dream on of bloody deeds and death

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by juette

Juette awoke sweaty and shivering in the middle of the night. It took a moment for the haze of sleep to clear from his mind and for him to figure out where he was: home, in bed, *safe*.

He put a hand on his chest to feel the hammering of his heart. He tried to breathe slowly and evenly to calm down — he knew he'd only had another nightmare, but something compelled him to check it had really all been in his head. He turned over, sitting up to check on Ianto.

The man was laying on his back, and he seemed so pale and immobile in the low light that he looked almost identical to the visions still dancing behind Juette's eyelids. It brought him right back to that night, that night Ianto had been laid lifeless on a red sheet amongst hundreds on the sports hall floor — that night he'd lost everything.

Panic surged through him again and he shook Ianto's still body.

Ianto opened his eyes.
"Juette?" he said, brows furrowed, voice rough from sleep.
- "Ianto," replied Juette in what sounded more like a whimper than speech.
It took Ianto a minute to wake up enough to understand what was going on. "Did you have a nightmare?" he asked softly.
Juette nodded frantically. Ianto sat up as well — slowly, as to not get light-headed — and gently pried Juette's hands from their iron grip on the bedsheets. The man startled almost imperceptibly at the cold touch of Ianto's fingers.
"What happened?"
- "You were there," said Juette, and despite not usually showing much of his emotions, the panic was clear in his voice. "You were there, and you were— it was— I don't—"
He sucked in a shaky breath, and Ianto stroked the backs of his hands with his thumbs until Juette had regained his composure enough to continue.
"You were— dead," he said, very quietly, because speaking of it made it real, "again."
Ianto nodded solemnly. It wasn't the first time Juette had nightmares about this, and it certainly wouldn't be the last — the memory haunted his mind just like that of Canary Wharf haunted Ianto's.
"It was just like being there again, just like it," Juette continued. "It seemed so real, I thought — I thought—"
- "I know," Ianto said softly.

He was about to take Juette in his arms, but instead he took one of his partner's hand and placed it on his neck.
"It's alright now," he said. "I'm right here."
Juette stood still for a moment, focusing on the pulse he could feel right underneath Ianto's skin. The rhythm was irregular — had been ever since Ianto had first re-opened his eyes after that fateful day — but slower than Juette's own panicked heartbeats, and it grounded him, allowing him to calm down somewhat. Ianto was here. Alive. Different, but alive. Okay.

He took a deep breath, and let his hand slip from Ianto's neck down his back in a makeshift hug.

Ianto hugged him back then, gentle as always, and started rocking back and forth, knowing how soothing the motion was for his partner.
"It's alright," Ianto said once again. "It's alright."
- "Alright," Juette repeated. "Yes." He already sounded more like his usual self again.

Ianto absentmindedly kept up the repetitive movements. He couldn't help but feel guilty everytime Juette woke from such a nightmare: he knew it was all his fault. He'd wanted nothing more than to protect his partner, and he'd given his life to do just that — yet now he had to live with the consequences.

"I'm sorry," he blurted out.
Juette didn't reply, instead clinging a little harder to his boyfriend.

Whether he knew the real reason for the apology, Ianto couldn't tell.

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