

A woman's touch

by mazaher

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*I find Molly Hooper extremely difficult to write. She's almost completely opaque to me, despite the fact that, yes, I've been there myself. This 221B is my attempt at ...sympathy? Initially, it should have been part of The empty time, but I realised that it didn't really fit. Truth be told, *that* version reflects my opinion more faithfully. I can't see Sherlock's attitude toward Molly as anything else than basicall exploitative, although I don't think he's doing it on purpose; it's just how he is. Nobody's perfect, and Sherlock arguably less than most. So, this is more or less wishful thinking on my part. But so be it, because we love him all the same.*

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St. Bart's, night, 4:32 hours after The Fall

"You said 'Mother'. I heard. After you fell."

"Oh, did I?"

"She must be quite out of the ordinary. With two sons like you."

"She's rather ...formidable."

"You miss her a lot, don't you?"

"Hm-mmm."

"Well, I'm not her. But time and again you may need another point of view on things. A woman's. No strings attached. Because yes, I love you, and I hope you will not disappear from my life --not now, not ever-- but I'm not in love with you, not anymore. You're going to be very busy for a very long time, and anyway your life is with John. I can't afford being in love with you. Not if I want to be ...someone, at the same time. This is what I can offer, and it's for free. If you ever want it, I mean."

Sherlock watches her. Molly feels herself blush.

"You are more than a bit extraordinary yourself, you know that?"

"Not quite, I don't think."

"But you are. I've received all kinds of offer from all kinds of people, but this is the first time I've ever been offered anything truly for free. Thank you, Molly. I'll keep it in mind."

"You're welcome."

Molly turns quickly. For free, she said. She meant it. Staring isn't contemplated. She'll think it over, later. In bed.

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