

Coda: Heap earth upon it

by mazaher

July 7th, 2011

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Summary: A visitor and a gardener, on a rainy, early summer evening in Kensal Green Cemetery, London. Somebody has died. Who?

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This addition to *Of bees, and needles, and scalpels, and ghosts* issues from two separate sets of reflections.

One relates to an email discussion with athens7 about Sherlock as asexual vs. demisexual + mildly Asperger's.

The other comes from a train of thought initiated by irisbleufic's generous comment about *Of bees...*, which made me think about what can be said to constitute a good enough ending (opposed to a conventionally happy one) in real life vs. in fiction, and also about how important it is, turning the improbable accident of having been born into a story-- a true, meaningful one.

Many thanks to the both of you, then, for the gifts of your attention and of your writings. I raise a goblet of Kwak and drink to your health.

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NdA:

-- The title is the last line in Oscar Wilde's sonnet *Requiescat* (1881).

-- *Ave atque vale* are the last words in *Carmen CI* by Gaius Valerius Catullus (ca. 84-54 BC).

-- *Amor omnia vincit* is so worded in *Eclogue X* by Publius Vergilius Maro (70-19 BC); *improbis* is referred to *labor* in his *Georgics*, book I, but often it gets switched on purpose to the end of the former phrase, making for "self-willed Love overcomes everything": demanding, unreasonable, compelling, impudent, rule-breaking love.

-- The lilies on this real grave have been shamelessly stolen from Sherlock's fake one in the intense, touching story *As The Days Keep Turning Into Night* by yourebrilliant, at <http://bbcsherlock.livejournal.com/193676.html#cutid1>.

-- Credits for the he image below: Wikimedia Commons, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki,Kensal_Green_Cemetery_view_December_2005.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kensal_Green_Cemetery_view_December_2005.jpg), Creative Commons license;

-- Unbetaed and written in haste, because I'm more busy than I'd like to be at this time of year... but I don't like re-heated soup, so here it is, hot from the pot, for better or worse.

-- Additional note at the end.

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A tall man under an umbrella is standing in the rain in front of a recent grave behind the Anglican Chapel, where Terrace Avenue begins to gently curl around the Inner Circle. A black Bentley is waiting a hundred yards away, idling.

He was a good man.

There is something wrong in younger people dying. It doesn't feel right, being older and left behind.

So much remains hanging.

Unsettled arguments. Untold affection.

*Death is so *final*.*

The visiting time has passed, the Cemetery is closed, but still he doesn't move.

He stands at attention, bowler hat hanging perfectly vertical from his left hand parallel to the immaculate crease of his trousers, limbs fastidiously composed inside his Savile Row suit.

His bone frame is big, and he probably looks rather less lean than he actually is.

It was such a good ...partnership. Sherlock had seldom reached a sufficient level of intimacy and trust with anyone for his sexual drive to surface. Much less the redoubtable tangle of emotions we use to call love.

Sherlock had been clearly famished for love, whatever his status re: sex. But those who had been willing to love him, one way or another, seemed to invariably expect sex from him much sooner than he was ready.

They frightened him.

John took things slowly, inching his way toward contact like one would friend a stray cat.

You don't move toward a stray cat, you don't stretch your hand, you don't even look. You merely make yourself present, part of the place, offering food and water (tea) and leaving the door ajar for access to the warm spot on the other side of the bed...

Until one day the cat rubs on your shin and you can crouch and -- always provided you don't look-- rub one fingertip between ears or under chin in return.

The rain becomes heavier. The light is beginning to fade. He must be catching cold in this dampness.

Nobody knows what really has been going on between them.

If there were lots of snogging, periodical bouts of enthusiastic lovemaking, and maybe John occasionally making out on the side with some girlfriend-with-benefits... with Sherlock's blessing of course.

Or of they were comfortable enough in that cocoon of unresolved tension, the words unspoken, the touches delayed.

It doesn't matter, actually.

Love is so much more than sex.

He shakes rain from his umbrella, and the engine stops. The chirp of blackbirds seeps into the sudden silence.

There is something highly irregular in the sight.

Wrong hour for a visitor.

Wrong place for a Bentley.

Wrong weather for the season. Why all these tears?

None of my business. I'm only here to weed along Central Avenue.

Power. Freedom. Love. Sherlock was wise enough to choose freedom, and love was given him freely on top of that. He got the better bargain.

The tall sad man bends and stretches a gloved hand to rearrange the white lilies in a vase, in front of the Parian marble obelisk. Satisfied with the result, he straightens back to attention.

Some things (not dull, not boring) do not stop or end or finish just because of a comparatively trivial accident like death.

Moriarty doesn't have that much influence.

This story (their story) could never end because of him-- not if the both of them had survived, not if both had died. Not even as it is, with only one of them alive.

*It's the old amor omnia vincit, after all, even if amor *is* often improbus, and victory can taste as bitter as tears.*

One half of my brother's heart is buried here. The other half lives on. Ave atque vale.

I don't mind the rain. When it rains, I can see things nobody else can see. Snails uncurling and making their way along the corners of gravestones. Magpies chasing turtle doves. Hedgehogs searching for berries. Earthworms stretching and contracting, clitellum sliding forward, body following, athletic, determined. This strange man who now bows his head in a final greeting, adjusts his hat carefully on his head, and strides toward the car, athletic, determined.

He folds his umbrella, steps inside.

The engine revs up.

Very slowly, they drive away.

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Additional NdA:

Mycroft often comes across as possessing (or being possessed by) a rather monumental ego. But I realise while proofreading that in all this admittedly short story, he never spells the word "I", not even to himself.

And no, I don't feel guilty for virtually comparing him to an earthworm.

I *like* earthworms.

They're beautiful, and they do a great job, although hidden from the public eye.