you are one of them."

The word "friend" always seems to hit him a different way. But still he can't point down what it is.

Liam waves to the waitress, that comes over quickly, a tray in her hands.

"Do you already know what you are going to have, Sir´s?" she asks calmly.

"I would like one of your strawberry cakes and a cup of your Irish Coffee."

"And what about you?" the woman turns around to him.

"For me a black one." She notes down the order and leaves quickly again.

"So, what have you been up to?" asks Sherlock, folding his hands and resting his chin on them.

"This and that, I had a few presentations about various math topics at a university, and helped the students through the weeks. I was replacing the teacher, since I know the headmaster and he asked me to lend a hand." Liam explains to him, his red eyes always focused on him.

Huh, so nothing else. Knowing that there is something different behind this calm posture and the dark red eyes, still piercing him, always leaves him thinking that there must be a different reason he was gone for a few weeks. But it seems plausible, Sherlock himself met him teaching at a University once too.

"What have you been up to?" Liam asks back, still not averting his gaze.

"This and that, I had a few cases but it was nothing major nor interesting. I don't want to find some old boring lady her dog again or some child running away from home. But you know Wattson, he always pushes me to take up these mundane tasks." Sherlock lets out a frustrated sigh. It was some terrible boring weeks, but with Liam back that changes for the better.

Liam stops looking at him and observes the passers-by. His side view is beautiful, the sharp chin and perfect nose, the hair softly curling around his cheek bones...

Why the hell is he staring at him again? The black haired man reminds himself to be a bit less obvious and looks around the café.

Almost every table has some guests seated, one pair of guests having a heated discussion at the tables in the back. The ladies hair is styled up so ridiculously, it reminds him of a birds nest that must fall down any moment.

"Here is your order, sorry for your wait!" The waitress returns once more, putting down a piece of delicious Strawberry Cake and two cups of Coffee.

The aroma is just the perfect thing right now.

Liam forks up a piece and slowly lifts it towards his mouth. So slowly, and entrancing...

Sherlock hides his face behind the coffee mug and takes a sip. The hot fluid wakes him up again and reminds him to remain the cool detective on the outside.

"Do you want a piece? You are eyeing it already and I don't mind sharing it with a friend."

"Ahhh, no thanks, what are you thinking?!" quickly waves off his offer. Liam takes another bite, this time looking at him with a sensual look in his eyes.

"Haha, thanks for the offer, I'll take a piece with my spoon."

As he does so, Liam doesn't avert his gaze for a moment. Sherlock feels an unusual sense of dread.

"It's good, isn't it? This is a wonderful place to go for cake, and that's why I invited you over here." he explains and takes another bite.

"Y-yes, it's a good choice. Very...interesting guests too." he quickly takes over a glance at the arguing couple with the woman and her weird hair, and yes, they are still arguing.

Liam follows his glance, chuckling quietly.

"They are often here, always flaunting weird headdresses and getting into unnecessary arguments." he explains to Sherlock.

"Oh, well if that's so." They both drink their coffee and silence falls over the table.

What to say now? Doing small talk is absolutely not his strong suit.

"How are your brothers doing?" Wow, great. What a topic to come up with, smart detective wonder of London, Sherlock Holmes!

Liam simply shrugs. "Oh, they're doing alright. Everyone had their business to attend to these days."

Sherlock wants to ask what kind of business, but holds back his question.

Liam finishes his cake and cleans his face with the napkin, then smiling at him with his usual smirk. "You should have the strawberry cake too next time."

"Yes, next time I will make sure to remember what you told me."

Another sip, another moment.

"I'm sorry, smalltalk is...exhausting." Liam draws lines on the table, for once avoiding his gaze.

Sherlock is surprised, but hides it behind a cocky smile. "Good to know there is something you aren't super good at."

"Am i really good at so many things?"

"Maybe?"

Their exchange comes to a halt again. This is awkward.

"Would you like to come over for a game of chess next?" the young man asks him directly, looking at him again with his entrancing red eyes directly into his.

Last game of chess was like a war between two masterminds, but he really enjoyed having someone like-minded and equally smart on the other side of the chess board.

"Sure, I really enjoyed the last time. But i'm going to win this time." Liam chuckles and shows his almost arrogant smile to him again. "We are going to see about that. Try

me, Mister Sherlock Holmes.”

Sherlock laughs it off, then takes another sip of the coffee. “Maybe you can teach me some of your smart moves too. You always seem to be one step ahead of me.”

Liams facial expression changes slightly. “Oh, you think so? Hmm...”

“I don't hold back against you in any way, maybe that's it. Unless you want me to do so.”

The young detective waves it off. “Go all the way against me, i want to see your true potential.”

“My true potential? Hah....alright.” They look at each other, both sure of their mental skills and eager to test it against each other in another session of chess.

The coffee slowly gets colder, so Sherlock drinks it quickly and puts down the empty cup.

This might mean that their meeting is over? Now that they're both finished with eating their order.

Suddenly Liam takes his hand, softly places his on his own. He stays that way for more awkward seconds.

“Uhm...”

“You're interesting and I like you, Sherly.” Suddenly the mood changes between them. Trying not to look flustered he just smiles weirdly.

As quickly as the moment happened it already ended again. The blonde man in front of him removes his hand and puts on his hat.

“It was very nice to meet you again, we should have more pleasant meetings like this.” Liam smiles at him, this time sincerely.

“Alright, next week I will take you up on the offer of some chess.” Sherlock answers, putting the money for both of their orders on the table.

“Thanks for paying, you're a good man Sherly!” The “Sherly” seems this time more teasing than anything, but before he can complain, the man has already left the booth and went to the door. The doorbell rings again.

“You damned man, leaving me behind like this?” Sherlock grabs his jacket and grips it hard, leaving the café as well. Outside is no Liam in sight anywhere, he must already have walked quite a bit off.

He managed to throw him off guard, look all the time fully knowing about his appeal to him and using it against him. But he can't complain about their meeting either, it made him happier than he likes to admit.

A breeze picks up, blowing through his hair. Maybe these feelings inside him are a bit too extreme for just meeting a fellow friend, aren't they?, he wonders. But what does he know of love?

Sherlock turns around, hands in pocket and walks towards his home. Next week he has to make sure about this and get Liam out of his shell too, unwrapping him and lay bare his true self. With a bright smile on his face he picks up the pace.

“Yes, show me all of you, William James Moriarty!”