

The
Great Sex
Olympics
of 221B

By XistentiaAngst

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Forward

September, 2013

This work is a fan fiction story for the BBC TV show “Sherlock,” said show written by the brilliant Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat and starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman. Although Holmes and Watson have had many incarnations, this particular story, set in modern day, is a direct descendent of Gatiss/Moffat/Cumberbatch/Freeman.

The Great Sex Olympics of 221B was originally published on archiveofourown.org under the pen name XistentialAngst in the summer of 2012 and has since become, I flatter myself to say, something of a classic of Sherlock fan fiction.

In every good story there is some inherent challenge or obstacle to overcome. In the case of the Watson/Holmes characters, I find it fascinating to speculate what it would take for a man who is straight and a man who has rejected sex completely to discover that their friendship could have a physical component, that agape could become eros. This story is one possible answer to the question: what would it take?

I want to thank the Sherlock/Johnlock fan community for encouraging my work and giving me the motivation to write prose professionally again after a number of years spent doing other things. At the time I compiled this ebook, this story had 48,000 hits, 1659 kudos and 609 reviews. Your comments and support have meant a great deal to me.

The original posting, and those reviews, can be found here:
<http://archiveofourown.org/works/477669>

This ebook version has been slightly re-edited and illustrations imbedded.

Disclaimer: I do not own these characters. This ebook is available for free, and I make no profit from its publication.

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Summary:

John Watson thinks Sherlock Holmes should admit that he, Watson, is more of an expert on sex than Sherlock is. But Sherlock refuses to concede the point. He comes up with an experiment plan that will resolve the issue. The results will determine who wins the prize. But sometimes even the best thought-out scientific study has unexpected consequences. Word count: 58,600

Warning:

This work of fiction is very sexually explicit and depicts sexual acts between m/f and m/m characters. If that makes you cringe, please depart posthaste.

Notes:

This story sets Sherlock and Watson in modern day just like the BBC Sherlock series. The story takes place about a year after Watson moved in with Sherlock Holmes, and a strong friendship and working partnership is in place. This story presumes Watson is straight and Sherlock is celibate.

While this story does have John and Sherlock with other partners, it is *very much about their relationship*; how they egg each other on and support each other when things get to be too much, and about how they come to see each other as more than the labels they'd assumed were true (eg 'asexual', 'straight'). Ultimately it is that redefinition that allows them to broaden their own relationship.

And now... let the games begin...

CHAPTER 1: The Challenge

The door to the upstairs flat at 221B Baker Street crashed open, and Dr. John Watson strode in. His attention was completely caught up in the argument he was having with his flatmate, Sherlock Holmes. The detective followed on his heels. Neither of them paused their bickering in the slightest as coats and scarves were removed and hanged, John kicked off his shoes and set them neatly against the wall, and then moved into the kitchen to put on the kettle. Sherlock stayed on his heels, determined to get the last word.

“The victim was no longer interested in her husband sexually; she was bored. Hence the signals she was giving out at her office that attracted her killer.”

“And you deduced the fact that she was bored with her husband, sexually, from a seat imprint on the far end of the couch,” John shook his head, frowning.

“That and they’d been married five years. Statistically--”

“She wasn’t a statistic, Sherlock, she was an individual. Sex doesn’t have to be boring after five years.”

“Perhaps it doesn’t *have* to be, though I could argue the point. But statistically—“

“All I’m saying is, there’s no way you can *be sure* that was the case -- either by the fact that they’d been married five years, or by the fact that she sat at the end of the couch. There was a side table there – a lamp and someplace to sit a drink. That’s comfortable. That doesn’t mean they didn’t have a hot time in bed.”

“Why would you assume that they did?” Sherlock countered, annoyance creeping into his tone. “*You* think about sex all the time, so you assume that everyone else is as obsessed as you are. That’s not deductive reasoning, that’s subjective thinking.”

The kettle boiled. John stood on tiptoes to get 2 mugs and put them down on the countertop harder than necessary.

“Thank you, Sherlock, for deciding that I don’t know how to think objectively, that I just paste my own preferences on everything like a five-year-old. After all, it doesn’t matter that I’m a doctor who has seen *hundreds* of patients who, you know, have sex lives, or that I know a hell

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of a lot more about sex than you do experientially. None of that matters because I'm just an idiot, right?"

Sherlock leaned against the counter and scowled. "Your medical practice does not specialize in sexual functionality."

"No, but I've spent a great deal of time practicing as a GP, and I treated a lot of frustrated men in the Army. Believe it, the subject comes up!"

John thrust a mug of tea into Sherlock's hands and went to have his own tea in the living room. He sat in his chair. Sherlock followed.

"You may know something on the subject," Sherlock conceded, reluctantly. "However, it does not follow that you know more than I do."

"Of for --! It would kill you, wouldn't it?" John said, in exasperation, "to admit that there might be just *one thing* I know more about than you. Why is that? You don't have a problem listening to what I have to say about the corpses, from a medical standpoint."

Sherlock snorted. "Which, generally speaking, are things I already knew."

Sherlock realized immediately that he'd said something Not Good. John went pale. His chin jutted out in that stubborn way of his and his eyes narrowed. "Right, then. Thanks for confirming that it's a complete waste of my time to go with you on cases."

"John," Sherlock said hurriedly, "Even if I usually know as much or more about the corpse than you, your presence and your medical degree have a certain weight with Lestrade and the crime scene staff that my words alone do not. That's quite useful."

"You are such a bloody arrogant git!" John said, with no trace of his usual affection.

Sherlock tried once again to back pedal. "There are sometimes things you notice about the body and about the scene that are useful to... trigger ideas. I've told you that."

"Conductor of light," John said. "I'm flattered!" He didn't sound flattered.

John leaned forward and poked a finger towards Sherlock. "Listen. We all know you've got an amazingly brilliant mind. And I'm happy to admit that there's a hell of a lot that you know that I don't know. Cigarette ash, for example, poisons, the way watches look when they came from Siberia by way of Belarus."

Sherlock huffed a laugh. "You can't tell the different between Belarus imports versus, say, imports from Georgia. They're not—"

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“BUT,” John interrupted. “I don’t think it would put too much a strain on your vast ego to concede that there are at least a *few things* that I know more about than you. And sex is definitely one of them.”

John waited. He seemed to expect something. Sherlock was perplexed. “I would concede it, if it were true.”

“How can you sit there and deny it?” John said, with a sarcastic laugh. “Seriously, how?”

“John, sex is a key motivator in crime. Do you really think I’d let myself be ignorant in an area that important?”

That gave John pause. He studied Sherlock for a moment, thinking. “Reading a book about how to drive a car doesn’t make you a good driver.”

Sherlock raised a haughty eyebrow. “And swallowing up every glass of wine placed on a bar does not make you a vintner – or even a connoisseur.”

For a moment John just glared at Sherlock, his face getting red. Sherlock glared back.

“Sherlock,” John said in a voice that was so calm, it was chilling. “You don’t *like* sex. You don’t *have* sex, as far as I can tell. Trust me when I say that you are *not* an expert on sex.”

Sherlock rolled his eyes. “If I didn’t pick up my violin again for ten years, I’m quite sure I would not have forgotten how to play.”

“Ten years?” John asked, with raised eyebrows.

Sherlock blushed, his porcelain cheeks pinkening. Then he blushed harder in annoyance at the tell. “It was just an analogy. I am in no way implying that it’s been.... that’s hardly relevant.”

“Well, Sherlock, here’s what I have to say about that,” said John with a smug smile. “I’d say that if you hadn’t felt any desire to pick up your violin for ten years, then perhaps you’re not very bloody much of a musician! And if you had a case which involved a compulsion to play sheet music, perhaps you’d be well advised to listen to someone who--”

Sherlock gripped his head with both hands. “Stop it! Stop! These bad analogies are rotting my critical thinking! Let’s stop talking around it, shall we?”

“Fine,” John said.

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“You think that because you try to shag every woman you meet, that gives you a level of authority on all things sexual that should supersede mine, that I should ‘bow to your wisdom’ on such matters.”

“*No*,” John said, exasperated. “I think that because a) I’m a doctor who has had both basic training and clinical experience dealing with sex, b) because I personally quite like it, c) because I’m personally quite experienced with it – as in *recently*, and d) because I’m quite good at it – yes, you should concede that I know more about sex than you do! Seriously, Sherlock, how is this even debatable! You’re being so childish!”

“Define being ‘good at it’,” Sherlock said with a narrowed gaze. “Every sexually active male in London is convinced he’s ‘good at it’.”

“OK,” John said, in a tone that implied he was taking off the gloves, “I get my partner off, *always*, at least once and usually two or three times. And women have told me I’m quite, quite good. And besides that -- you just know! *I know*. So put that in your violin and... er... stroke it.”

Sherlock rolled his eyes. “Please! Women can fake ‘getting off’, John. And of course they are manipulative enough to stroke your ego, and your ‘violin’ too, I’ve no doubt.” The corner of his mouth curled up in a sarcastic grin.

“I know damn well when a woman’s faking it, Sherlock, for Christ’s sake! There are -- colors and fluids and -- I just know!”

Sherlock sighed with a ‘this is so tedious’ face.

“I would have thought that, being my flatmate and all, and with all your vaunted deductive powers,” John said in disbelief. “That you would have deduced by now that I am bloody brilliant at sex!”

“John, I can tell when you’ve had sex, and what you thought of it, but unless I see your partner soon after, I can’t deduce what she thought about it, which is rather more to the point. And I rarely see the women after you’ve had intercourse. It’s not like you bring them into the living room for a post-coital chat.”

“I wonder why that is?” John said.

“And I might ask the same of you,” Sherlock insisted. “I know you’re not exactly a consulting detective, but what makes *you* deduce I have no experience with sex, or ability to perform it brilliantly, if I chose to do so?”

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"Because! Because you have displayed zero interest in it, or in attractive men or women, since I met you! And sex is like dancing, Sherlock, you have to love it! You have to *feel* it!"

"Sentimental. Twaddle." Sherlock said.

They glared at each other for a good ten minutes. But John, who had given in on so much to Sherlock, and who knew he was right, was not willing to back down this time. He leaned forward, elbows on his knees.

"Right. How much are you willing to bet that I know more about sex, and am better at it, than you?" He said in a steely voice. "Because I'll bet anything you like."

"As would I," Sherlock said, his words equally metal-encased. "But how would we judge such a thing? It's completely subjective."

"You're the scientist. If you're so brilliant, figure out a way," John said. "Meanwhile, I'll think of what it is I want to win."

"Game on," said Sherlock.

CHAPTER 2: The Plan

Two weeks later, over breakfast, Sherlock said in a neutral voice, “I have the experiment plan ready. Perhaps we could review it together tonight.”

The bite of toast John was chewing stuck in his throat. He took a big swig of tea to wash it down. “Uh-- alright. Why don’t you email it to me today so I can be prepared to discuss it?”

“It’s complicated. I’d prefer to go over it together,” Sherlock said.

“Fine,” said John.

John was working at the clinic that day, and as he left the flat and took the tube to work, he was feeling queasy from the butterflies in his stomach. He was nervous. And intrigued. And more than a little bit excited.

He’d almost convinced himself that Sherlock had forgotten about the challenge. They hadn’t discussed it again after that night. But he should have known – Sherlock would not back down from a dare, particularly not one that involved something as fun as constructing an experiment plan. What had he come up with? John was exceedingly curious. He hadn’t been able to think of very many ways they could test such a thing.

Would Sherlock suggest that they *have sex with each other*? The thought gave him the kind of rush that he might feel if a friend jumped out from behind a door and shouted 'boo' -- an immediate scream followed by a giggling thrill, almost despite oneself. He and Sherlock having sex would be... well, that would be very weird. John wasn’t gay, even if everyone seemed to think they were a couple. He liked and admired Sherlock a lot, *abnormally* a lot as bloke-to-bloke went. And he was objective enough to acknowledge that Sherlock was attractive, in his own way. But the genius was also a cold fish, untouchable. It was hard to imagine Sherlock having sex with *anyone*, even if John wanted to have sex with a man, which he didn't. How would that even... ? No, it was just weird.

He stifled a giggle. He could almost hear Sherlock's cutting voice: *Is that your penis? Really?* No, John pitied the person who tried to have sex with Sherlock Holmes. And

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anyway, how could that decide the challenge? They'd end up arguing – *you liked it better than I did; no, I did not!* And that wouldn't solve anything.

But what was the alternative? Polling past lovers? Visiting a sex lab? Taking some kind of erection suspension test? It all seemed equally unlikely and laughable (and potentially embarrassing). Still, while John might not respect Sherlock's abilities at sex, he did respect them at science, and he figured whatever Sherlock had come up with it was bound to be interesting and well thought-out.

And very possibly manipulative as hell. He had to be on guard for that. Whatever the plan was, he had make sure the fine print didn't give Sherlock the advantage.

What the hell was the plan? The nervousness took a tentative sidestep towards fear. *No, don't go there*, he told himself, *no point in freaking out until you know what it is*. Whatever the plan was, John didn't have to agree, right? If he didn't like anything about it, he could just say no.

A small voice in his head told him he'd never said no to Sherlock Holmes. He ignored it.

He should win this, and he *would*. No matter how Sherlock tried to arrange it, the fact was, John was fantastic at sex and he was pretty sure Sherlock was clueless. He was probably so clueless he had no idea how clueless he was. It was about time John taught his flatmate a modicum of humility.

* * *

That night, when John nervously walked into 221B, the 'case wall' over the fireplace had been arranged with at least 20 pages of text, graphics and charts. Sherlock was dressed in his going-out clothes—a dark suit with a blue shirt (tight, as usual) and shiny polished black shoes. As John came in, Sherlock swept towards the door with unusual solicitude.

"Ah, John, you're home," Sherlock said coolly. "Are you hungry? Would you like to order some take-away or run out for dinner before we proceed? Or perhaps you'd like some time to unwind."

John blinked at him in surprise. His eyes went to the papers on the wall. "Ah... thoughtful of you. I guess. But I can wait for dinner. I'd really like to hear about the plan. Maybe I'll just—change."

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“Of course,” Sherlock said.

John looked at Sherlock’s clothes. “Er -- unless you wanted to go out. If so, I’ll keep on my work clothes—“

“No, not I. By all means, change into your comfortable clothes.”

“Okay,” John said.

He went upstairs to his room slowly, his excitement building. In fact, he could barely suppress a shiver as he changed into a comfortable jumper. It was clear Sherlock was focused on this wager. He’d done his homework. And there had been a confidence in him. The solicitude... what was that about? John had the strange feeling it was the sort of ‘samurai bow’ one would offer an opponent before beating the shit out of him. Maybe Sherlock felt the plan was an ace in the hole.

Interesting.

John had to make sure it wasn’t. He smiled. He changed into a comfortable pair of jeans quickly and went back downstairs. He forced his anticipation to wait just a little longer as he made two cups of tea. Finally he was standing in front of the fireplace with Sherlock.

“So... what is all this then?” John asked, looking over the papers.

“Yes, well...” Sherlock cleared his throat. He was trying to sound neutral, but John could tell he was quite pleased with himself. “It was an interesting problem. How do you measure something as subjective as sexual response? I assumed neither of us wanted to go to some clinic to be poked and prodded.”

“Cheers to that,” John said, taking a sip of tea.

“Exactly. So I needed to design an experiment we could do here, in the flat. Something that would be as objective as possible, something that would hopefully not subject either of us to anything too public or uncomfortable.”

“Yeah,” said John, feeling a little bit relieved.

Sherlock pointed to the first page. It had rows labeled “Sherlock” and “John” and columns labeled “Subject A” and “Subject B”.

“The first thing that was obvious to me was that we’d have to test you and I against the same subject. After all, an individual’s sexual biases and responsiveness will clearly effect the results. So there’s no way we could test ourselves on two different people and expect the data to be at all comparable.”

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John stared at the page. “You’re saying you and I have to have sex with the same person? ‘Subject A’? But at different times?”

“Precisely,” Sherlock agreed.

OK, that was a bit weird.

“Why is there a Subject B then?” John asked.

Sherlock waved an impatient hand in the air. “Obvious.”

John noted that both Subject A and Subject B’s columns intersected with the John and Sherlock rows.

“You want us both to have sex with two subjects so you’ll have two sets of data,” John guessed.

“Precisely,” said Sherlock. “I considered adding more. And if the results are inconclusive, we can always broaden the study. But it will be a challenge enough to find two good subjects willing to participate. I think we should keep the scale like this for now.”

“I’ll say,” John muttered. “So you’re going to have to find two different woman, both willing to have—“

“No,” Sherlock said. He stared at John like he was being dim.

“What?” John asked.

“Subject A is female. Subject B is male.”

Ah, there it was; the ‘boo’ moment. It wasn’t that bad, really. Compared to, say, being faced with a gun in the face in a dark alley. John had been expecting just about anything. But seeing it actually *there* – on the paper, and in Sherlock’s ‘this is only logical’ expression, made it real. John swallowed.

“Sherlock,” he said, sounding remarkably calm. “I have never had sex with a man, so I don’t see how that can be relevant to a test about my sexual ability or knowledge.”

“John, it’s necessary,” Sherlock explained, impatiently. “We must both have sex with the same two subjects or the data is meaningless. Do you agree?”

“I get *that*, yeah,” John began, “But why a man and a woman? You don’t have to be bisexual to be good at sex. It’s not about being the most versatile.”

Sherlock rolled his eyes. “It has to be this way *because*, John, you prefer women and have never had sex with a man. And I prefer men and have never had sex with a woman. So if

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we used either two women or two men, one of us would be at a severe disadvantage. This is the only way it could possibly be fair.”

John stared at the papers on the wall, compressing his lips. *OK, ‘boo’ moment #2.*

What? It wasn’t as though the idea of Sherlock being gay had never occurred to him. It was just – shit – it hadn’t occurred to him in the context of this challenge. And it was one thing to maybe wonder about his flatmate’s proclivities, or if he even had any proclivities at all. It was another to have Sherlock standing right there saying – *I like men. I prefer to suck cocks.*

And shit, John was starting to get hard. What was that about? It was just the weirdness of all this. Talking about sex in detached manner like this, sex that *might actually happen*. Maybe he had a science kink he never knew about. And, alright, the sudden visual of Sherlock doing that. It was the shock of it.

John cleared his throat. “It seems a bit odd, though. To have a test of our sexual prowess include a scenario where both of us will have to have sex with a gender we’ll be complete novices at. That’s rather backwards, isn’t it?”

“And one gender in which we won’t. It’s actually quite elegant,” Sherlock said with a self-congratulatory smile. “After all, if you’re really good at sex, you should be able to transfer those skills to a new situation. So each of us will have the chance to show what we can do with what we know, and what we can do with something we’ve never done before. It’s perfect.”

“Hmmm.” John said. It did make sense the way Sherlock put it. But that was all theoretical. The idea of actually being naked, in a bed, with a strange man, ‘Subject B’, was another matter. One he’d have to seriously think through.

“Just to be clear,” John said, “I don’t have to agree to any of this.”

“Of course not,” Sherlock said with a shrug. “You have the option of conceding.”

Sherlock tried very hard to say it neutrally. But John heard it, a tiny trace of smugness in his voice. John narrowed his eyes.

“Well, carry on,” he said. “Let’s hear the whole, messed up rest of it.”

“My experiment is not ‘messed up’,” Sherlock said with a trace of hurt. He pointed to another page that looked like an Excel print out. It had time tables on it.

“The way it would work is this: There are four test nights. You would have sex with one of the subjects. Thirty minutes after the sex concludes, we sit the subject down to fill out a survey....” Sherlock pointed to another form that had checkboxes and looked something like a porno version of a form you’d fill out at the doctor’s office. “A week later, that same subject

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comes back and I would have sex with them. Again, they fill out the same survey upon completion. We wait a week, then repeat the steps with the other subject. The entire test will take 4 weeks.”

“Sounds reasonable,” John said, “But this should be blind. The second person to go should not get to see the results of the first person’s poll. That might give clues that would be unfair.” John was proud of himself for thinking of it. He knew something about the scientific method. He’d run studies of his own in med school.

Sherlock was studying him with an expression that was a bit... awkward. “Actually, John, I’ve given it a great deal of thought, and I think it shouldn’t be blind at all.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean that the one of us who is not performing that night should be in the room at the time the study is being conducted.”

John stared at Sherlock, trying to wrap his head around it. “*What?*”

Sherlock sighed in exasperation. “Really, how can I make it any clearer? While you are with a subject, I would be in the room observing. And vice versa.”

“No!” John said, then, “What the hell, Sherlock? Why?”

“Several reasons,” Sherlock said in the fast voice he used for deductions. “First, we both admit that sexual pleasure is extremely subjective. Even though we would be testing ourselves against the same subject, there’s no way for it to be one-hundred-percent objective. The woman might prefer tall men or a certain kind of penis or be in a bad mood one night. And certainly, the person performing will have little objectivity – though they will fill out a survey as well. No, a test of this sort requires at least one impartial observer, someone who can fill out a survey at the end as well. That third data sample is critical. And I assumed you would not want yet another party involved as the observer.”

“That—that doesn’t even make sense!” John said. “How can you impartially rate *my* performance when you’re my competitor?”

“I am capable of being objective, John,” Sherlock said stiffly, “And I’m showing a great deal of faith in you to assume that you can be objective also.”

“Nope,” John said, “No, no, no.”

OK, *this* was definitely crossing the line. It was one thing to have sex with a strange woman, and then a strange man, and to think about Sherlock doing the same – *with the same people*. It was another to be buck naked and performing, well, whatever it was he had to in order

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to win, with Sherlock sitting right there watching him, propped in the corner like some note-taking vulture.

Sherlock pressed his lips tightly together. “Perhaps Lestrade would be willing—“

“No,” John said.

Sherlock was quiet for a moment. “Mike Stamford. He’s a doctor.”

“God, no!” John said, in horror.

“John, there must be at least 3 points of data! That is the only way a clinical trial like could possibly be valid!”

John stared at the print-outs. He was feeling the chill of irrational fear but also... excited. Fuck. Sherlock! Life was never dull with him, was it?

“Think of a third party you’d be willing to accept or concede the contest,” Sherlock said flatly.

“Shut up,” John said. “Just... go on. We’ll decide at the end. No wait – you said there was several reasons why you thought we should... ‘observe’ each other.”

“Yes,” Sherlock said, with a trace of excitement. “The other reason has to do with the order in which we arrange the subjects. You are more comfortable with the woman and I with the man. So in order to be fair, we will both either go first with our ‘stronger gender’ or both go second. “

“Right,” John said.

“There are pros and cons to both. But I think the best case scenario is for us to each to go first. If you are the observer, and you see me with the man, then that will give you an advantage when it is your turn with him. You will get to see what he likes and also observe my technique. That advantage will lessen your handicap due to your lack of experience with men. And the same goes for my turn with the woman – I can observe you with her and be better prepared myself, lessening my handicap.”

It did have a kind of elegance. “God, that’s brilliant!” John said. Then he frowned. “And yet so incredibly fucked up at the same time.”

“So that’s how the test nights would run – you with the woman, then me a week later. I with the man, then you a week later. The only question is which subject is first. There might be a slight disadvantage in being the first ‘on stage’, as it were, due to natural nervousness. So I suggest we flip a coin.”

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John looked at another sheet, biting his lip. “What about time? How long will we have?”

“I thought about setting a time limit, but it would hardly do to be interrupted before the experience is complete. I thought a more reasonable criteria would be that once you or I come, it’s over, hands off. Beyond that, you can take as long as you want and do anything you want.”

John gave a tight nod. He was very good at withholding ejaculation, so he felt confident he could do whatever he wanted before coming. Not that he was seriously considering this.

“Who gets to pick the subjects?” John asked. “And, seriously, how do we find both a decent-looking man and a woman willing to have sex with both of us – not to mention put up with being watched?”

“I’ve researched several London swinger sites. We’ll have to agree on criteria, then I’ll discretely advertise. We’ll interview candidates together. We’ll both have to give a favorable vote to pass someone through.”

“Yay, that’ll be easy,” John muttered, thinking of the difficulty he had picking up a woman just for regular old sex.

“If we can’t find candidates acceptable to both of us, it’s a draw,” said Sherlock.

The reality of it was starting to sink in. For a moment, John actually saw himself, standing here looking at the graphs, talking to Sherlock about having sex, including gay sex, and watching each other having it. And to think three weeks ago his biggest problem was how to pay the rent. Suddenly, it all seemed blindingly absurd.

“I’m going to have to think about this,” John said. “It’s pretty damn strange. I mean, even you do see that, right?”

“You agree that it’s a sensible approach to determining the challenge? That is, which of us is better at sex?” Sherlock said.

John shrugged. “I... guess. If you take all the weird out of it. Which is not possible and kinda my point.”

“Can you think of an alternative methodology?”

John couldn’t. He hadn’t been able to come up with much of anything in the past two weeks. He shook his head.

“Well, then,” Sherlock said briskly. “I’m prepared to accept your concession. In fact, we haven’t even set the ‘prize’ yet. So if you choose to concede, I’m willing to simply put it behind us. You will admit that I am a better authority on sex than you, and that will be the end of it.”

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“What?” John laughed in disbelief. “No way! First of all, I haven’t said no yet. And secondly, there is no way choosing not to participate in this crazy-arsed experiment means you’re the sex expert around here.”

“That’s precisely what it means.”

“How do you figure that?”

“Because if you choose to concede that indicates that you aren’t confident enough in your abilities to win. And furthermore, the reasons for your rejection shows that your sexual template is incredibly vanilla. To be blunt, John, a sex ‘expert’, particularly one that would be useful in crimes of passion, needs to have a broader palette than that.”

“Vanilla!” John said, outraged. He turned from the fireplace to face Sherlock and took up his soldier’s stance, crossing his arms and glaring. “Oh, I am so *not vanilla*, Holmes. You have no idea.”

John’s voice was low and dangerous. For a moment, Sherlock’s smug expression was replaced by an expression John had never seen before – something a little curious and... heated. But it was only a moment. Before John could blink, or really be sure of what he’d seen, Sherlock’s snide expression was firmly back in place.

“Let me count the ways,” Sherlock said. “1) you have a problem with having sex with a man. 2) You have a problem with both of us having sex with the same person, even on different nights—“

“I never said—“

“Oh, please! It was transparent! And 3) you object to voyeurism, even by a lone individual, someone you know, someone who is also going to allow you to be the observer in turn, and who has a perfectly valid scientific reason to be there. As I said, *vanilla*. With a V, John.”

John wanted to strangle him.

“Fine!” John said. “All of it! Bring it on! If you can do it, I can do it. And you are so going down, Holmes.”

Sherlock smirked. “I’m sure that will be on the agenda, yes.”

CHAPTER 3: Defining the Parameters

Sherlock sat in his chair in his blue robe late into the night, fingers steeped under his nose. He had a three patch problem.

He'd been surprised, once again, by John Watson. He'd been certain John would not accept the experiment plan, that he would concede and this whole ludicrous challenge would come to an end.

John hadn't conceded.

Sherlock should not have pushed, should not have accused him of being 'vanilla'. Sherlock didn't want to actually do the experiment. In fact, he dreaded it. He should have manipulated John the other way, pretended like it was no big deal to give up on the whole thing. But he hadn't done that. In the heat of the moment, he'd felt *compelled*, compelled to push John's buttons, gain his compliance, manipulate him.

Why?

It was disturbing. And interesting. Sherlock so rarely surprised himself. He considered it.

Everyone assumed Sherlock was asexual, cold, incapable of being touched. Just as he was a known 'sociopath'. It was a convenient fiction. Fiction? Half-truth, perhaps. Maybe a truth whose time had come and gone. But now this 'virgin' thing was getting out of hand. To have his authority, his knowledge of crime, challenged as if he were a complete innocent, that was unacceptable.

And he particularly didn't want John thinking that. Clearly John did think that. That was vastly annoying.

Sherlock was not a virgin. He'd had four lovers in his past. The first had been Victor, a boy that he sometimes saw reflected in John. Oh, Victor hadn't been as brave as John, nor as strong and certainly not loyal. He'd been blonde and pretty, soft and sweet. And Sherlock had thought he was in love. They'd done the sorts of things teenaged boys might do, with hands and mouths, for months in secret. But the night they had finally had full-on anal sex had been a disaster. Not the sex itself. Sherlock had bottomed, coaxing Victor through it, and it had been

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rather good. But they'd fallen asleep afterwards and were found in the morning, still naked and entwined, by Victor's father. Victor's father had been enraged and Victor was humiliated. He'd blamed Sherlock for seducing him and agreed with his father's demands never to see Sherlock again. It had cut him deeply.

He'd vowed never to open his heart again.

In uni there had been Seb, an older boy who took the unhappy 'freak' under his wing – at least in private. Seb had abused him, fucked him with no preparation and no affection, ignored his calls, pretended he didn't know him in public. And Sherlock had put up with it, infatuated and stupidly eager for Seb's dribbles of attention. The three month fling had ended in pain and humiliation.

And Sherlock had vowed never to open his heart again.

In his cocaine days there had been two encounters, both meaningless one-night stands. He'd been disgusted with himself, repulsed afterwards by the sour taint of a stranger's smell on his skin, by his own weakness, by the emptiness of it all.

And then he'd just... stopped. It wasn't worth it.

And one day John had come into his life – warm, lovely, fierce, dependable John. John was straight. So even if Sherlock might have been tempted from time to time, had looked at John and wanted... things, it was never an option to seek out his flatmate's bed, his lips, his arms. And that was just as well. John would never be his, and Sherlock would not risk his heart again. Besides, he didn't need the complication. He wasn't the relationship type and his work demanded his complete and utter focus.

Sherlock had remarkable control over his body. He was able to tamp down his sexual needs, and when he couldn't, he dealt with it mechanically and quickly.

Nevertheless, he *did* know all there was to know about having sex. Endless repetition would have only resulted in more of the same. What was the point? Did the fact that he no longer used drugs make him any less knowledgeable about cocaine? Ridiculous!

But he was tired of John assuming, *hinting*, that he was a sexless creature, that he was incapable of desire. It annoyed him – no, made him angry. The experiment would certainly put an end to that.

Sherlock considered it again, deeply. He could still manipulate John out of it, if he chose to.

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But... no. He wanted to go through with it. Perhaps it was time to bring certain parts of himself back online, to refresh his experiential data. And it was, after all, quite an intriguing experiment plan.

Of course, if they were going to go through with it, Sherlock would have to win. He did nothing that he couldn't be the best at. He didn't doubt he could beat the estimable Dr. Watson. He was sure John was a kind, caring and generous lover -- in a banal sort of way. But Sherlock could do better than that. He would be bloody brilliant. He *would show* John. And if he left his flatmate a confused, melted puddle on the floor, well Sherlock could live with that.

The 'observer' bit had been brilliant, truly. He allowed himself a smile and began to strategize. For the first time in a long time, the idea of having sex sounded like... fun.

* * *

The next morning at breakfast, John had a notepad by his plate. Sherlock glanced at it as he stirred his tea.

"You have conditions," Sherlock said.

"Yes." John cleared his throat. "We need to lay out some ground rules."

Sherlock rolled his eyes. "Shocking."

"Yes, well, sorry for being so predictable. Deal with it. First rule -- no drugs or chemical enhancers."

Sherlock frowned. "Why?"

"Because this is about natural ability. Sustaining an erection for four hours chemically is not on."

"You use the calculator on your phone, John."

"Not when I'm taking a math test, *Sherlock*. No drugs. No chemicals."

Sherlock tapped his fingers on the table. "Agreed."

"Number two, no recording."

Sherlock huffed. "But, John, this is an interesting study! And data might be missed during the live performance."

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“No.” John looked at him with a steely gaze.

“We could do the blob thing over the faces and—“

“No. Having you watch me is bad enough. I’m not going to walk into Lestrade’s office one day and see him playing my arse on the Internet.”

Sherlock narrowed his eyes. “Fine. Though as a medical man, I would have expected you to be more scientifically minded. What else? There must be more.”

“Number three – from this moment on, both of us are hands off any sexual partners until the experiment is over.”

Sherlock stared at him in horror. “That’s... irrational! We have to be allowed to prepare, John. Even high school rugby players train for a match!”

“Sherlock,” John said seriously, “I am your friend as well as your doctor. I’m not going to do this at all if it means you’re going to run out and have sex with a dozen strangers to get sexed up. It’s not safe and it’s not healthy and... I just don’t want you to put yourself in that dynamic.”

Sherlock glared at him. “We’ll be having sex with a strange man and a strange woman. What’s the difference?”

“The difference is that we’ll choose those people carefully, together, and it will happen here where the other person can provide help if need be.”

“Oh, for god’s sake, John! I’m not a child! You don’t ‘need my assistance’ when you go out with your harem of boring females. What possible harm could a woman I pick up in a bar do to me?”

“Besides which,” John said firmly, “the conditions that existed when the challenge was made should be the ones under which we test – who you were that night, and who I was – not who we could be after several weeks of shagging.”

Sherlock’s eyes narrowed. “You’re trying to get an unfair advantage. You’ve been more recently in practice.”

“Yes, and that’s what I was trying to tell you *the night you agreed to the challenge.*”

Sherlock considered it for a moment. He pressed his lips tightly. “Fine. No sex before the study.”

John gave him a *oh-no-you-don’t* smile. “And just to define ‘sex’ that means no fingers, tongue, lips or boy bits near anyone else’s fingers, tongues, lips, boy or girl bits.”

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“Unreasonable,” Sherlock said to the ceiling.

“Whatever else you want to... do... to prepare, it’s fine. Just no third parties.”

“Oh, so generous of you, John,” Sherlock said sarcastically. “What else? Must we stipulate no socks in bed?”

“Three rules, that’s it,” John smirked. “And I’m sure you’d look stunning wearing socks in bed so feel free.”

They ate in silence for a time. Sherlock studied John, noting the dark circles under his eyes. John hadn’t slept well. Nevertheless he seemed remarkably calm. His hands did not shake. His appetite was not impaired.

“You don’t intend to change your mind,” Sherlock stated.

“Nope,” John said. He met Sherlock’s eyes unflinchingly, his blue eyes calm and sure. Sherlock knew that look. It was John’s completely committed gaze. John had made up his mind. And once he did, he rarely changed it.

“Interesting,” Sherlock said, taking a sip of tea.

* * *

They sat at the dining room table with Thai take-away. Sherlock had his laptop open, fingers on the keys.

“We need to agree on attributes,” Sherlock said.

“Such as?” John licked a bit of peanut sauce off his thumb.

Sherlock watched him do it. His lips twitched.

“I’m... going to post for subjects A and B on a swingers matching-making site tomorrow. We should decide what we’re looking for.”

“Right then.”

“Subject A, female. The parameters include: hair color, skin color, eye color, age, bra cup size, height, weight, fitness level.”

“What if we don’t agree?” asked John.

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“Then we’ll have to compromise,” said Sherlock in a neutral voice. “Well? What are your preferences?”

“Not sure. Do you have any?” Sherlock shrugged. “For the woman, I prefer small breasts and as fit as possible. Otherwise, it doesn’t matter. It’s unlikely I’ll be attracted to her no matter what. For the male, I have more of an opinion, so you can have more input on the female.”

“Okay,” John said, thoughtfully, twirling his fork in his Pad Thai. “So what are your preferences on the male?”

Sherlock looked down at his computer screen, lips pursed in thought. “Blond for the male. Fit, naturally. I prefer someone not as tall as I am. All those limbs. It gets awkward.”

He didn’t look up at John, but John felt his ears warming. He cleared his throat. “Actually, now that you’ve got me thinking about it, I think I have more criteria for the male as well.”

“Why?” Sherlock glanced up with surprise.

“Well, when it comes to women, I’m pretty open. Blonde, brunette, ginger, fair-skinned, dark, big breasts, small breasts... It’s all good. If you want smaller breasts, that’s fine. Any of it works for me, as long as she’s attractive.”

Sherlock studied him. “And for the male?”

John shrugged. “It’s going to be harder with the male, so it would be helpful if he were as attractive to me as possible.”

Sherlock waited, watching him. John blushed more deeply.

“I mean, he’s already going to have the same parts I have, isn’t he?” said John. “I don’t want to feel like I’m shagging myself, so not blond, if you don’t mind.”

Sherlock’s eyes narrowed at him thoughtfully. “Brunette?”

“Yeah,” said John. “If that’s... preferably. And not a big, beefy, hairy guy. Less obvious testosterone would be a plus.”

“So you want to have sex with a man who’s tall, dark, slender and fair,” Sherlock prompted, amusement in his eyes.

“That’s not what I... Shut up,” John muttered.

They looked at each other and both started laughing.

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“I suppose I can live with dark hair on the male,” Sherlock said. “I wouldn’t want to ruin your fantasies.”

“Prat.” said John. “And I’ve changed my mind. Put double-D down for the lady.”

“Now you’re just being cruel,” Sherlock said.

CHAPTER 4: Training

A. John

3 week training plan

John Watson

- 1. Masturbate daily up until final week, then refrain entirely. Wank the morning of the 2 performances to insure stamina.*
- 2. Review porn for gay oral and anal sex tips. Revise notes down to concise plan.*
- 3. Make a list of favorite techniques when with a woman and visualize.*
- 4. Alternate a five-mile run with gym visits every day but Monday.*
- 5. Drop half a stone.*
- 6. Get a good haircut week before.*

WEEK ONE:

John was in his bedroom watching gay porn on his laptop. He was watching gay porn, for the first time in his life, in preparation for having gay sex for the first time. Which he would do in full view of his male roommate. It was turning into one of those periods in his life where Irony had taken the lead and Rational Thought and Normalcy (even his and Sherlock's brand of it) had absconded together for South America.

And John Watson was going with it.

If there was one secret strength of character John possessed it was this: that when things got really hinky, he was the calm in the eye of the storm. Grace under pressure was his middle name. In fact, one might say that he was a better human being, was at his very finest, the more dangerous and dodgy things got. So after the night when Sherlock first explained the experiment plan to him, and he had been goaded into accepting the challenge, that dangerous-dodgy radar got triggered and he'd felt... calm.

This was going to happen. He was going to do this.

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In all honesty, what he felt now was an excited, nervous anticipation curling gently (and sometimes not so gently) in the pit of his stomach and balls. Well, it was hard to deny this was exciting. It boiled down to this:

He was going to get two nights of pretty much guaranteed, really very major sex, with partners Sherlock would arrange and he merely had to approve. That felt strangely liberating.

He was going to get to show off how good he was at sex.

He was going to get to show off to Sherlock.

He was going to watch Sherlock having sex.

In truth, John was bloody well intrigued, and the further he sank into acceptance of the bizarre situation -- and after all, he'd accepted a hell of a lot of *bizarre* since he'd first stood outside the door of 221b -- the more intrigued anticipation he felt.

John had known Sherlock for over a year and had never seen a flicker of sexuality in the man. And apparently, Mrs. Hudson and Lestrade, who had known Sherlock for far longer, had never seen it either -- no interest, no partner, not ever. But now John Watson was going to see that side of Sherlock. True, the situation under which he would see it was fucked up as hell, but he still felt rather privileged -- and curious. Sherlock liked men, that much John knew, but he had a hard time picturing exactly what that meant. Did he top? Bottom? Did he like giving blow jobs? Receiving them? Did he somehow manage to remain cool and detached? Was he clinical about it? Or did he fall apart in bed? Did the anti-social genius really *feel* any of it?

Maybe it was completely inappropriate to wonder such things about a best friend -- ok, it *was* completely inappropriate. But Sherlock was so damn... enigmatic, so cold and untouchable. John had to admit he was fascinated to see this new side of his friend. And John justified it to himself -- it was a bonding experience, wasn't it? It was a 'guy thing' -- sort of. After this experience, he and Sherlock would be able to talk about things like sex and girls (and boys) and wouldn't that be healthy? Wouldn't that make them better friends than ever? He could just say to Sherlock -- "hey, sick of you being a sexually-frustrated dick, why don't you go down to the pub and pick up that blond bartender and shag him?" Somehow, that felt like it would be progress.

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John browsed through the video thumbnails on the gay porn site. He was already in his stretched-out old boxers and a loose t-shirt, lube on the nightstand, cock already showing a little interest at the training session.

John had masturbated to plenty of video porn. After all, he'd been in the army. But gay porn did not sound appealing. Nevertheless, he had to acclimate himself to the idea and pick up some techniques.

He looked at blowjob video thumbnails until he found one that looked watchable. He'd start by thinking about *receiving*. There were some things he'd just have to work up to.

He started the video he'd selected. A dark-haired young man – no more than 20 – was licking at a semi-hard cock, flicking it with his tongue to bring it to life and looking up into someone's face off screen. Yeah. That was... nice. John's cock began to thicken.

The brunette tongued the head of the now-stiff cock, licking all along the underside before sucking it into his mouth with an enthusiastic leer.

John made a soft noise and squirted some lube onto one hand, anxious to get started. *Ummm. That looked like it felt really good.* He was rather fond of blowjobs and it had been a long time since he'd had a proper one.

The brunette on screen had a young, boyish face, not overtly rough or masculine, and John did not find it displeasing. He decided he could live with getting this exact blow job from this exact person, if it came down to it. Of course, getting a blow job and giving one were two different things.

And that was only the start. John would not just be giving head. No, this wasn't merely his first man-on-man encounter, it was the fucking *Olympics* of gay sex. He'd studied Sherlock's 'performance evaluation' sheet. He'd have to demonstrate good technique in manual, oral and anal sex. And when it came to anal, he'd already decided that he'd have to be ready to bottom or top, whichever Subject B preferred. After all, the goal was to have Subject B weeping over his glorious love-making. So it was his pleasure that mattered, not John's.

He wished now that he had experimented with a man or two in his youth. It wasn't that he'd been adamantly opposed. In fact he'd rather had a crush on a mate in high school. It had just never happened. Even in the army, he'd had a position of authority as a doctor and it never felt quite right to let down that barrier. Besides, there had been women in the army, and there were always the non-coms. He'd had a rep as a ladies man and he liked that.

So here he was nearing 40, starting from zero and having to perform gay sex like a champ. Another man might have crumbled under the pressure. But, in a way, it made the whole

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thing easier for John. He'd never been one to carry a day pack when he could carry a back pack, assault rifle and a 20 pound medical kit instead. He liked a challenge. He rose to the occasion. And this was going to be his first, and likely *only*, time with a man. He might as well *do it all* this once, and then it would well and truly be off his bucket list.

Not that gay sex had ever been *on* his bucket list, but, well, it would be something he could say he'd done once. Or not. Probably he'd never admit it aloud. But he'd have the experience under his belt, for what it was worth. *Been there, done that, have the t-shirt.*

And it was most definitely *not* vanilla.

John's fingers were too familiar with his own cock and too good at pleasing it. Low warmth threaded through his groin as he watched the young man give excellent head. John's cock wanted those fingers to continue, quicken, *right now*, but his mind resisted.

He stopped the blow job video, bookmarking it for later. It was good, but it was too tempting and not useful enough. He needed to push himself out of his comfort zone. He found a video of two man having anal sex. With a bit of a wince, he started it up.

Hmmm. The bottom was on his back on a bed with both knees up and bent to his chest, while the top, a man with a short buzz cut and an athletic body, was braced over him, his cock going in and out with a wet sound.

John shoved the laptop down the bed, keeping the display tilted up and got on his own knees and one elbow. He imagined a body beneath him. He made his fist into a tight, narrow channel and fucked his hips into it, matching the man's rhythm on the screen.

Mmm. Yeah. Good. He studied the 'bottom' in the video – the hairy legs and angular lines were not doing it for him. But when he pictured the young brunette from the blow job video in this position, his legs with perhaps with just a light dusting of down, the warmth in his groin increased. *Yes. Better.*

There was too much separation between the bodies on the video. That was for the camera. It would be better, wouldn't it?, to feel legs wrapped around his waist, to rest skin-to-skin on the body below. He'd had anal sex with a woman, so he understood the preparation required. This would be different though. He tried to imagine he could feel a cock rubbing against his stomach as he thrust inside.

He felt a surge of lust clench his stomach. *Yes, that's the way. Like that.* He knew how to hold himself above a woman as he moved inside her, to maximize the friction. Would it be

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similar for a man? Would it feel good to a man if John pushed his belly down onto his partner's hard cock even as he continued to thrust? John tried the motion. *Oh, god, yes. Nice.*

The idea of having another man's cock rubbing against his belly should have been a turn off, but... it was actually quite hot. John was ultimately a pleaser in bed, and he loved all signs of his partner's arousal. To have something as prominent and unmistakable as a long, thin, hard, throbbing cock pressed against him instead of a clitoris – which he could barely feel in this position – seemed like rather a good thing. Could he make his bottom come like this?

The idea of it, of the dark-haired man beneath him rutting up frantically then suddenly going still and crying out, losing control, his deep voice anguished and sobbing.... John imagined a hot splash of semen on his stomach while he was still thrusting inside and that, was... *fuck!*... good, really good. John had to stop his own hips and hand immediately to avoid coming.

He lay there, panting into the pillow, his mind hazy with endorphins and feeling quite pleased with himself. This wasn't going to be so bad. Assuming they could find the right Subject B, of course, a man who didn't physically turn John off. But he had control over that. He had approval.

As a reward for what John thought was jolly good progress, he decided to allow himself to come. He flipped onto his back, removing all his clothing impatiently. He was fully engaged now – body and mind -- in fantasizing these new scenarios. He wanted more.

He spread his legs and put on more lube. He placed his hand, open and palm down, over the overheated flesh. He closed his eyes and rutted up against his flat palm and fingers, now reversing the role he'd just played, trying to imagine that someone was above him, someone was thrusting inside him, that it was a man's lean and muscled stomach he was rutting against while the man's hard length pushed into him, stimulating his prostate. What would that feel like? John had never tried it with his own fingers. He'd had a girlfriend who had occasionally done it, but she'd never found his prostate and he'd been too embarrassed to tell her so.

His hands were already slick. He kept his left hand in place to rut against and with his right he reached back and teased. He stopped thrusting long enough to coax his passage open and inset one finger – it felt strange. As a doctor, he knew where to find the prostate. When he gently pushed against his own he felt an electric surge jolt through his penis, as if someone had just tugged on it hard. *Fucking hell!* Wow. Intense. Crazy intense.

He stopped everything for a long moment, breathing hard. He was incredibly aroused. He imagined his lover, a man, pausing above him, as if he had just gotten fully seated and was waiting to begin, pale eyes on his. John swallowed thickly.

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“Yes,” he said aloud. “Do it.”

And then he began to move, rutting up into his flattened palm and at the same time thrusting with his finger, brushing against his prostate each time, imagining a hard, heavy body, flat chest, above him. *Stomach alabaster pale and soft but the stomach muscled underneath, abs hard, bracing against my thrusts, wanting my thrusts – ‘harder, John, harder’, pale eyes – no brown; the man’s eyes were brown -- staring into his.* John wanted to kiss the man now, pull those plump, cupid bow lips down, bring the body even closer, chest to groin, all the better to rut against, to fuck that mouth with his tongue in time with the rhythm, the friction of his cock against that silky smooth skin, rubbing himself over and over while being fucked, an aroused cock deep inside him, throaty groans of pleasure in his ear, the smell of musk and sex – so good, so many sensory inputs, so goddamn *everywhere and everything and*

John came with a stifled scream. It was the most intense orgasm he’d had in months, maybe even since before Afghanistan.

He lay still for a long time, basking in the afterglow and feeling quite chuffed with himself. He’d been able to get off while imagining fucking and being fucked by a man. It had gone far better than he’d expected for the first training session.

It wasn’t until an hour later, while in the shower, that he had the niggling worry that he might have liked that fantasy a bit *too* much. Maybe it was just because it was new and somehow inherently filthy? Reality wouldn’t be like that. In real life it would be hairy and messy and awkward and possibly hurt.

John Watson would survive it and acquit himself admirably, and never care to do it again. And that was all.

WEEK TWO:

John went to the fridge to get milk for his tea. He sighed at the bottle of skimmed in his hand and poured a bit into his mug. It was better than nothing, but not by much.

“You loathe skimmed milk,” Sherlock remarked dryly, peering into his microscope. “And you’ve been working out every day.”

“Mmmm,” John said. “Wanted to get back into the shape I was in in the army.”

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“John, you do not need to lose weight and your muscle tone is already far above the average male Londoner, even ones ten years your junior.”

“Yeah? Well the average male Londoner isn’t going to be seen bare-arsed in front of two strangers, god and their flatmate.”

Sherlock glanced up from the microscope then, but his eyes only flickered into John’s before his gaze went to John’s mid-section. He proceeded to observe it with an annoyed frown. “Subject B, and I dare say Subject A as well, might appreciate a little something to hang on to. Not to mention that I don’t need you fainting on cases. Don’t get too thin.”

“Says the man with the perfect body,” John snapped, feeling decidedly whingy. Low blood sugar did that to him.

Sherlock met his eyes and looked briefly pleased. Then he smirked. “I’d be reassured by the unusual number of bananas making their way into the flat and then vanishing, but since you’re not eating any other carbohydrates I think it safe to assume their destination is not your stomach.”

John turned pink. “Shut it.” He finished his tea and put the cup in the sink.

“Also, you’re beginning to smell a bit like Bananas Foster. It’s terribly distracting.”

“Going to the gym,” John said.

WEEK THREE:

John was in a staff meeting when he felt his phone vibrate in his pocket. He knew enough to turn off his audio alerts, but he was paranoid about turning the phone off completely. No telling what Sherlock would get into.

While Dr. Meyers talked on about a case of food poisoning she’d seen last week, John snuck a glance at his phone.

Good fellatio video link here. SH

John blushed and put the phone back in his pocket. He swallowed a nervous giggle. Honestly - his life!

The phone buzzed again. John resisted for ten seconds, then looked.

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Note technique involving light suction and frenulum at 3:20. Particularly effective in my experience. SH

John bit his lips and crossed his legs. He pulled his sweater further down over his lap. He turned off his phone.

Sarah snuck a worried look at him. John looked out the window.

That night, over stir-fry, John brought it up.

“Sherlock, why are you texting me porn video links?” he asked calmly.

“Why not?” Sherlock speared a piece of asparagus with a frown. “I came across it and thought it might be useful to you. Do you know, John, that asparagus contains a metabolite called methanethiol which makes urine smell particularly odiferous? It affects the taste and smell of semen as well, so don’t eat it within three days of the experiment. I’d avoid the entire brassicaceae family for that matter.”

“Yes, no asparagus, thank you, Sherlock,” John said, feeling his ears heat up. “But why would *you* help *me* train for the experiment? You’re my competition.”

Sherlock looked up at him in surprise. “I want to beat you, John, not see you humiliated.”

John’s eyes narrowed. The tip of his tongue danced against his lips. Slowly, he smiled at Sherlock, an unspoken challenge. “We’ll see who’s beaten and who’s humiliated.”

“Mmmm,” Sherlock said. His eyes dropped to John’s lips then down to his own plate. He stabbed a piece of chicken and brought up to his mouth, pulled it off with a plop, chewed.

B. Sherlock

3 week training plan Sherlock Holmes

- 1. Inform Lestrade that I will not be taking any cold cases nor anything less than an 8 for the next month.*
- 2. Invent aphrodisiac formula and consume as part of daily regimen.*
- 3. Stimulate libido using visual and manual methods. Achieve orgasm at least once daily through the conclusion of the experiment.*
- 4. Research female anatomy and make a spreadsheet of different pleasuring techniques and their reputed effectiveness [note: second-hand data an undesirable necessity].*

WEEK ONE

Sherlock leaned over the corpse of a woman, aged 23, at Bart's morgue. His latex-enclosed fingers spread her legs, lifting first one, then the other, on the stainless steel table. She had waxed not long before her death and her genitals looked particularly naked. He separated the folds of her labia carefully and used his magnifier to further his study.

He heard Molly enter but didn't look up until her coffee mug hit the floor. He gave her an annoyed glance and went back to work.

"You must be on some interesting case!" Molly laughed nervously. She grabbed a handful of paper towels and sopped up the mess.

"Must I?" Sherlock leaned in closer with the magnifier. The clitoris was really quite small, wasn't it? One might be tempted to use the word 'inadequate'. Did it shrink post-mortem? He made a mental note to look it up. Or perhaps size varied and this woman was just an unlucky specimen. More data was required.

He slid a finger deep into her vagina, probing gently. Over his shoulder Molly made a funny noise.

"You know," Molly huffed in her trying-to-be-funny-voice, "If you ever wanted to see the r-real thing.... I mean, a living one--"

"It's against the rules." Sherlock pulled his finger out and turned to look at Molly. He removed his latex gloves with a snap. "Why is your face all red?"

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“W-what rules?” Molly’s expression was stuck somewhere between you’re-taking-a-piss and mild shock.

“*The rules.* I would ask to perform cunnilingus on you, but it’s against John’s rules.”

Molly went a deeper crimson. “Oh. Ok.”

She turned and left. A few minutes later she came back. “Maybe if I talked to him?”

“Pointless. John never changes his rules.” Sherlock typed notes into his laptop without looking up. “Any more female corpses?”

Molly opened her mouth to reply but nothing came out. She left again.

* * *

Gingseng, Yohimbine, Horny Goat Weed, Fo-Ti, Muira Puama. Sherlock looked over the assembled bottles and pouches he had arranged on the kitchen table next to his Bunsen burner. They were all herbal aphrodisiacs. He’d ordered them from the internet and now was brewing a special formula of his own invention. None of them were ‘chemicals’ like Viagra, so not technically breaking John’s rules. That didn’t mean John had to know about it, and Sherlock wanted to finish before John came home from the clinic.

Sherlock needed the formula. He was waking up his libido.

It did briefly occur to Sherlock that waking himself up like this might be trouble, that it might not be so easy to put his libido back to sleep once the experiment was over. But he was a rigorously disciplined man, and it did not overly trouble him. After all, he had gone cold turkey off cocaine several times to get himself clean. He could ‘cold turkey’ sex, too, as soon as it served his purposes to do so. Right now his problem was the opposite.

It was proving more difficult that he’d anticipated to rouse himself.

On the first day of his training, Sherlock had tried to masturbate and he’d failed to get an erection. John was out and Sherlock had brought up some male-male porn on the internet. He tried a dozen videos. They did nothing for him. He could not shut off his brain, couldn’t stop seeing the technicalities of it, the blankness of the actors and thinking things like “*Who would make a video in a room with that wallpaper?*”, “*How much do they pay these actors? They’re terrible!*”, “*Look at that gluteus maximus, he’s obviously a postal worker.*” and “*Come on! I’ve heard pigs make more convincing moans than that!*”

XistentialAngst

When he finally realized he'd been analyzing the videos for over an hour and still had no sign of arousal, he got angry and turned it off.

* * *

Sherlock had been taking the formula for 4 days but with no more luck using video porn. Were the aphrodisiacs even working? He felt hot in his own skin – jittery -- everywhere but *right there*, where he needed it. He was losing precious days of training. Sherlock needed a plan B.

That night as John cleaned up after dinner – which Sherlock had not eaten – Sherlock lie on the couch in the sitting room in the dark, fingers steeped under his nose.

John, in his typical mother hen mode, had ruled out real partners. What else could he try?

There was *voyeurism* – he had binoculars, he could go rooftop surfing. Sounded tedious. He could spend hours watching parents tuck in children and old married couples hump under the covers before he found anything interesting. He could go to a *gay bar*. Dancing wasn't prohibited. He could dance, grind a bit, see if he could get an erection going and then come home alone to finish off... *Phone sex*? No, he could tell a fake even over the phone. And then he'd have to insult the stupid--

"I'm going up early," John said, pausing in the doorway to the kitchen. He was backlit there, a John-shaped silhouette surrounded by light. He looked like an army doctor turned angelic herald.

"No wings," Sherlock muttered.

"What?" John asked. "Why are you sitting here in the dark? Want me to turn on the light?"

"Noooo," Sherlock said, enunciating clearly.

John sighed. "Alright. Sorry you're in a mood. Try to get some rest."

John went upstairs.

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A half hour later, Sherlock was still listing options (up to 9 now, though 2 would not be possible without leaving the country) when a faint noise reached his ear. He tensed, listening. It came again.

Without making a sound, Sherlock slipped to his feet and thence to the door. He opened it carefully, silently, and stuck his head into the dark landing and listened.

There was the faint, rhythmic squeak of a bed spring and a barely-there moan.

Sherlock's heart rate accelerated and suddenly it was a lot more difficult to breathe. Of course, John had always masturbated, but Sherlock hadn't paid it more than cursory attention, the way he registered that John liked strawberry jam or had slept poorly. But this felt different. Very different. For one thing, Sherlock was looking to be aroused, and here was a possible means right at home. And secondly, he knew what John was thinking about. He was touching himself and preparing himself for the day Sherlock would watch him having sex with a woman and then with a man.

Sherlock held his breath, straining to hear.

Maybe John was thinking about having sex with a man right now. Was he imaging what that would be like, bending a man over a chair and fucking him? Was he thinking about how good that would feel? Or maybe he was thinking about having sex with a woman in front of Sherlock, about thrusting into her while Sherlock watched him do it. Did that turn John on?

It was definitely doing something for Sherlock. He felt a warm, heavy ache in his groin. He ran his palm down the front of his pjs to find himself half hard already. A wave of relief went through him. He hadn't realized how worried he'd been about his reluctant libido.

He moved, as silently as he could, to sit on the bottom step of the stairs leading up to John's room. He wanted to go up to the door and press his ear against it, but he was afraid of being caught. From here, he had to listen very hard.

There was a weak spring in John's bed. It was creaking rhythmically now. John was well into it. There was a faint gasp of pleasure. Sherlock gripped himself harder through his pj bottoms, rubbed. *Oh*. That felt... marvelous. *Astonishingly good*. He had a lot of sensation down there – tingling, warm, achingly sweet sensation, heavy with want. It hadn't felt this good to touch himself in a long, long time. A light sweat broke out over his body, his skin was so hot.

The formula was working.

The squeaking springs grew more enthusiastic. Sherlock could swear he heard a faint wet sound, the sound of a fast moving fist perhaps, muttered words he could not decipher.

XistentialAngst

Sherlock could hardly untie his pants fast enough. He needed... there. He stroked. *Oh. OH. God.* The pleasure of it, the tingles everywhere, the delightful ache. His erection was a good one – very hard and red. Pre-come was already leaking. He quickly lathered his palm with spit and began to stroke himself in earnest. He let his head fall back on the stairway wall and closed his eyes. Each stroke felt better than the last one, making him warmer and heavier than the one before. Oh, it had been *years* since it felt this good. Something was coiling low and urgent in his belly.

John. Sherlock pictured John in his room, on his bed. He was upright on his knees, Sherlock's mind supplied, legs slightly spread, entirely naked and thrusting into his own fist. *God, yes.* Sherlock could hear the rhythm of the bedsprings and unconsciously timed his strokes to match.

John on his knees, thrusting into his hand. Was he imagining a body in front of him? Was he imagining thrusting into a woman as she spread herself open on all fours? Did he glance towards the empty corner now and then, imagining Sherlock was sitting there, watching? Did John like that? Did it make him harder? Sherlock wouldn't have thought so, not of John. But John was proving to be far less predictable than he'd guessed. Brilliantly so.

Or perhaps John was picturing a man in front of him, was imagining himself thrusting into a tight arse. John was sturdy and strong, but a modest man. Sherlock had never even seen him entirely shirtless. What would he look like naked and aroused? What did his cock look like? What would he look like bare chested and flushed with arousal, his eyes glazed, if Sherlock turned to look over his shoulder – no, that wasn't right – when he watched John from across the room as he took a man? Fucked him hard? Showed no --

Sherlock came. He hadn't intended to so quickly, but the images in his mind were overwhelmingly erotic. He felt the orgasm's hard edge and placed his free hand in his mouth, biting down hard to stop himself from screaming. He climaxed violently, jets of semen striking his shirt, his chin, the wallpaper, the stairs. It had been a long time since he'd orgasmed, several months, and he had a lot of reserve.

Oh god, oh.... that was... good.

He panted on the stairs, rather in shock. But he allowed himself only a few moments of rest before he took off his shirt and wiped down the stairs and wall. When he slipped back into the stairwell, he could hear that John was still going strong. Sherlock might have felt a twinge of resentment about not matching John's stamina, but for tonight, the victory he'd had was good enough.

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WEEK TWO

Sherlock sat at his desk surrounded by books and bound reports. Among the works were *Master & Johnson*, *Our Bodies Ourselves*, *How to be the Perfect Lover* (written for men about women), *101 Techniques in Pleasuring Her*, a bound report on the G spot, the *Kama Sutra* and a half dozen other works. Sherlock's laptop was open to an extensive excel spreadsheet.

John stopped by Sherlock's desk, curious. He ignored Sherlock's 'go away, John' vibe. He picked up each reference source, looked at the title, flipped through it, then put it down again.

"Do you mind, John? I'm trying to work."

"All of these are about women," John said.

"Brilliant observation of the obvious, as usual."

"You're doing all this research just for one time with one woman?" John raised an eyebrow at him.

Sherlock gazed back at him, face neutral. "Intimidated?"

John's lip widened into a smile that was both dangerous and smug. It made something in Sherlock's mind whimper.

"Not at all," John said. "Please. Read every word. Mark your little columns."

He dropped the book he was holding and walked away leaving Sherlock feeling remarkably annoyed.

"I hope you're enjoying the gay porn, by the way." Sherlock said dryly without looking up. He felt rather than saw John turn. "Not quite like the real thing though."

Sherlock placed his left hand, the one facing John, on his left knee and drew it slowly up his leg, continuing until he was cupping the start of an erection in his trousers.

John made a soft strangled noise and left the room.

Sherlock smiled.

WEEK THREE

XistentialAngst

Sherlock stared at a page in Masters and Johnson's *Human Sexual Response* with intense focus. It said:

*Demisexual -- A **demisexual** is a person who does not experience sexual attraction unless they form a strong emotional connection with someone.*

It was surprising to Sherlock to learn something new about himself, particularly at his age. But it fit. Victor. Seb. His lack of arousal with strangers. The fact that porn did nothing for him. Of course, not being a person who formed any kind of emotional connection easily, he had lived sex-free. Maybe it had not been as much of a self-discipline as he'd given himself credit for.

Then there was the fact that he had succeeded in awakening his libido and had been masturbating, with intense pleasure, once or twice daily for several weeks now, thanks one stimuli – *John*.

Sherlock couldn't deny it. He no longer even needed to hear John masturbating to get aroused. He only had to think about it. Of course, he had always been attracted to John on some level, but he'd been able to ignore it before. Now that he was masturbating daily to thoughts of his flatmate, it was getting difficult to pretend the attraction wasn't there. It was difficult not to stare when John wasn't looking, to look at his hair and not want to comb fingers through it, at his lips without wondering what they tasted like, his hands, his shoulders, his arse. The desire to touch him as he walked by was getting more difficult to control. He had gotten erect just from being in the same room as John.

This was sliding into dangerous territory. Sherlock felt a sense of panic that made him slightly nauseous. He had been far better off before. He did not want a relationship. He could not risk John's friendship. He would not gamble his heart. And even if he, Sherlock, *were* willing to risk all that, it was pointless because John liked women.

Sherlock had to get through this experiment and then find a way to shut it all off again. He must. He would. Until then, he had no choice but to use the stimulation John provided to sexualize himself.

And John could never know.

CHAPTER 5: The Interviews

Londonswingtime.co.uk: Looking for Love -- females

Tall, dark and handsome male, early 30s, and attractive blond male, late 30s, seek attractive female, 20s or 30s, for casual swing. Must be fit and petite, A-cup preferred. Email photo and description.

Londonswingtime.co.uk: Looking for Love -- males

Tall, dark and handsome male, early 30s, and attractive blond male, late 30s, seek attractive, dark-haired male, 25-40, for casual swing. Must be fit, slender and not overly butch. Email photo and description.

John leaned over Sherlock's shoulder to look at the photos on the laptop. Sherlock shifted back into him, minutely, but all of John's attention was fixed on the screen.

"She's not bad," John said, pointing to a woman with thick and frizzy ginger hair, a cute freckled face and slim figure.

Sherlock huffed. "Look at that clock on the wall and the collar on her polo shirt. That photo was taken in 1998. If she still looked good, she'd have sent something more recent."

"Right. What about that brunette then? She's cute."

"Look at her mouth," Sherlock sneered. "It's not just closed, its defensively pursed. She has bad teeth."

"You don't know that."

"Am I ever wrong?"

John rolled his eyes. "*Harriet?* But fine, keep going."

Sherlock brought up another photo, this one of a woman in a yoga studio, stretching a leg up behind her back. It looked like a professional shot.

"Uh, *yeah*," John said, enthusiastically.

"You find her attractive because she's a contortionist."

XistentialAngst

“You say that like it’s a bad thing. Anyway, you said fit – she’s fit. Not busty either. And blonde.”

Sherlock wrote her contact info in his notepad. “Yes, John, I am capable of noticing hair color. We’ll see if she’ll agree to an interview.”

“I thought you might like this one.” Sherlock brought up a photo of a rather severe-looking woman with black hair and piercing eyes, bright lipstick.

“No,” John said immediately. “She looks like she should be chasing Dalmatian puppies.”

“Interesting.” Sherlock made a note in his notebook.

He brought up the next photo. The woman – girl – was very perkily wearing a cheerleader uniform, pom poms held under her breasts.

John let out a long breath. “Is that *legal*? She can’t be more than 16.”

“She *says* she’s 19,” Sherlock said, eyes flickering to her email.

“Uh, no. Not without 2 ID’s and birth certificate.” John said. “This whole thing is questionable enough as it is.”

“*Interesting*,” said Sherlock, making a note.

“What’s that website again?” John asked.

Sherlock scooted his laptop away from his flatmate’s hands. “Never mind that. Focus. That’s all the females we got today, but I just put the ad up. Want to see the males?”

Sherlock turned his head to look at John. John was close. He smelled faintly of Earl Gray tea and of the clinic, not so faintly of John. John’s tongue appeared and swept over his lips. Sherlock watched it with narrowed eyes. Nervousness? Interest? Definitely not fear.

John nodded in lieu of replying. Sherlock pulled his gaze away. He’d saved the jpgs off in a ‘subject B’ folder and he brought up the first one.

An older man, claimed 39 but more likely 42, and not bad looking. Hair dark but graying, rough stubble, business suit.

“No,” John said.

Sherlock said nothing, just made a notation on his pad and clicked the mouse.

Short, stocky, rugby uniform, latte-color-skinned, mixed Caucasian and East Indian, Sherlock surmised, boring face but attractive eyes.

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“No,” John said.

Sherlock made a note, clicked the mouse.

Buzz-cut, very muscular, wide neck, button-up shirt and khaki trousers. American. Athletic. Brunette.

“No,” John said.

A Mike Stamford look-alike but 20 pounds lighter and 10 years younger, intellectual, glasses.

John shook his head. “No.”

Black male, rather posh-looking. Jacket and tie. Arrogant face. Large nose.

“No,” John said.

“You’re not even looking,” Sherlock said, with some frustration. He couldn’t help feeling secretly pleased though. Except that it was clear John *really* didn’t find men attractive.

John rubbed at his face. “I *am*, I’m just – that can’t be the sum total of the gay male selection in London.”

“Very insightful. There are more than 5 gay or bisexual men in the greater metro area, yes. I only put the advert up today.”

John sighed, looking discouraged. “I think I need a pint.”

* * *

John was dressed in his red button-down shirt, freshly pressed, and the jeans that set off his body to its best effect – or so he’d been told. Sherlock, as usual, looked like he’d just stepped off a catwalk in a body-hugging gray suit and tight white shirt, his dark curls annoyingly perfect. He sat completely focused and unperturbed in his chair with a clipboard and pile of papers, jotting down notes rapidly.

“How can you be so calm?” John asked, pacing and wiping sweaty palms on denim.

“Why shouldn’t I be calm?” Sherlock didn’t bother to look up or stop writing.

“Well, we’re about to interview five people, hopefully two of whom we’ll be shagging in the next few weeks.”

XistentialAngst

“Would being nervous facilitate the interview process in some way?”

“No, but it would facilitate me not wanting to punch you.”

Sherlock glanced up to look at John. The doctor dropped into his chair but he bounced one foot anxiously.

“John, I’ve seen you walk up to total strangers in bars and chat them up. Why on earth would you be nervous now? These people answered our ad and they’ve seen our photos. They’re coming here because they want to have sex with us.”

“Well, two of them are *men*, for one. And it’s just... weird. You didn’t tell them in the ad that one of us would be watching. Or that they’d be quizzed afterwards. We’ll be lucky if we don’t have things lobbed at our heads.”

Sherlock snorted. “I’m sure as kinks go on a swinger site, we’re relative pansies.”

John winced. “Don’t say ‘pansies’.”

“And they can always say *no*,” Sherlock pointed out.

The doorbell buzzed.

WENDY

“Oh, blimey, you’re a fit one! Boff of yous!” Wendy tossed her long dark hair and pushed her plump and pretty chest forward. She bit her bottom lip, then ran the tip of tongue over her coral-painted lip slowly, suggestively. At noting Sherlock’s blank face her eyes shifted to John where she found a much more receptive audience. His mouth hung slack. There was a hint of drool.

“Yes, thank you,” Sherlock said, standing and helping her up by the elbow.

“Oh, yes, lovey, I likes the forceful ones. But I just got here.”

“And yet, you’re made such a strong impression. We’ll be in touch.”

“She was hot!” John protested, after Sherlock had ushered her out the door.

“I’m not having sex with Eliza Doolittle,” Sherlock snapped.

“You know *My Fair Lady*?” John asked in surprise.

“What difference can that possibly make?”

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“Seriously? Audrey Hepburn? Who cares what’s coming out of her mouth when her lips look *that*.”

“I do. She’d drive me to distraction in the first ten seconds.”

John thought about it. “Maybe she’d be open to a gag during your round. We could pretend you get off on it.” He sounded hopeful.

Sherlock glared. “As a matter of fact, a gag does sound strangely appealing at times, John, especially right at this moment. But, *no* on Wendy. You might recall that we both have veto power. *Veto*.”

“Spoilsport,” John said, folding his arms.

MIRANDA

There was a knock on the door. Sherlock strode over to open it. In the doorway was a bleach blonde, thin and excessively tan. Her eyes ran up Sherlock’s body appreciately. She smiled. “Hi. I’m –“

“Using your 18-year-old daughter’s photo on a swinging site,” said Sherlock. “Word of advice: honesty is the best policy.”

He closed the door in her face.

“Hey!” John jumped up. He glared bloody murder at Sherlock and opened the door, chasing after the sound of high heels pounding down the stairway. Sherlock could hear John’s frantic apologies and then the slam of the front door.

John’s heavy tread started back up. That tread sounded ominously threatening. Sherlock sniffed and went to put the kettle on.

“Sherlock,” John said as he entered the kitchen. He was using his I’m-speaking-softly-in-lieu-of-shouting voice. “These people are coming here at your, *our*, invitation. You *will* be polite.”

“For heaven’s sake, John. She said she was twenty-five! Does she think we’re *blind*? How can people be so stupid?”

“I don’t care.” John folded his arms and glowered. “She was wrong, but she still deserved a polite refusal. People have feelings you know, particular when it comes to sex. It hurts to be rejected.”

XistentialAngst

Sherlock rolled his eyes. "You're too nice."

"No, I'm *not cruel*. There's a difference." John strode over to the cabinet near the sink and reached up to get the mugs. His jumper pulled up, revealing the exquisite fit of those jeans around his arse and the bare skin at small of his back, honey-colored and smooth.

Sherlock's hands gripped the handle of the kettle tightly, even though the water wasn't boiling yet. He looked away. "Yes, fine, as you say. And I... I'll make the tea. Go sit down."

John huffed a laugh and shook his head, setting the mugs down. He turned to face Sherlock, leaning back against the counter. "You're backing down without a strop, making me tea, and we're interviewing candidates for sex. There must have been a genie in that bottle of wine I opened yesterday."

Sherlock barked a single deep laugh. "I'm sure you could think up three better wishes than that, John," Damn. His voice sounded deep and rough. He'd stop speaking then.

The kettle still wasn't boiling. Still wasn't. Still not. There was a saying about this, wasn't there? He'd deleted it. And the pull of John, just a foot away, leaning against the counter in those hatefully sexy jeans was dragging on Sherlock, like iron filings to a magnet. Sherlock brought up his eyes, defiantly, and met John's. For once, he didn't try to mask it and, instantly, John saw. He went still, staring at Sherlock with a little frown of confusion between his eyes. Sherlock felt a flush of heat bloom across his stomach and cheekbones, saw it answered in a flush on John's face. John licked his lips, his frown of confusion deepening. "Sherlock?"

The doorbell buzzed.

John shook his head. "Er - *I'll* get it this time," he said. "You *behave*."

MICHAEL

"So what do you do, Michael?" John asked, sipping his tea.

Michael was a very attractive and very young-looking young man with short auburn hair, a black leather jacket and jeans. He fussed with his cup, wringing it in his small, thick, calloused hands. John's eyes followed the gesture, staring at the hands for a moment before looking away, blushing.

"I'm a—"

"He works in a shop where they repair vintage motorcycles," Sherlock said in a bored voice. "Most likely in Chelsea because he took two trains to get here. The grease on his cuff is

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specially made for World War II era bikes and he has wax on his palm. He doesn't earn enough to own a bike like that himself. Obvious."

"Did you look me up or something?" Michael said warily. "I mean, I didn't —"

"Give me your real last name. I know."

"No, it's a thing he does," John said. "He reads people."

Michael wasn't convinced. He looked from John to Sherlock as if they might pull out badges at any moment. Then his face softened. "Well, you're not bad to look at, anyway. Neither of ya. Even if you are a bit old."

He looked at John as he said that. John pursed his lips grimly.

"Not that I mind," Michael said. "Not when there's the both of ya."

Sherlock sighed and tilted his head back to look up at the ceiling. You, he mouthed, so softly it was inaudible, but John could read his lips.

"Nice neck, mate," Michael eyed the endless pale stretch. "Bet you could fit something long down that."

"Yes, and exactly how old are you, Michael?" John said with a razor-sharp smile.

"Said in my email, didn't I? Twenty-two."

"Mind if I see some ID?"

Michael huffed in disbelief. "Is he for real?" he asked Sherlock, jerking his head towards John. "You two? Going to toss me out for being underage?" He snorted, "When I've got this," he gripped his crotch, "And I'm ready to fuck both of ya?"

A moment later, Michael was being hauled up by his coat collar. His feet dangled momentarily off the floor as he was tossed over the threshold by one angry army doctor. "And don't let the door hit you in the arse on the way out!" John shouted down the stairs.

He slammed the sitting room door to find Sherlock watching him. "You really should make an effort to be polite, John," Sherlock said with a smirk. "It does pain one so to be rejected."

"Shut up," said John.

LENA

“I trained at one of the best Bikram yoga facilities in the world, in L.A. I was there six months.” Lena crossed her lithe legs and smiled. Her teeth were very white. They nicely set off her brown eyes and blonde hair.

“Four,” Sherlock corrected in a neutral voice.

“What?” Lena looked at him guiltily.

“Don’t mind him, Lena.” John was leaning forward in his chair, elbows on his knees and a very avid look on his face. He shot one arm out to grip Sherlock’s forearm in a friendly-looking squeeze. Most friendly-looking squeezes didn’t leave bruises, though.

Lena watched the gesture with a small smile. “So the two of you are—”

“No,” John said, letting go.

“But it is a threesome?” Lena’s eyes shifted from John to Sherlock and back again. She didn’t look terribly put off by the idea. Or even a little put off.

John swallowed thickly. “Uh... not exactly a threesome. It’s—”

“You and John. I watch,” Sherlock finished impatiently. He gave Lena a fake smile. It was charming, but utterly fake.

Lena drew back slightly. “Oh. Is that what you do? You... watch? Because you’re terribly good-looking.”

“That’s not exactly —” John started.

“That’s what I *will* do, the first time you visit,” Sherlock said. “But then—”

John gripped Sherlock’s arm again, more tightly this time. “Lena, what Sherlock is trying to say is that this is a somewhat unusual situation. What we’d like is, well, first I will make love to you. Sherlock will be observing but he won’t be involved.”

Sherlock snorted at ‘make love’. John squeezed tighter.

“... and then we’d like you to come back, a week later, and you and Sherlock will be together and... and I’ll watch. I know it sounds crazy but —”

Sherlock snatched up a piece of paper. “Also, you’ll be expected to fill out this quiz form, after each of us.”

He handed it to Lena. John stifled a groan and put his hand against his face.

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“Well, we have to tell her *sometime*, John,” Sherlock said. “That’s what this interview is *for*.”

“Yoga instructor,” John said, very softly and with a hint of despair.

Lena looked over the form. “What’s the bet?” she asked, peaking an eyebrow at them in a challenge.

“What?” John said innocently.

“This is about which of you is better at sex, right?”

“You’re not as stupid as you look,” said Sherlock, grudgingly. “Curious. I wonder if there’s a connection between flexibility, vasoconstriction and stimulation of the brain.”

“You’re, uh, right, it *is* a bet,” said John quickly. “But that doesn’t mean we wouldn’t respect or—“

“So what you’re telling me,” Lena said, cutting him off, “Is that I get to have sex with *you*—“ her eyes raked John, “while *he*” (nods at Sherlock) “watches. And then a week later I come back and have sex with you,” (at Sherlock, running her eyes up and down his long length) “and he” (quirks a brow at John) “watches. And both of you are going to be trying your hardest to convince me that you’re the best lover God ever graced womankind with?”

John’s mouth was hanging open. He closed it. “That’s... that’s about the size of it, yeah.”

Lena smiled. “Dear *Lord*! And I thought that swinger site would be a bust. Where do I sign up?”

RYAN

When John opened the door to admit Ryan, he found a man who was three inches taller than himself with soft-looking light brown hair, worn to his shoulders, a kind and attractive face and wire-rimmed glasses that were distinctly John Lenin-esque. He had a medium build and was dressed in khaki’s, a button down plaid shirt and a navy blazer. In other words, he looked exactly like what he said he was – a 28-year-old sixth form history teacher.

John was determined not to overthink why Ryan was here. He held out his hand. “Hi, Ryan. I’m John.”

XistentialAngst

Ryan shook it, giving John a surreptitious once-over. “Hi, John. Sorry, I’m... a bit nervous.”

“Yeah? Me, too,” John said, grinning. “Come in anyway.”

“I’ve never done anything like this before,” Ryan said as he stepped inside.

Sherlock had not bothered to rise from his chair and his posture – both feet flat, slouched in his chair, fingers steeped under his chin as he looked at Ryan – was very Sherlockian. His eye movement over their visitor indicated he was ‘deducing’.

John cleared his throat. “This is my flatmate, Sherlock.”

Ryan stared at Sherlock, going a bit wide-eyed at his attractiveness. “Hello,” Ryan said, shyly.

“You’re not lying,” said Sherlock. “You really haven’t done this before.”

“*Sherlock*,” John warned, just as Ryan said, “No I haven’t had much luck meeting people.”

Sherlock ignored them both, sweeping to his feet with a charming smile. He held out a hand. “Sherlock Holmes.”

John blinked in surprise. He’d never seen Sherlock offer to shake hands, bare handed, with anyone.

Ryan shook it. “Hello again.” He looked up into Sherlock’s eyes. “I see when you wrote ‘tall’ you weren’t exaggerating.”

“Yes, well, we do like to offer *variety* at 221B,” Sherlock glanced at John with a snarky smile.

“Sherlock!” John got his point immediately. And blushed.

“Ah,” Ryan said, obviously not getting it.

“Have a seat,” John offered, wondering if maybe the earth might just conveniently swallow him up sometime soon.

Ryan sat down on the couch.

“You don’t have a lot of facial hair,” Sherlock said, eyeing Ryan shrewdly. “That’s good, isn’t it, John?”

“Ryan, would you like a cup of tea?” John said in a strangled voice.

“Uh – that would be nice, thank you.”

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John hesitated, suddenly realizing his error. “Maybe you’d like to come out to the kitchen with me while I make it.”

“Delighted.”

Sherlock didn’t take the hint and followed them into the kitchen. But he lurked, silently, in the doorway, leaning back, arms folded, watching John and Ryan intently.

“This is a bit awkward,” John said, with an encouraging smile as he plugged in the kettle.

Ryan’s eyes flickered from John to Sherlock. “Awkward is not entirely unfamiliar to me. Especially when it comes to dating. But... how does this work? Exactly? With you two?”

“We’re desperately in love,” Sherlock said, with a morose sigh.

“No,” John said, shooting Sherlock a glare. “He’s joking. He’s my mate. We’re not together.”

“You wound me to the core, John.” Sherlock put a hand over his heart.

Ryan looked confused. John felt confused himself. Sherlock was obviously playing a role for Ryan. John wasn’t sure why or what he was up to, but he decided to just be truthful. After all, Lena had got off on it. Besides, John didn’t have a lot riding on whether or not Ryan said yes.

“To be blunt,” John said, “we’ve got a bet on. Which of us is the better shag. That one over there has got the mind of a scientist on steroids and he’s come up with a plan to test it. That’s where you come in.”

“Steroids effect muscles, John, not brain tissue,” Sherlock said drolly.

“So *where* do I come in?” Ryan asked.

“Well, you’ll be subjected to both our charms,” John said. “such as they are. You have sex with Sherlock and I watch. A week later you have sex with me and he watches. I mean, if you decide you want to take us on, that is.”

“Don’t forget the form, John,” said Sherlock. “That’s the best part.”

“Yes, and afterwards there’ll be a quiz,” John said, rolling his eyes.

Sherlock produced said quiz, apparently from nowhere, and held it out. He took two strides across the kitchen to get close enough to hand it to Ryan, but when Ryan reached out to take it, Sherlock didn’t let it go. For several seconds the paper was taut between them, Ryan

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pulling and Sherlock not releasing. Sherlock's warm, relentless gaze was on Ryan's eyes, a teasing smile on his lips. Ryan's cheeks flushed pink.

Just before Ryan was going to release the paper, Sherlock withdrew his fingers with a quirk of his mouth and strode back to the doorway. He leaned against it languidly, arms behind his back. Which, of course, had the effect of pulling that ridiculous white shirt even tighter so that the buttons looked ready to pop (and when had he taken off his jacket?).

John watched all this, stunned for a moment, then he felt rather ill. Sherlock was already playing the game. He was playing the amusing, posh gay man for Ryan, John realized. And he was *fucking flirting*.

Damn it! No one had told John the round had started. He felt like he'd missed the bell and been caught by a left hook. They hadn't even agreed that Ryan was acceptable, though, frankly, they were low on options. Of the 30 photos they'd received from men, John had only passed 2 through to the interview stage. And the other one had been, well, Michael. Ryan was rather the last pickle in the pickle jar. And now Sherlock was already two steps ahead, the bastard. *That* was not on.

Ryan looked over the form. His eyes widened. "I'm supposed to rank you guys? This is... uh... pretty out there."

John slid down the counter to get closer to him. He peered over Ryan's shoulder at the form. "Yeah? I don't know. No bondage or whips or anything. Just really... good... sex."

John braced his right hand on the counter and leaned further towards Ryan in a move that simultaneously put him inches away from Ryan's mouth and pulled his red shirt tight across the muscles of his shoulders and chest (two can play at that game). John had plenty of experience in coming on to woman, and he used it. He let his gaze linger on Ryan's lips, let heat come into his eyes. The heat was real, but it was more anger at Sherlock and his damned doorway sex lounge than anything else. Ryan didn't have to know that.

Ryan stared. John stared back. And either Ryan was not as mild mannered as he appeared or John was sexier than he believed, because after returning John's heated gaze for several long moments, the paper fluttered out of his hand to the floor and Ryan leaned forward and kissed him.

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Oh, shit. John almost pulled away, reacting on instinct. But at the last second he checked himself. He felt a giddy surge of glee at having out maneuvered Sherlock Holmes. He brought a hand up to Ryan's shoulder and parted his lips, lightly sucking at Ryan's mouth. Ryan liked that. He leaned in over eagerly, pushing his own tongue against John's. John guessed it had been a while since Ryan had been with anyone. John recognized the desperation.

It was John's first time kissing a man. It was... not bad. Nothing to write home about, not exactly fireworks, but neither was it repulsive. Ryan felt... non-threatening. There was the occasional brush of stubble and Ryan's mouth was firmer than a woman's, not soft and sweet. But John had his eyes closed, and it was just a warm mouth after all. Ryan was a decent kisser.

Nevertheless, when the kettle whistle abruptly sounded, John was relieved. He broke away.

"Bad timing," John said, giving Ryan a flirty smile. He started to make the tea. He didn't dare look at Sherlock.

"Actually, I had tea before I left school," Ryan said, shakily, "So none for me."

"Would you care to see the rest of the flat then?" Sherlock offered, his voice husky.

John turned to see Sherlock smiling beguilingly at Ryan. He did not look at all put out by the kiss. He looked... *fuck*, drop dead sexy is what he looked. There was a flush on his cheeks, his green/gray eyes were dark and dangerous... John had never seen him look like that before, *seductive*. Damn, he was good.

"S-sure," Ryan said. Sherlock reached out his hand, palm up. Ryan stepped forward and took it. Sherlock guided him out. Ryan shot a tentative glance over his shoulder at John as he went, apologetically. John smiled encouragingly. *Yes, fine, it's all fine.*

As soon as they were out of sight, John's smile vanished.

Bedrooms. Hell. John decided it would be in his best interest to tag along.

Ten minutes later, Ryan was at the door of 221b saying goodbye. Both John and Sherlock had walked him downstairs. He looked dazed as John stood there, leaning against the open door jam, giving him a slow, lazy smile, and Sherlock was still holding his hand, rubbing a thumb lightly over his knuckles, those pale green/gray eyes gazing at him intently.

"Well, then," Ryan said, clearing his throat. "Guess you'll let me know. Email?"

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“We’ll be in touch,” John said.

“Soon,” Sherlock promised. He released Ryan’s hand reluctantly.

“Fine. I mean... good.” Ryan paused on the threshold as if he wasn’t quite sure which direction was the exit, despite the cars going past behind his back.

Sherlock grasped his shoulders, turned him 180 degrees, and gave him a gentle push towards the street.

“Good-bye, Ryan,” Sherlock said.

“Bye,” John said. “Nice to meet you.”

They closed the door.

* * *

As soon as the door was closed, Sherlock spun around without looking at John. He nevertheless managing to express the epitome of wrath in the set of his shoulders as he pounded up the stairs to the flat.

“What the hell was that!” John shouted as he pounded up after the maniac.

“You’re asking me?” Sherlock shouted, turning on him and trying to slam the sitting room door in his face – John pushed it back open. “I wasn’t the one who had my tongue down his throat eight minutes and twenty seconds after he entered the flat! Mr. ‘I’m so not gay’.”

“*He* kissed *me*, Sherlock!”

“Yes, after you draped yourself over the counter with your ‘come fuck me now’ eyes.”

Sherlock stalked further into the room, spinning back around angrily.

“Which I did *after* you lounged all over the doorway, trying to pop your own damn buttons!” John said, stepping forward to wave demonstratively at their offensive pearliness. “Not to mention that little game of penile tug with the bloody quiz form!”

“Penile tug,” Sherlock said mockingly, putting a finger to his lips, “Hmmm. I don’t believe I’ve ever heard passing a piece of paper described quite like that.”

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“Because nobody’s ever passed a piece of paper with as much fucking insinuation! I’m surprised it didn’t combust. And then you gave him a bloody tour of the bloody flat. What, the laundry basket and toothbrush jar? Seriously? Holding his hand!”

“I had to do something after your little display!” Sherlock spat out. “You were *snogging* the man in the kitchen,”

“I didn’t start it!” John said, taking another step closer. “You were flirting with him from the minute he stepped in the door. What, is he your type then?”

“It was clear you found Ryan acceptable. I was merely trying to ensure his participation.”

“Bollocks!”

By now, they were nearly chest to chest in the middle of the room. Sherlock was at his most intimidating, drawn to his full height and glaring down, and John, not giving a bloody inch, looked up with his fists clenched at his side, his expression saying, *Push me. Just try it.*

“Jealous?” Sherlock asked, his eyes narrowing.

“*Competitive*,” said John, narrowing his eyes right back.

They stood there glaring at each other, with nothing but the skull as a witness, as moments ticked past. Finally, the tension grew unbearable and something had to give. They both burst out laughing.

“Oh my god, this is ridiculous,” John cackled. “This has got to be the most insane thing we’ve ever done. I mean, discounting anything to do with explosives.”

“Did you see the look on his face as he was leaving?” Sherlock choked out. “He looked like he’d just been hit in the privates with a lemon pie. He’ll probably wander about for twenty minutes before remembering where he lives.”

John howled. He fell back over the arm of the sofa, landing on his back and giggling. “Oh, fuck, I almost feel sorry for him, getting both barrels from the two of us! It was like ‘Love: The Death Match’”

“The Gigolo Wars,” snorted Sherlock.

“Saving Ryan’s Privates!” John ejaculated.

“Battle of the Bulges!” said Sherlock.

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They laughed so hard, John thought he'd pee his pants. But eventually his giggles died down.

"Poor git," John said. "I'd feel sorry for him, except he's going to get to have sex with *you*, which is way above the league of a mild-mannered schoolteacher. So not really much in need of my sympathy then."

Sherlock stopped laughing.

"What?" John asked.

"You were making tea." Sherlock headed for the kitchen.

"Oh, yeah."

When both cups were prepared to John's satisfaction, he handed a mug to Sherlock.

"So... Lena and Ryan then?" Sherlock asked, raising his cup.

"Lena and Ryan," John echoed. They chinked the mugs together as if it were a pact.

"I'll email them tonight," Sherlock said.

"OK," said John.

And suddenly, it was shockingly real.

* * *

The next morning John was having breakfast before work when Sherlock came into the kitchen wearing his blue robe.

"You're up early," John said.

"Never slept." Sherlock placed a 50 pence piece on the table.

"What's that?"

"Lena and Ryan both accepted. Now we need to set dates. We agreed to a coin toss, remember?"

"They... they did? They agreed?" John flushed a bit. "Uh. OK." He picked up the coin. "Not that I don't trust you, but... I don't trust you."

"By all means."

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John flipped the coin up. It spun an impression four times before he snatched it and slammed it against his forearm. “Call it.”

“Tails,” said Sherlock.

John lifted his hand. Heads.

“Your choice, John. Lena first? Or Ryan?”

“Lena,” John said without hesitation.

Sherlock sat down in a kitchen chair, studying John’s face. “Interesting.”

“Don’t tell me you didn’t expect that?”

“You’re naturally modest. I thought you’d want me to go first.”

“Nope,” John said, decisive and calm.

Sherlock studied his face. “It’s strategy. You think I’ll fail with Lena and we won’t bother to go on to Ryan at all. You’re avoiding it.”

John shook his head. “I’m not trying to get out of having sex with a man. I’ve trained for it. I’m ready.”

Sherlock tilted his head. “You’re leading with your strength. You think you’ll intimidate me.”

John laughed. “I’m not telling you why. It’ll serve you right to not know for once. Have you decided what you want to set as your prize? Because I have.”

“Lead on,” Sherlock said.

“When I win, and I *will*, you’ll wash all the dirty dishes *daily* for two months and no whinging.”

Sherlock snorted. “One month.”

“Let’s hear yours before we negotiate.”

“Certainly. After I annihilate you, you will not complain about anything related to my experiments, including body parts in the fridge, spills, smells, or any accidents that do not result in literal human deaths, for a period of two months. Not one word.”

“Alright, but if you get two months I get two months.”

“‘Not complaining’ is passive. ‘Cleaning dishes’ is active labor, it takes time. Half-time is a fair trade.”

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“You just make this shit up, don’t you?” John snorted.

“It’s quite obvious. But we can get the opinion of a third party if you insist.”

“Oh, fine! But by ‘one month’ I mean the calendar month of my choice, not four weeks.”

“What if I’m on a case?”

“Especially if you’re on a case.”

Sherlock considered it. “Agreed.” He held out his hand as if to shake on it. John took it over the table.

Sherlock’s long fingers wrapped around his. Sherlock had exceptionally nice hands, John thought, not for the first time. Large and graceful, lean but not too thin. Strong hands. A violinist’s hands. Hands that could do damage if they wanted to. Their grip was firm and surprisingly warm.

John looked at their hands, joined. He knew he must have held Sherlock’s hand before, however briefly, but he could not remember the exact circumstances.

He *did* remember Sherlock holding Ryan’s hand yesterday, at the door, his thumb rubbing lazy circles over Ryan’s knuckles. John didn’t much care for the image. At all. He pulled his hand away.

Sherlock was watching him, his gaze inscrutable. “Shall we start this Friday night, John?”

John nodded. “Yeah. I’m ready.”

CHAPTER 6: John and Lena

John looked himself over in his bedroom mirror. Freshly-pressed button-down shirt that matched his blue eyes (no T-shirt underneath)—check. Jeans that left him a bit of expansion room—check. Two condoms in his pocket—check. Small tube of lube (which he wouldn't need unless Lena really wanted anal sex)—check. Freshly showered and groomed John Watson—check. Equal parts nervousness and arousal – yeah, that. In spades.

It wasn't often that John had a date with a woman that he knew would end in sex. This wasn't even really a date. It was just sex. Lena couldn't come over til 9, and she'd made it clear she would have eaten. She knew exactly what they were doing. She'd seen the bloody quiz form. And damn, it was freeing—not to have to worry about whether or not he could talk a woman into bed. All he had to worry about was blowing her mind. Oh, and the minor fact that the most observant man in the world would be watching.

He jogged down the stairs at 8:30. The sitting room was clean, as was Sherlock's bedroom. They'd decided to use his room because it was adjacent to the sitting room and had a bigger bed. The two of them had straightened it that day (well, mostly it was John cleaning and Sherlock making stacks of papers and yelling at John for touching things). Clean sheets were in place. John had burned some candles trying to disperse a lingering scent of formaldehyde. He'd put a 30 watt bulb in the bedside lamp.

Because, you know, John was going to be having sex in Sherlock's bed in a few minutes. With a yoga instructor. While Sherlock watched. Just another day at 221b.

John put a bottle of red and a chilled bottle of white wine on the kitchen table, along with clean glasses. He put a bottle of scotch out, too, in case Lena preferred it.

"I told you, she doesn't drink," Sherlock said. "Body a temple, etc, etc."

"She might be nervous and—" John looked up and stopped, aghast. "What the *hell* are you wearing?"

"Don't you like it?" Sherlock smirked. He put out his arms and did a slow turn by the kitchen table.

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What he was wearing was black leather pants that clung to every line of his long, long thighs and tight ass, and a long-sleeved, black silky T-shirt that had a low V-neck and hugged like a second skin. His hair had been tamed a bit, combed back with some product into glistening waves and curls. He wore black boots. He looked like he was dressed to go out clubbing. Somewhere dangerous. With maybe Lady Gaga.

“What are you *doing*?” John said. “This is my night with Lena!”

“Merely setting the stage,” Sherlock said flatly. “I’ll be dressed like this next week – she needs to have this mental image of me.”

“You don’t have to look so... so...!”

“So?” Sherlock tilted his head to one side, studying John’s face in his full analytical mode.

John flushed. “You know damn well,” John said bitterly. “You can mop the floor with me when you want to, looks wise. You don’t try to steal the thunder when you’re mate’s with a woman. That’s a rule.”

Sherlock lounged against the fridge (yes, lounged, the bastard). He crossed those long legs. There was a noticeable bulge in his crotch. He had to be padding. *Had* to, the insufferable prat.

“I don’t recall agreeing to any such rule,” Sherlock said coolly. “That might be an accepted social norm when two ‘mates’ are out at a pub, but this is a competition. I’m having sex with her next week, so I have to start playing the role tonight. It’s really very simple, John. Nevertheless, I have no intention of ‘stealing your thunder’ this evening. In fact, I’m looking forward to seeing you at your *very best*.”

Something in John’s brain froze. He had no idea what to say to that, or what the hell Sherlock meant. OK, yes, he knew what he meant but... what the hell did he mean?

John stood there frowning at him, arms crossed. He hadn’t the foggiest idea what to say. Nope, not a single thing was coming to him.

“You have nothing to feel insecure about. You look good. For you.” Sherlock said.

“Screw you. I’m not insecure. I’m never insecure.”

Sherlock smiled. “Toothpaste,” he said.

“What?”

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Sherlock stepped towards him, and touched the side of John's lips with his thumb, briefly, then gave him a tight and perfectly flat smile.

John frowned and wet his own thumb, rubbed at the spot Sherlock had touched. He was feeling strangely discombobulated by all this, and he had a sneaking suspicion that was *exactly* Sherlock's plan. He was trying to throw John off.

John glared. "Just what are you playing at, Sherlock?"

"I'm not playing at anything. Ah, there's the doorbell." And the doorbell sounded.

* * *

Lena did take a glass of white wine after all. John felt childishly pleased about Sherlock being wrong. They drank and chatted for a few minutes in the sitting room, the three of them, John and Lena on the couch and Sherlock in his chair.

John had seen Sherlock play roles before, but it was still disconcerting. His entire being had shifted when Lena came into the room. He was more masculine, brooding, darker in a more arrogant way. He was playing a bad boy, John realized, and it was as if his body had been possessed. God, the man was bloody remarkable, John had to give him credit. But other than just being in this persona, Sherlock wasn't obviously trying to charm Lena tonight, and he stayed quiet until Lena spoke to him directly. Which she did, of course. She was flirting with John as well, clearly found him attractive. But her eyes kept drifting back to the sodding Prince of Darkness and his cheekbones.

Right, then, John decided, enough of that.

She only had sip of wine left, so John took the glass from her hand and put it on the table. He stood up and straddled her legs, his knees just barely on the sofa, his feet on the floor. In this position he filled her sight completely. He said nothing as she looked up at him in surprise, but he let her see the intent on his face. *You are mine tonight. And I'm taking you now.* Lena shivered and gave him a slow smile. *Come on then.*

John put his hands on her shoulders and stroked along her collarbones to the back of her neck. He placed both thumbs *just so* and pressed gently on either side of her spine. She sighed and went limp. Her head lolled back and he took her mouth, ravished it slowly, sucking, lightly biting, lathing with the flat of his tongue. Lena kissed him back, forced to yield to his deliberate

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pace. After a few minutes she was arching up into him. She wanted contact. He didn't give it to her. He had her full attention now. Good.

He slowly eased the kissing, bringing her back to the surface. Then he took her hand and led her to Sherlock's bedroom. She followed silently, her brown eyes dark with desire and now entirely fixed on him. John felt it when Sherlock silently slipped past him into the room. But Lena didn't seem to notice, her eyes were fixed on John's fingers, unbuttoning her shirt.

Standing by the bed, John removed Lena's clothes. He took his time, caressing newly bared skin with his thumbs and light fingertips, with kisses and gentle pulls of lips and tongue. Lena closed her eyes, giving in to the sensation. She shivered as he unhooked her bra and slid his fingertips lightly underneath to remove it, her skin blossoming in goosebumps and her nipples hardening.

"This feels good," she said.

"I know," said John.

After he'd removed her top and bra, John turned her and pulled her back against him. He knew the idea of the voyeurism had excited her, that day of the interview, and he reminded her of it now. They were facing towards Sherlock, and John stroked her stomach and arms, cupped her breasts, ran the flat of his palms over her nipples while allowing her to feel the hard length of him pressed up against her backside. She lolled in his arms, her head back on his shoulder. She liked being displayed like this. She opened her eyes and watched Sherlock, her lids heavy. But John did not look at Sherlock, not once. He skimmed his fingers over the top of her skirt, cupping her mons, just lightly, revealing it, but never giving her enough. He traced over the fabric with maddeningly light circles until she was groaning, her hips moving instinctively, her eyes shut, and she wasn't thinking about being on display anymore.

"God, you feel good," Lena said, grinding back against him. "I want to touch you. I really want to touch you."

John chuckled darkly. "If you're a very good girl."

SHERLOCK

John unzipped Lena's skirt and slid it down. Other than some completely impractical lace panties, Lena was naked. And still John stroked her thighs and belly and only lightly over her pubis and breasts, biting and sucking at her neck, as if he had all the time in the world. Lena

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was coming apart in his arms, driven mad by his reticence, by what he withheld. She ground back against him wantonly. And John was still completely clothed.

Sherlock thought he might go mad seeing those competent, relentless hands work over her flesh, seeing John so absolutely in control like this, seeing Lena in his thrall. And Sherlock was caught in it just as helplessly. He was desperate to see more, to see more of John, to see everything, wanting it so badly his hands were shaking. It was pathetic, but he couldn't help himself.

Slowly, John guided Lena over to the bed and down onto her back. She was pliant and unresisting. He arranged her the way he wanted her, so that her knees were at the edge of the bed and her feet were on the floor and he stood between her legs. She looked up at him, vulnerable and trembling, as he slowly started unbuttoning his shirt. John didn't say anything, but he was looking down at Lena like she was his most cherished Christmas present and prom queen all wrapped into one and like he was going to eat her alive.

Sherlock knew what it was like to be admired by John Watson, but not like this, never had John looked at him like this. Sherlock couldn't think about that or about how badly he himself was aroused. So instead he forced himself to think about the psychology of what John was doing, about the position he'd put Lena in. It was brilliant. Already John was between her knees, reminding her of where she needed him, yet leaving her empty and unfulfilled, not giving her his weight, his presence, not yet. And he'd left her feet on the floor so that, as he removed his shirt, *oh f-ing hell*, and his golden skin gleamed, so soft-looking over his lean frame, Lena was in position to show him what she wanted. She pressed her feet hard against the floor and arched up her hips – presenting herself to him, asking for that skin, for it to be pressed against hers. She wasn't begging, no – but she was close enough to begging for how little of himself John had yet given away.

Sherlock was rearranging everything he'd thought he knew about John Watson in his mind. There was always something, and in this, Sherlock had been completely wrong. He could see now that this wasn't like the tea and jumpers at all, sex and John Watson. No, this was more like the part of John that was at one with a gun, that could shoot a bullet into a heart at 300 yards and afterwards smile without the slightest regret, despite being a healer, despite being a moral man. Because there were some wars in which John Watson took no prisoners, felt no qualms and left nothing but ashes. Protecting his friends was one of them and this, giving pleasure, was like that, too, apparently. He was utterly confident, completely in charge and gently devastating.

John's shirt was off now and he stood there for a moment, touching his own stomach lightly. He was large and erect in his jeans, giving Lena (giving Sherlock) a visual tease. He

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tugged the end of his belt, and somehow there was a threat in his expression, an edge, something ridiculous and yet insanely hot like *once this thing comes out you are in so much trouble*. Sherlock's trembling had moved from his hands to infrequent shudders down his whole body. And Lena gave up on trying to lie still, unable to take it anymore. She sat up fast and took the end of the belt from John and yanked it open. Her fingers scrambled at the button and then the zipper with intense focus, not looking into John's eyes, and seemingly having forgotten that Sherlock existed. Sherlock could only will her fingers to stop shaking and move faster because he wanted to see John Watson naked *right now*.

John's flies were pressed open and then... Lena brought John out and into her hand. John groaned a little and put his fingers in her hair, softly, to show her how good she was being. And Sherlock was looking at his first sight of John, this part of John, hard and full, thicker than he'd expected and so unbearably male. Sherlock was already aroused, had been lost since he'd seen John take control so utterly in the living room. But at this, seeing John's heavy flesh in Lena's hand, Sherlock felt a bolt of lust run through him that was so intense he had to put his palm in his mouth and bite on it, hard, to stop himself from crying out. He was grateful that neither John nor Lena were paying any attention to him because for a long moment, as Lena rolled a condom onto John, he could not school himself. He was utterly defenseless.

Lena looked up at John, met his eyes flirtatiously, and said, "I have to." She pulled him into her mouth.

John rocked forward with a hiss, "Yes... yes... god, that feels good."

Sherlock gripped the chair, hard. He had a nearly overwhelming compulsion to go over there and push Lena aside, get on his knees in front of John and suck him in deep. He wanted it more than breathing. He couldn't, he was in no way allowed, but what he could do was picture it in his mind. He could imagine that John felt like, heavy on his tongue. He could remember this, memorize every detail of it, so he could bring it out later when he was alone and he needed it. He could pretend.

JOHN

John had not looked at Sherlock since they entered the bedroom, but that didn't mean he wasn't hyper aware of his presence. He knew Sherlock so well, and he knew when he had Sherlock's focus. He could feel it blazing at him right now like the heat of the sun.

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John had thought he would feel self-conscious at the voyeurism, embarrassed to be so exposed in front of Sherlock. He'd worried that it might throw him off his game. But now that they are in it, he found that it was nothing like that. It was... exhilarating, like running after a killer through a darkened alley. It made everything sharper, made him feel incredibly aware and powerful. This was not a threesome. John was not touching Sherlock or even looking at him, and he had no intention of doing so. And yet... Sherlock was part of this intimacy in a way that charged the very air of the room. A beautiful woman was sitting on the bed, naked and aroused, and she was taking John into her mouth. And yet the idea that gripped John's mind was not about what Lena was doing; it was that Sherlock was watching – watching his cock go in and out of Lena's mouth, *seeing this*, seeing him naked and hard, that brilliant mind watching, cataloguing, analyzing, and that perfect, untouchable (virginal?) body, that *transport*, was (maybe? probably?) aroused by this. And that was....

Fuck.

John pushed Lena gently back. He gave her a small smile and ran his thumb over her lip. "I love your mouth," John said, "But I have to touch you now."

"Oh, god, I want you to," Lena replied. She helped him pull his jeans and pants down and off and then she moved back onto the bed.

John crawled over her, feeling amazingly unselfconscious. He held his weight above but off her, making her crazy for want it. He spent a long time kissing her mouth, hands moving over her, massaging. Her breasts were sensitive and he could probably make her come that way, but he didn't give her quite enough stimulation for that, his hands warm and firm but not directed enough to satisfy. She pushed his head down with a gasp and he licked and nuzzled and sucked where she needed it, his mouth tugging at her breasts. His hands rubbed inside her thighs, the crease of leg and groin. His thumb rubbed circles on her mons, just minutely to the left or right of her clitoris but never giving it direct attention other than teasing brushes with his fingertips. She arched up into his hand and groaned desperately into his mouth.

"Jesus, John, you're a bastard," she said. "I know you know where the hell it is."

He chuckled. "Oh. I'll make you come. But I want to do it with my tongue."

She groaned a plea, *oh yes, please, please*, and pushed his head further down in answer. She was definitely not shy. He slid down and spread her apart. She was very flexible, and proud of it, so he spread her further than he otherwise would. She looked down at him, at herself, as he kissed the inside of her thigh. She liked being open, visible. Her eyes flickered over his head to where Sherlock was sitting and John shifted a bit, so that he was not blocking

the view. He ran a hand into the crease of her groin, pulling her slightly more open, as if showing her to Sherlock. This might do something for Sherlock – or not. John wasn't sure. But it definitely got Lena off. He watched her expression closely, and whatever she saw on Sherlock's face, she got a fresh flush of lust and dropped her head back with a sound part laugh, part groan.

“Oh, fuck me. You two. John, *please*, before I implode.”

John didn't have to be begged twice. He smiled. Because he knew that, at this, he was very, very good.

SHERLOCK

When John had told Sherlock that he *liked* sex, Sherlock really had no idea. Most people would say they 'liked' sex. Well, other than Sherlock himself. But Sherlock watched John work Lena the way he himself worked a crime scene, with great relish and utter focus. And Sherlock understood now. If he'd ever had any tiny spark of hope that John would give this up, give up women, for a platonic friendship or the work or... any reason whatever, he was deluding himself.

John was now completely nude and he was sturdy and compact, scarred and painfully beautiful, even more beautiful than Sherlock had suspected he would be. He had Lena spread open like a parcel, and when he began to go down on her it was not what Sherlock expected. John had both palms on the backs of her thighs and he rocked her hips up off the bed so that he could lick fully, back to front. He took long sweeps with the flat of his tongue over her anus, her vaginal opening, her clitoris, again and again, and it was like an invading army, relentless, crossing boundaries, giving no quarter. Lena stiffened in surprise and then melted at this assault with a full body shudder. The sheer lasciviousness of it was rather shocking.

John alternated these broad sweeps with focused attention where Lena most wanted it, sometimes sucking and sometimes doing something with his lips and tongue that had Lena thrashing and moaning. But John would pull away before she could go over the edge, returning to those broad strokes, sometimes even to nibble at the skin of her thigh in such a way that he was just brushing the core of her with his hair. John was sadistic that way.

Sherlock had to shut his eyes, because it was suddenly too much, seeing John like this, seeing every inch of him, seeing him in such a raw sexual act –it threatened to overwhelm him. Sherlock couldn't even pretend, couldn't think about what it would be like if he were in Lena's position, because his mind would probably crack in two. So when Lena screamed out her

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first orgasm, Sherlock was not watching. He had his eyes screwed shut tight because he was *so very hard* that it felt like he would burst a blood vessel if he didn't do something about it. If he didn't block out this assault on his senses, something embarrassing was going to happen. When Lena cried out again, almost sounding in pain, just a few minutes later, Sherlock was still not watching and was reciting the digits of pi.

He could hear them shift around. Whatever new thing they were doing (intercourse, Sherlock supposed), Lena was still moaning, more of a persistent low whine now, and John said "God, you feel good. Look at that."

Sherlock's curiosity got the better of him and he had to look.

JOHN

Lena was wrecked after he'd made her come twice with his mouth. John was brutally hard and he'd been very patient and now he really wanted to do something with his cock besides ignore it. But he wanted Lena's full attention when he did.

He was still hyper aware of Sherlock in the room and the recovery position he choose was very deliberate. He liked to please and he liked to arouse, and Sherlock was a part of this whether either of them anticipated it or not. John still couldn't look at him, but he knew exactly where Sherlock was, where his gaze fell.

John pulled Lena onto her side and shifted them both around a little more so they were optimally positioned. Lena was limp and warm and a little sweaty and it made his cock twitch. He'd worked for this pliancy, for this surrender, and now he wanted to be buried inside her. But not yet.

He gently tugged up her top leg, placing her foot on the bed so she was again open, only now on her side. He moved himself next to her, groin to groin. He took himself in hand and began to rub against her, using his hard tip and then length against the most sensitive part of her, stroking all along her, not penetrating, just rubbing against her soft, wet flesh, so very wet from his mouth and her own arousal. Lena glanced down at them, shivered, and said "*Oh my god.*" As he worked himself over her, the tension in her thighs started to build again.

With her leg up like this, it was not enough friction for John, but what it was was highly *visual*. He was up on one elbow, watching. The sight of himself rubbing, thrusting, against the soft wet flesh of her was very erotic. He was teasing himself now as much as he was

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teasing her. And, of course, Sherlock. He was most definitely teasing Sherlock, who had to be able to see everything.

The trembling in Lena's thighs grew tighter and tighter. She was close again. She said "*Oh, god, John, I need you inside me,*" and suddenly he couldn't wait another minute either. He changed the angle, took himself in hand and slid up into her in one strong push. He buried his head in her neck and groaned at the feeling of it, of finally having friction and heat, of being inside a woman.

Lena was trembling on the brink and she pushed against him, urgent. But he couldn't finish her at this angle. He rolled himself onto his back and pulled her over him, still joined. He placed one hand on her hip and another on the small of her back to tilt her forward a bit. He held her still and ground up into her, just there, where she needed it. She squirmed but he was controlling it, made her understand that if this was going to happen, he was going to give it to her. She panted and moaned, so close, and he thrust up inside her, hard and fast, pounded against her, using his strength to raise both of them off the bed. And she was coming.

John slowed his thrusts, deep and tight, letting her ride it out. He was totally on an endorphin high. He hadn't had sex this good in *years* and everything was bathed in crystalline brilliance. He was incredibly aroused – by all of it. But he was in the zone and he felt like he could go on forever. He was already thinking about the positions he'd take Lena in.

And then John made a fatal mistake. He was looking up at Lena, astride him. Her eyes were closed and she was still shuddering on the tail end of her orgasm. And John looked past her slim waist at Sherlock. It was a male thing, he couldn't resist. John's eyebrows were raised as if to say – *number 3, are you counting?* And then... any thought remotely like that died instantly. *Fuck.*

John had forgotten about the black leather pants, about how different Sherlock looked tonight. He'd expected to see Sherlock in his suit, sitting in the chair, trying to look bored but maybe aroused despite himself, betraying some interest in the proceedings, maybe looking at John with a little respect. That's what John *thought* he'd see, but that was not what he saw.

Sherlock was sitting in the chair, absolutely rigid. He looked like a dark angel, pale in those black leather pants and tight silk shirt, and he was shattered. One hand was raised to his mouth where he had inserted two fingers. He seemed to be both sucking on them and biting them hard in an attempt to control himself. His other hand was clenched on his thigh, white with strain and inches away from a very prominent, very hard erection. John could see the outline of him clearly in the black leather, and if he'd had any last shred of doubt that Sherlock was a sexual being, well, it was just blown to smithereens. But the part that really did John in was

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Sherlock's expression. He was looking at John and John had never seen such bewildered want, such stark lust tinged with confusion and despair.

John was suddenly right at the edge and he gave a groan. "Oh, fuck, I—" and then he was falling. He closed his eyes and tried to stop it, reached for himself to grip the base of his cock. But it was too late. He pulsed deep inside Lena as blinding pleasure ripped through him. *Jesus, oh god, oh fuck oh.* He gave up fighting it and opened his eyes, needing to look at Sherlock again as he came, wanting to see him like that, because *fuck*.

But Sherlock had left the room. John heard the soft sound of the bathroom door click shut as his orgasm surged through him.

* * *

Lena was gone. She'd filled out her quiz form and was subjected to a cup of tea and some lazy cuddling and snogging from John in the kitchen before she went (it was supposed to be hands off after orgasm, but John had never left a lover the instant he came and he wasn't about to start now).

Sherlock hadn't really looked at John since the bedroom. But he'd given Lena another dose of the bad boy routine before she left. He'd tugged her away from John, with a low laugh/growl, as if they were passing a bloody baton. Sherlock had walked her to the door and gazed intently at her before briefly nuzzling her cheek and, perhaps, if the gasp Lena gave was any indication, biting her ear none too gently. He'd whispered something dark and rumbling to her and Lena had shivered and smiled.

Yes, well played, Sherlock. Lena was definitely looking forward to next week now. John couldn't be arsed to care, frankly. Currently, he was sitting in the living room feeling stropky.

Sherlock was at his desk, filling out his quiz form on John's performance.

"You don't look very pleased, for someone who just had sex," Sherlock noted dryly, without looking up.

He was still in that motorcycle machismo outfit and John wished he would just take his black-leather-clad arse to his room and change. *Something* in 221B should feel normal. Because right now, nothing much did.

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“Yes, well, it’s a bit embarrassing for a man my age to come within a few minutes of entering a woman, and never mind that it’s a bloody competition or that my flatmate was—” John stopped. Because saying out loud that Sherlock had been watching, or alluding to the look on his face, or what that had done to John, was suddenly far more honest than John cared to be.

Sherlock looked over at him sharply. “You did give her three orgasms. What more did you want?”

“What I wanted, what I bloody *intended*, was to fuck her three ways to Sunday,” John said, running a hand through his hair in irritation. “She’s *ayoga instructor*. I had at least four positions planned.”

Sherlock snorted. “Yes, poor Lena. You made her climax three times and then convinced her that her vagina was so inhumanly fantastic that she shattered your iron will. She was positively glowing. Look at her form if you don’t believe me.”

“That’s not the – really?”

“It’s on the kitchen table,” Sherlock said. “I can’t look at it myself until I’ve filled out mine, but I’ll hazard a guess that she gave you a 54.”

John wandered into the kitchen, casually. Lena’s form was on the table.

Manual stimulation – 9 out of 10. Yes, he did have good hands. Women liked them.

Oral stimulation – 10 out of 10. And bloody well earned, John thought smugly.

Penetrative sex – 7 out of 10. There. That should have been an 11. Because John was world class at it. It should have been his best event.

Visual stimulation – 10 out of 10. That was interesting.

Mental stimulation -- 9 out of 10

Overall experience – 9 out of 10

John totaled the numbers in his head – 54.

“You really didn’t look at this?” John called out into the sitting room. “Because if not, you are bloody amazing.”

Sherlock didn’t answer.

Other than the ‘penetrative sex’ mark, it was really quite good. And John *had* made her come while pounding into her. It could have been worse. He felt a little better.

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He wandered out into the sitting room. Sherlock had finished his quiz and was typing on his computer.

“Chinese?” John asked, pausing in the middle of the room. “You’ll have to change though. I don’t fancy our meal being interrupted every five minutes by someone trying to chat you up.”

Sherlock didn’t look at him. “Not tonight, John. I need some sleep.”

“You *need* to eat.”

“Not tonight.” Sherlock tone was cutting, the one he used when he really didn’t want John to argue.

“Alright,” John said carefully.

Sherlock stood up and unplugged his computer, preparing to take it into his room. Watching him, John realized that something was wrong. There was definitely a wall up.

“Everything alright?” he asked.

“Of course.”

But John stepped in front of Sherlock as he tried to exit. “Because... this competition. It’s not worth... if you’re not one hundred percent alright with it, *all of it*, we’ll sodding well call it off.”

Sherlock huffed and gave John his ‘you’re really overdrawing your stupid reserve for the day’ stare. “I assure you, John, I’m fine. More than fine. In fact I was more aroused by Lena tonight than I thought I would be. That bodes well for next week, I think. For me, anyway.”

“I see,” John said. But he thought: *Bloody liar*.

“Besides, you’ve thoughtfully left me wiggle room. And I’m very, very good at wiggling.” His eyes narrowed in challenge.

John huffed a laugh. “Is that supposed to worry me?”

“It should. Good-night, John.” Sherlock swept past him.

“Wait -- do you want me to help you change the sheets? Doesn’t seem right that you’d, you know, get the wet spot.”

Sherlock snorted. “For god’s sake, I’ve slept in skips before. And you were wearing a condom. It’s fine.”

Sherlock disappeared into his room.

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John stood there, wondering if he should try again. It just didn't sit right with John. Sherlock had been there through the whole thing. John had kissed and snuggled with Lena afterwards and Sherlock had shut himself out. But... what had he expected? What was the norm in a nutball situation like this? For them to sit and chat about it? Trade impressions of the evening? Give each other a brotherly hug? A bloody high-five? A... kiss?

All of those things felt impossible with Sherlock back as his usual, cold, acerbic self. John could hardly believe that what he'd seen tonight in that bedroom had been real. Maybe he had imagined it. Or maybe Sherlock was just so unused to sex that he was aroused by anything. After all, he was reading bloody Master & Johnson instead of watching video porn. Seeing the real thing in front of him was bound to be a little intense. And it was no doubt embarrassing for Sherlock that John had seen him that way. Oh course, *he'd* seen *John* with his dick hanging out, so there you go.

Still. If Sherlock needed to act like it hadn't happened, John would go along with it.

The quiz form lay on Sherlock's desk, face down. John resisted for about ten seconds. He turned it over. And stared at it. Sherlock had given John 10's across the board.

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Subject Name: Lena	Quiz Taker: Lena
Tester Name: John	
Date:	

221B Quiz Form

Complete the following rankings as honestly as possible in evaluating the tester. In each category 1 indicates 'least satisfactory' and 10 indicates 'most satisfactory'. If a given category was not part of the evening's activities, place a 0 in that field.

Category	Ranking (1 to 10)
Manual Stimulation	9
Oral Stimulation	10
Penetrative sex	7
Visual stimulation	10
Mental stimulation	9
Overall experience	9
TOTAL SCORE:	54

Damn, John! xx Lena

Subject Name: Lena	Quiz Taker: Sherlock
Tester Name: John	
Date:	

221B Quiz Form

Complete the following rankings as honestly as possible in evaluating the tester. In each category 1 indicates 'least satisfactory' and 10 indicates 'most satisfactory'. If a given category was not part of the evening's activities, place a 0 in that field.

Category	Ranking (1 to 10)
Manual Stimulation	10
Oral Stimulation	10
Penetrative sex	10
Visual stimulation	10
Mental stimulation	10
Overall experience	10
TOTAL SCORE:	60

CHAPTER 7: Sherlock and Lena

For the next week, John and Sherlock didn't talk about the competition. They talked about some cold cases Sherlock had agreed to review for Lestrade. They talked about the rash of flu at the clinic. They talked about the weather and about the annoyance of tourist season traffic. John went out for drinks with some old rugby buddies, acted macho and flirted a cute blonde. Sherlock worked on his experiment spreadsheets and spent quality time brooding in his blue robe on the couch. And when he wasn't brooding he was neutral and polite and distant.

John did not say, "I've been meaning to ask you about the way you looked that night. I didn't know you could feel that way. What was it, exactly, that you found so arousing? Because I'd really like to know what goes on in your head." And Sherlock did not say, "I did not anticipate that you would be so masterful in bed, John. If you ever decided you could see your way to it, if it wouldn't be too much trouble, I'd really like to know what it felt like to have you to fuck me into the ground."

It would be three weeks before it was John's turn again and he, naturally, had to keep up his training. It was his duty. So he wanked every day. He thought about Lena, her taste, the way she felt, the smell of her, the arch of her body as he pounded into her. But there was always that sense of Sherlock's invisible presence like a dark miasma wrapped around the fantasy, making everything more erotic, more dangerous, giving it that extra edge. And when John came, he saw Sherlock in that raw moment, fingers in his own mouth, erection straining against black leather, looking lost and desperate and shattered.

John tried to figure out what it was that he found so compelling about that image. Was it the idea of Sherlock, ice-water-in-his-veins, Holmes being out of control? Was it that he had looked so different, so not-himself? Was it that John himself was being watched, was he a latent exhibitionist? John couldn't figure it out and finally gave it up as something subconscious that he would never be able to define and catalogue, it just *was*.

By the following Friday, John was itchy and anxious with anticipation. Tonight he'd watch Sherlock with Lena. He found it impossible to imagine what Sherlock would be like having full-on sex, what it would be like watching Lena with another man, what he himself would feel in the role of observer. Maybe he had been 'vanilla', because he had never done anything like this.

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* * *

When John came downstairs, Sherlock was wearing the same outfit he'd worn on Lena's last visit – the black leather pants and black silk T-shirt. John couldn't help but be reminded of the image he'd had in his head all week. He forced himself not to think about it, or about the fact that he'd be seeing two people having sex in his own flat tonight. Because, really, it would be embarrassing for a man his age to be sporting a hard on before Lena even got there.

Sherlock said not a word as John put the white wine and glasses on the table, picked up the room a bit and dimmed the lights. The detective seemed to be brooding, but perhaps he was just putting himself into the role.

As John walked into the sitting room, he found Sherlock making another round of adjustments to the chair John would occupy that evening. It was so unlike him to fuss that John asked, "Are you alright?" even though he felt like an idiot asking it when Sherlock looked so thoroughly bad ass.

"Why wouldn't I be?" Sherlock asked. He looked at John, his face neutral as usual. "You are aware of your role tonight? You'll be required to stay close and pay close attention throughout."

"Yes, I know," John said, rolling his eyes. "Don't worry. It's... your night. I won't do anything to get in your way."

When Lena arrived, there was no sitting and chatting, and no wine either. Typical of Sherlock, he never wasted time when he knew what he had a goal in mind. He went down to open the door to 221b and John waited in his chair. Lena and Sherlock entered the flat, Lena looking quite pretty in a blue blouse and tan skirt, bare legs, flat sandals. She looked a little breathless.

"Hello, John," she said, smiling at him warmly.

"Hi, Lena. Lovely to see you." John smiled back, letting his appreciation show on his face. But he didn't get up or say anything more, as difficult as that was.

Sherlock looked nervous. He paced in front of Lena for a moment, saying nothing. Then gathered himself into a sort of dark cloud. His face changed, from one breath to another, to an expression that was utterly confident, even cocky. He circled Lena slowly. A carnal smile

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played on his lips and his eyes ran over her in way that might be considered obscene. He ducked his head down to smell at her neck on one side, bit at her ear on the other.

“Oh, *Lena*,” he rumbled, his voice rough and deep, “I can’t wait to get these clothes off of you. Do you have any idea how hot you were last week? I was desperate to...” he licked her throat in a long stroke, “... taste you.”

John watched in shock, completely frozen. Did this... did this actually work? Because it outrageous. Or, possibly, effective. Lena was either going to fall to the floor and spread her legs or slap him.

She literally went weak, her knees giving out (*amazing*, John thought). Sherlock caught her with one iron-strong arm around her waist. “I knew you were trouble,” she half laughed, half panted.

“Let me. Show you. The meaning. Of *trouble*,” Sherlock punctuated the words by biting lightly at her neck and jaw. It was a line he would have rolled those icy gray eyes at, had anyone else dared to say it in his presence, but he completely sold it.

Sherlock tugged Lena over to the sofa and sank down, pulling her, roughly, onto his lap. Her legs straddled his hips. He ran both hands up her hips and back, palmed them over her shoulder blades, pulled her down and they were kissing.

John was unable to process any particular emotion. He’d seen Sherlock playing roles before, for cases, even flirting on occasion, to get the information he wanted. This wasn’t so different. Yes, he was acting sexy. Yes, he was obviously turning Lena on. Yet this was all just *soun*Sherlock that John could have been watching a stranger. It felt like he was watching two people he didn’t know snog – a bit awkward really.

And then Sherlock pulled Lena in tighter, those large hands spreading and digging into her shoulder blades. His eyes opened just a bit and they flickered over to John for a few seconds, grey-green and so familiar, closed again, and he deepened the kiss and...

Oh.

It clicked into place in John's mind -- he was seeing Sherlock Holmes kiss, *really* kiss. There were the soft, plump, cupid’s bow lips, pressing, sucking, nibbling, lush and, well, er, lovely, the way only a woman’s lips normally were. There were glimpses of his tongue as it swept through languorous French kisses. And despite all the ‘bad boy’ persona, there was a sweetness in it, a *youngness* that made John’s breath catch in his throat.

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Oh. Hrm. Yes.

Sherlock opened his eyes again, ever so slightly, and looked at John. John licked his lips, not sure what the hell was on his face, but it was probably embarrassing given the fact that he was physically responding, and not even from kissing but from watching someone *else* kiss. But Sherlock just studied him for a moment and slid his eyes shut.

He pushed Lena up and lifted the hem of her blouse. “Off,” he growled. She gasped a laugh and pulled the blouse over her head. Sherlock must have practiced (John could see it now, it was probably on a corpse) because he deftly unhooked her bra and slid it off.

And then Lena was half naked in Sherlock’s lap and Sherlock was lounging back, pulling her into him and using that *plush mouth* on her breasts, those long fingers stroking the pale skin of her back. He was not teasing her nipples, as John had, but going right for it, pulling and sucking, lightly nibbling. His eyes looked up into hers demandingly. And Lena whispered something like *Yes* and squirmed in his lap, rocked her crotch against him.

Fuck.

John felt a rush of blood to the groin. He could hardly believe this was Sherlock, the analytical machine, sprawled on the couch like a debauched rogue. And lovely Lena, half naked, squirming in her short skirt, pushing her breasts harder into his mouth.

And yeah, now this was just uncomfortable, because John was beginning to feel annoyingly warm in his clothes. He was getting a clear sense of how frustrating this night was going to be, and the pair on the couch had barely started.

SHERLOCK

Lena was squirming in his lap and this was the moment when smoke and mirrors would not work. Sherlock knew how to *play* at sex. He knew people (women, men) often found him desirable, and he knew how to read their secret desires and push button x and trigger y to incite an arousal response. A whisper in the ear, a breath on the neck, fingers run up an arm, a glance of feigned heat, muttered promises he never intended to keep. He’d used all that to get what he wanted from time to time. More rarely, he’d had to kiss and fondle. But that was as far as he took it, it never touched him. He always walked away completely unmoved.

This was not like that. He had to sexually perform tonight, be *in flagrante delicto*, which required more than brilliant acting, it required more than cataloguing Lena’s responses and

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proceeding with what she liked best. It required an erection, preferable a very hard and long-lasting one.

It was a dangerous game, but it was one he was determined to win. He would never concede authority to John on such an important subject as human sexuality, obviously. But that now paled in comparison to a deeper compulsion. Sherlock had seen John -- bared, erotic, fucking, coming. He wanted John to see him like that. The idea had filled his head all week; he *had to have it*. Maybe it would change nothing, but if this was all there was, only John looking at him, *really seeing him*, then Sherlock would take it, as mercilessly and with as much damage inflicted as he could.

But to do that, he had to not fail in this.

Sherlock had been half-hard earlier in the kitchen, just being in John's presence. But Lena was demanding his focus, her breasts were in his mouth and it was distracting. He had never seriously tried being with a woman before, but this only confirmed what he'd self-diagnosed. He had no sexual attraction to strangers, and particularly not strange women. Her flesh was soft and warm and she was gasping and wriggling against him, but he felt nothing sexual. It might as well have been an enthusiastic Labrador retriever jumping on him for all the good it did the state of his pants.

But Sherlock Holmes never entered battle without a strategy. He had a mind palace vast and deep and had set up a shelf of memories and fantasies to use tonight. Last week he'd been paying such very exquisite attention. And John was here, so close. Sherlock barely parted his lids and looked at John again. His jaw was clenched tight, his eyes on Sherlock. His tongue swept his lips nervously. John was getting aroused. Good. Sherlock let his gaze linger on those blue eyes as he brought up images -- Lena pulling John's cock out his pants for the first time, his weight heavy and glorious in her hand, the way John's fingers firmly but gently grasped her chin as she took him into her mouth, the sweet arch at the small of John's back as he lay between her legs.

Sherlock groaned, grinding up into Lena. "Feel my cock. Feel how hard you make me."

Lena's pulse quickened and her breath froze for two seconds before she ground down onto him with a whimper. She liked dirty talk. It caused her pulse to throb. She wriggled against him, massaging his cock through two layers of clothes and it felt good, warm pleasure radiated out from the contact. He grabbed her hips, fingers digging in just a little too much, because she liked that, and rutted up into her, spiking the pleasure again, making himself harder.

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He gave her a dark look. “I want to taste you. Take your skirt off. I want my mouth on you, right here.”

Sherlock heard John breath a whispered curse, and he smiled inwardly. *Oh, yes, John, does the idea of that arouse you? Do my words? Do you want to see me tasting her? Sucking her? I want you to. I want you to see it. I want you to want and not be able to have. See the lessons you have already taught me about the power of withholding? I know you, John. This will be so very hard for you to take, won't it? Watching. It will be almost unbearable.*

Sherlock undid the zipper at the back of Lena's skirt and she stood up and took it off, along with her panties. He looked her over slowly, letting her feel the heat of his scrutiny, then slipped down in his seat so that his hips were at the edge of the sofa and his head in the middle of the back cushion. He traced the tip of his tongue along the corner of his mouth and his top lip and held out a hand in a blatant invitation – *use me.*

She came, eagerly, her knees on the sofa, her body upright, her hands bracing on his shoulders. He ran his hands up the naked backs of her thighs and pulled her in so that her groin was to his mouth. Another muffled sound from John and oh, the pained *need* in it was delicious. Sherlock thrust his tongue into her folds. She closed her eyes, her fingers clenched on his shoulders. “Oh, yes,” she breathed. “Yes, suck me like that.” It was the first time he'd heard her say obscenities and that was good. His own dirty mouth was allowing her to indulge in freer behavior, letting her say the things she really wanted to say, ached to say. She would rank him higher for that.

He flicked his tongue against her clitoris, gauging her reactions. He did not care for the taste or the texture, but he was curious to learn the technique. A bit of a wince – too much, too direct. A slow side approach – she tilted her hips left. He experimented with the pressure and angle and speed until she began to jerk in a rhythm, her breath turning to pants and her thighs shaking under his fingers. He supported the back of her thighs with both hands, strong, holding her up, encouraging her to move wantonly.

He shifted his eyes to look at John, never pausing his tongue. John had both hands on the arms of the chair. His jaw was clenched and his face was red. A glance at his lap was unnecessary, but relished nonetheless, to confirm the impressive bulge that was there. Sherlock looked back up into John's eyes. Those eyes were hard blue steel, a soldier holding himself in check. If Sherlock were a criminal, and John looked at him like that, he would be begging to be put into police custody.

Sherlock chuckled. *Oh, John, you hate this, don't you? But you will watch anyway, I will burn this into your brain. You will never again be able to look at this sofa without thinking*

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about me sprawled like this, doing pornographic things to a woman with my tongue. I want you to see that. I want you to not be able to pass this sofa without your glance betraying your thoughts, without your cock going a little hard at the memory.

Sherlock issued John a silent challenge, *watch this*. Then he withdrew his mouth from being buried flush against Lena and sucked at his bottom lip as if savoring the taste. Lena looked down at him, moaned at the sight. And Sherlock began a series of delicate kisses and nibbles and nips and laths of his lengthened tongue against her, moving forward and withdrawing. Because it gave John a much better view of his mouth.

“*Hell!*” John whispered under his breath.

JOHN

Well, holy *fuck*. John had learned something very important about himself tonight. He’d learned that he was *not* cut out to be a voyeur. In fact, it was hard to imagine anything more torturous than to have to sit still and watch two people – worse yet, Sherlock and Lena – going at it right in front of him.

Lena, because he’d just had her last week, and at the sight of her, the *smell* of her, his cock was more than interested in a repeat and could not figure out why it was over here and she was over there. And Sherlock, because the bastard was manipulating the hell out of this and loving every second of it. There would be a payback in Sherlock’s future, oh yes. Something on the order of skin irritant in his sheets or the week-long kidnapping of his SIM card, but it would be swift and it would be bloodless.

Shit. Sherlock bloody Holmes. Sucking off a woman on their sitting room sofa, doing so brilliantly, and managing to look like an indulgent male model at the same time.

John should have known. How had he ever thought that a man who could pick any lock, had the map of London imprinted on his brain, could speak 10 languages and leap tall buildings at a single bound – well, firescapes at least -- could be rubbish at anything? Which was exactly what Sherlock had tried to tell him. But *how*? How could he do this? How could he be so confident, so effective, when he’d never been with a woman before? It was the pinnacle of unfair. John’s first time with a woman, he’d been an inch shy of pathetic.

And then John stopped thinking about how unfair it was. Because even though he knew Sherlock was goading him on purpose, the thing he was doing with his mouth, well, damn, it was *working*. It was driving John round the twist. That damn, perfect mouth, so adept at

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spewing out brilliant observations and cutting insults, it was plump and sweet and it was shining with Lena's juices.

And, *fuck*. Fine. John just wasn't going to look at it anymore.

He looked at Lena instead. Her breasts... in his position, John only had a partial view of her left breast. Did Sherlock do that on purpose? Well then, her arse. John had a lovely view of that, and of Sherlock's long fingers gripping the bottom of it and the tops of her thighs as she rocked and jerked against him. Yeah, that was hot. Her legs were spread open and braced over those black-leather clad hips. Sherlock was slouched down in that boneless way he had, his mouth at the right height for Lena's groin and his hips at the edge of the sofa. John ran his gaze over the two of them, from the bottom of Sherlock's boots on the floor, to Lena's pretty naked feet on the couch, on either side of Sherlock's knees, and up the line of her naked body. She was firm and petite, her thighs, her back, all her sweet pink skin exposed and Sherlock still fully clothed. Damn, they looked good, it was a work of pornographic art.

As if responding to John's appraisal, Sherlock's hip began thrusting up a little, towards Lena but not enough to touch her, only enough to draw John's attention to those hips and the very large bulge between them.

John's mind went a little hazy then. He wondered, idly, what would it be like if they were actually having a threesome? Lena would be up for it, John knew she would. What would it be like if, instead of having to sit here and watch, John could touch, kiss, lick? What would it be like to take Lena from behind as Sherlock had his mouth on her, just like this? To press up, naked, against her back, tilt her hips back a bit, and sink in deep. She'd be so wet and hot, so ready.

Fuck, yes.

God, that would feel amazing. John's mind helpfully supplied more details. Lena, kneeling on the couch over Sherlock, just as she was now. And John would... stand between Sherlock's legs, those long thighs spreading to let him in, pressing on either side of John's knees as he thrust up into Lena... yeah. And that mouth, working on her... that tongue, those lips. Would John be able to feel them? Probably not while they were on her like this, but he might feel the brush of Sherlock's chin against his balls. And those lips might even delve down occasionally and kiss where John and Lena joined... John would stop thrusting and just grind against her, tight and hard, as that mouth and tongue licked and nibbled at the base of his cock, at his...

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Shit. He had to stop thinking like this. He was supposed to be paying attention to Sherlock's technique and his mind was wandering and he was getting himself so hard it hurt.

John realized he was once again staring at Sherlock's mouth. It moved in for several long seconds of probing, then pulled back, plump and wet, back in.

For christ's sake. He had to stop thinking like this.

Or, they could both take Lena on the bed. John would take her from the front and Sherlock from the back. John's hand would be on her hip and Sherlock's above his, on her waist. She would be so full from the two of them, the friction would be incredible. John would suckle at her breast, giving her the stimulation she loved there, while thrusting inside her and feeling... he'd never done it, but he'd once read that you could feel the other man's cock through the wall of muscle. What would that be like? To feel a hard, rigid length thrust and pulse against his as he moved in and out her slick, tight heat, faster and faster?

"I want you to come, come all over me," Sherlock said, his voice dirty and deep.

John snapped out of his reverie, glancing up at Sherlock's eyes guiltily. But Sherlock wasn't looking at him, he was looking up at Lena, poised above him. She was shaking all over and gripping his shoulders hard. Sherlock's hands pulled her in tight and sucked. She gave a breathy scream and came.

SHERLOCK

Lena collapsed against him, limp. He rubbed her back and sides, mindful of the manual stimulation score. He was aware of how wet she was down there and these were very expensive pants. He would like to get her off his lap as soon as possible. And he really wanted to wipe his face, but he supposed that would be Not Good. He looked at John. John had his hands in tight fists and he wasn't looking at them but towards the windows, his face red.

Sherlock was feeling a bit put off from what he'd just done, from having Lena's sweaty, sticky heat draped over him – too hot, too close, too intimate.

"I want to fuck you," he told her, brushing back her hair. "Go into the bedroom and wait for me."

She sat up, looking a little dazed. She studied his face, bringing up her fingers to trace his cheekbones, ran a fingertip over his lips. "My god, you are gorgeous." She kissed him, thrusting her tongue into his mouth in an imitation of what they were about to do. He hummed as if he loved it and squeezed her hard. "Go."

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She went.

Sherlock stood up. John glanced at him, heaved a sigh.

“Coming?” Sherlock asked.

John shook his head minutely, not meeting his eyes. “I... I’m really not cut out for this. I can’t...” He stopped, swallowed. “I need to go wank or there’ll be permanent damage. Be there in five?”

Before Sherlock knew what he was doing, he gripped John’s upper arms, pulling him out of his chair. He only just refrained from shaking him. “You can and you will. *This* is the procedure we agreed upon. You will not leave me hanging.”

Sherlock didn’t mean to sound so vehement and John looked taken aback. “O-okay. Alright. Don’t panic.”

“I’m not panicking.” Sherlock forced himself to let go, dropping his hands to his side.

John had a perplexed frown between his brow.

“You have to see all of it, John,” Sherlock explained, his voice neutral. “Otherwise, you can’t properly rank me.”

“Okay,” John said, still placating. “I get it. I’ll... sod it. I’ll just deal with it. Sorry.”

Sherlock relaxed. For a moment he feared he’d given everything away, but John was too hazy with arousal to notice. So Sherlock indulged himself, taking what he needed. He allowed himself to feel how close he was to John. John was aroused, his breathing still rapid, the blue of his irises nearly subsumed by the black of his pupil, a flush of red against his cheeks, his neck. John licked his lips, nervously. Sherlock watched his tongue. He imagined he could feel the heat of John’s cock, so near, hard and wanting. Just the idea of it and Sherlock was weak in the knees and again fully erect. This was going to work, if he could just keep John close.

John was looking at him strangely. “Well? Don’t leave the lady waiting,” he motioned and Sherlock turned and headed for the bedroom.

“And just so you know, there *will* be payback for this,” John muttered as they crossed the room.

Sherlock smiled to himself. One could only hope.

JOHN

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He followed Sherlock into the bedroom and went immediately to the chair. He did not glance longingly at the bed, though it was a near thing. Lena smiled wickedly at him as he settled, silently telling him that she remembered everything they'd done here last week.

Yeah, thanks for that, John thought. Because I'm not already frustrated enough.

Sherlock wasted no time. He pulled his shirt over his head and ran his hands up and down his chest, his nipples, as he watched Lena intently. It should have been cheesy. It wasn't. It looked completely unconscious, like something he might do alone in his own room, teasing himself, stimulating himself before masturbating. Lena was watching avidly from the bed. She began to touch herself in turn, mirroring Sherlock's moves.

"Damn, the pair of you – you should come with a warning label," she said shakily, without taking her eyes from Sherlock.

Sherlock smiled, a slow sexy smile, totally fake and still electric. He pulled off his boots, undid his flies and pushed his trousers down and off, all in that completely offhand way of his. He wasn't wearing any pants.

John looked away as Sherlock's cock bobbed free. OK, here was the awkward. His flatmate was standing there nude and fully erect. Not really something John ever needed to see in his lifetime.

No, John's mind corrected itself, this was Sherlock Holmes, nude and fully erect. Extraordinary, mercurial, dangerous, amazing, (childish, petulant, irritating), icy, untouchable Sherlock Holmes. You wanted to see this.

John looked. He'd seen various parts of Sherlock naked before, nearly all him, whilst patching wounds or checking for bruises and broken bones, but never all of him so blatantly displayed, and never *that*, and most certainly not in that state.

Neither Lena nor Sherlock were paying attention to John and he allowed himself to stare as Lena scooted forward and traced her fingers up and down the long shaft. Sherlock somehow had a condom packet in his hand, but he didn't put it on yet, allowing her to feel him without it first. Allowing John to get a good look.

John had never given much thought to other men's cocks until this whole ridiculous experiment began. But in the past three weeks, he'd seen plenty of gay porn where they were on display, sometimes huge, sometimes ordinary-looking, sometimes just... weird. And he'd had to imagine it, touching one, sucking one, as part of his preparation. But those were all absurdly abstract ideas compared to this. It hadn't really meant anything other than an anatomical reality he'd have to deal with, a jut of flesh much like his own.

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But this was Sherlock and it was not a video and it was unbearable real. He was not as thick around as John, who was unusually thick, but he was longer, perhaps as long as seven and a half or eight inches. It had a pleasing balance, not too thin, just long and lean, like the man himself. He was circumcised and the glans was the same width as the shaft, sitting prettily (prettily?) on top. His cock was a bit darker than the rest of his pale skin but still pale compared to John's aroused state, more of a dusky pink rather than red.

It was, John supposed, objectively speaking, as these things went, a quite nice cock. Of course every physical aspect of Sherlock was annoying perfect. His body didn't have an inch of fat and it was finely muscled and sculpted, like an alabaster statue. The only excess on him was that incongruously lush arse and mouth. And yet he was basically a walking brain, celibate. Somewhere, a couple of angels from the design department were having a jolly good laugh.

Lena stoked his length and Sherlock's eyes flicked to John for a moment, holding for two beats before they closed. He put his head back, exposing that throat, and hummed, deep in his chest. Lena took the condom from him and rolled it on. Sherlock looked down at her and grasped her hair loosely with one hand. "Suck me," he said.

John's body responded with a shiver even as he was thinking that Sherlock had been watching too many porn movies after all. Lena didn't seem to mind. She tried to move forward but Sherlock held her back by her hair and instead used his hips to push his cock against her lips, then between them as Lena obediently opened.

Then John had to look away, because it was really *too damn much* for a man to have to take. His arousal had calmed a little since the living room, but at the sight of Sherlock pressing into Lena's mouth, it surged back hotly, cruelly intense. How was he supposed to be able to watch something like this? Live? Only a few feet away? Between two people that he... that he cared about? But he knew how Sherlock would sneer about his self-pity and so he forced himself to turn and look.

Sherlock was fucking Lena's mouth. Just light thrusts, not going in deep, but most definitely fucking it. The hand not closest to John was grasping her hair and the other ran up and down his own torso, unselfconsciously as it had when he'd stripped, rubbing himself. His eyes were closed, his face frowning a little, as if he was chasing some thought. What? What could he possibly be thinking about? Lena grabbed onto the backs of his strong thighs and moaned around him, clearly getting off on being held still and fucked like this.

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John couldn't catch a breathy groan before it left his mouth. It sounded embarrassingly loud and Sherlock glanced at him sharply, his eyes dark with lust. He abruptly pushed Lena away. "Enough. Get on the bed."

He almost sounded like himself, imperious. But Lena didn't seem to notice. She pushed back willingly, but had her own ideas about what she wanted next. She knelt on the edge of the bed and tugged Sherlock's arm, pulling him against her. She dragged his head down into a kiss and kissed him deeply, chest to chest, groin to groin.

And as John watched he felt something besides lust twist in his stomach for the first time. They were lovely together. But this was not *just* sex. It felt intimate, Sherlock's arms around her, her arms around him, pressed body to body, a deep and sensual kiss. And John felt a melancholy sadness. He felt sad for Sherlock that this wasn't real, that he was merely acting, that he did not have someone in his life to really hold him like this, to really kiss him like this, because they loved him. He deserved that. He was beautiful and he was incredible and he'd had so little human contact in his life (*freak, sociopath*) and John knew that in spite of Sherlock denying it, he needed this. Maybe he needed it more than most.

And following closely on this thought, sneaking in like it was perfectly ordinary and not at all alarming, was this: *I want to hold him like that. Just like that, pressed warm and tight against me. I want to put my arms around him and kiss him like that, deeply, sweetly.*

It was a strong urge, deep and painfully acute. And then John thought, *Oh, bloody hell.*

This watching thing was really messing with John's brain. Right now his dick was so hard everything looked appealing. And he loved Sherlock, platonically, of course he wanted Sherlock to have this in his life, and John's brain was getting it all twisted round, male and the female, affection and lust, admiration and desire, and the thrust and the heat -- it had gotten cross-wired. And it was perfectly normal to think something like that, momentarily, even about a good friend. But it was not real, and that wasn't how it was with John.

And then Sherlock was turning Lena and urging her onto her hands and knees on the bed and he was pressing his cock into her from behind and John's brain, thankfully, slipped back into gear.

No, no -- it was fine. He had no interest in being on the receiving end of *that*. He definitely wanted to be the one pushing into the soft, pliant heat of a woman, feeling a woman's belly and lush breasts beneath him.

That was the way it had always been and the way it should be.

SHERLOCK

God, the intimacy. The cloying intimacy of it was wearing on him. The mask was getting hard to keep up. To have to hold Lena like that, feel her soft, sweaty body pressed to his, kiss her so deeply, it made his heart pound and not in a good way. He had to move this along, finish this, while he still could.

He shut his eyes and brought up images, special ones he had saved for this moment.

John, lying on this bed with Lena, her leg propped up, rubbing himself over her. The way that had looked, that John had done it for Sherlock, that he was not hiding, but revealing himself, knowing Sherlock could see everything, *wanting* him to see.

God, yes, there... Good.

John holding his cock in his hand, rubbing against Lena, pushing the tip of himself -- against *Lena*.

Sticky, wet, woman.

Sherlock groaned and bit his lip. He swept that image away, grabbing for another.

John in his room, the sounds of his bedsprings. His hand moving rapidly over his cock. Now Sherlock knew exactly what that would look like, the heft and shape of him. He imagined John standing next to Sherlock's bed, his cock going in and out of his hand (as it had Lena's mouth) stroking himself, groaning. Sherlock knew his groan now, had mentally recorded the exact noises he made when he was about to come, the pleasure that raced across his face. *Yes. Good. So good. Yes.*

Sherlock ground into Lena, "It feels so good to fuck you." He nudged her legs further apart, tilted her hips up. He had read about this on a forum. If he could get it just right, his testicles would hit her clitoris on every thrust and some women could come that way. It would help if he didn't have to reach around and touch her.

He tried it, thrusting into her a few times, hard, slapping himself against her. "Oh, fuck, yes," she cried, getting what he was trying to do. She tilted her pelvis down, spread further. He pounded against her. "Yes, there ... yes!" she pushed hard back against him. But her words, her movements, were pulling Sherlock into the moment, crowding his brain with all the real and all the wrong.

John... John is sitting right here. He's watching me. He couldn't stifle a groan when I was in Lena's mouth and now he's watching me take her. Watch me, John. Watch my back as I thrust, watch my legs as they tremble, watch the throb in my carotid artery as I throw my head

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back. Do you want to kiss the pulse there? Bite it? I'm gripping her hips now. Do you wish they were your hips? If I looked at you now would I see what you saw on my face last week? How much you want me? That you would do anything, anything in the world, just to have me for one night?

But Sherlock didn't look at John. Because John wants, he definitely wants, but he doesn't want Sherlock and will never want Sherlock. He wants Lena.

JOHN

Something was wrong. John knew Sherlock as well as any man could know him, and more than was reasonably possible. And something was definitely wrong. The persona he'd been wearing was fading like an image on a bad TV. There was a tension in his shoulders, a sheen of sweat coating his skin, an expression that flickered across his face in brief bursts that was lost, panicked. He had stopped the long thrusts and was just grinding into Lena, biting his lips.

Hell. Sherlock was getting caught in his own giant brain. He was losing it. He was about to very visibly lose it. Lena had her head down against her forearms and she hadn't caught on, not yet, but she would. It was a matter of seconds.

John could not let that happen, couldn't, any more than he could watch Sherlock take a bullet if it was in John's power to jump in front of him. In one of those remarkable instances of perfect clarity that John sometimes got, he saw it all (Sherlock's studied neutrality as he said, *"It's your job to watch tonight. I need you to stay close."* Sherlock, panicked: *"You will not leave me hanging."* The way Sherlock's gaze kept moving onto him, briefly, all night). And John understood.

He softly cleared his throat. Sherlock turned to look at him, those green/gray eyes awash in negative thoughts, like bitter shards of glass. John nodded once at him, staring calm and sure into Sherlock's eyes. Then he reached down to stroke his own erection through his jeans with one hand while he opened his belt. Sherlock's eyes dropped like a stone to watch John's hand. He swallowed.

Lena could not see John as he unzipped, pulled himself out and ran his thumb over the hard tip, sliding in pre-cum.

Sherlock heaved a gut-wrenching breath that sounded like it was pulled up from somewhere deep inside. He closed his eyes, his head fell back and he began moving again inside Lena, fast and hard. "Oh, god," he chanted, "Oh, god."

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It took no more than a minute before Lena shuddered all over and cried out, climaxing. Sherlock thrust into her again, once, twice, and held, his fingers pressing her hips to bone white, a guttural cry wrung from his lips.

John's cock twitched in desperate empathy and it was a very near thing that he refrained from pulling himself off right there, hard and fast, staring at the two of them. But he forced himself to zip up his pants and go into the bathroom. He came, standing at the sink, eyes squeezed shut, trying very hard not to think of anything.

* * *

Lena filled out her form in the kitchen, plied, once again, with tea made by John. Sherlock was quiet. When she was ready to leave, he kissed her, briefly, on the cheek. "Thank you," he said.

The bad boy persona was gone, but if Lena noticed she didn't mention it. She took Sherlock's hand, squeezed it, and smiled.

"Shall I walk you out?" John asked.

He stepped out of 221b with her and on the sidewalk she turned. "Good-night, John. I hope tonight wasn't too strange for you."

"Ah, not as much fun as last week, no." He grinned and brushed the hair back from her forehead. "I'd really like to see you again."

Lena looked like she hadn't been expecting that. "But... what about Sherlock?"

John blushed. Of course, Lena would prefer Sherlock. He debated how much to say, but the competition was done for Lena. She'd already ranked them both. He didn't think it would be too much of a betrayal to tell the truth.

"Honestly, I don't think he'd be interested," John said, trying not to hurt her feelings. "He's mostly into men."

She blinked at him. "No, John, what about *you* and Sherlock?"

John felt his face grow hot. Christ, if even a woman who had just fucked both of them thought that... "It's not like that," John said. "I'm... we're just friends."

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Lena had a strange look at her face as she searched his eyes. She spoke carefully. “Look, this has been a huge turn-on, like something to remember when I’m 75. But to get emotionally involved... I don’t know, John. It’s kind of a quagmire.”

“It’s not a quagmire,” John said.

She considered it. “I’m slammed the rest of the month, then I have a trip with a girlfriend planned. If in July you’d still like to see me, give me a call.” She pulled out a notebook and jotted down her number.

She pressed it into his hand and kissed his cheek. “You are super adorable,” she whispered into his ear. “You both are. Good luck.”

Sherlock was already changed when John came back in the door – his clothes, his manner. He was the consulting detective once again – eyes cool, voice dry, face revealing nothing. It was spooky. John was starting to wonder if he had any idea what was real anymore.

Sherlock looked at John briefly in that calculating way of his, as if he knew everything John thought, everything he’d been up to. Of course he did. He probably knew exactly what pocket Lena’s number was in. But he didn’t say anything.

“Do you want to talk about tonight or...” John started lamely.

“You need to fill out your quiz.” Sherlock put it down on John’s desk, along with a pen. “And when you do, *don’t* patronize me.” He said the last in an impatient tone. “Lena’s quiz is on the table but please refrain from looking at it until you’ve completed yours.”

“Yes, Professor Holmes,” John said sarcastically.

“I’m going out.” Sherlock put on his coat.

“Is it a case?” John asked hopefully. Something like that would be nice right now – something to distract him, something familiar, something where the two of them could be what they’d always been.

“Research,” Sherlock said. “Nothing dangerous. Don’t wait up.” He started out the door, but he paused. He didn’t turn around. “I meant to ask... Why did you... that thing that you did tonight... You could have won the competition right then.”

From the flat tone of his voice he might have been talking about the laundry. But he wasn’t. John felt a flush of embarrassment, a knot of nerves in his stomach, hot and twisting. “I—I guess because I want to beat you, not see you humiliated.”

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Sherlock turned to look at him sharply, remembering. A small, confused frown creased his forehead. "You never stop surprising me, John."

"Yeah? Well, I hope I never do."

Sherlock's searched his face for another moment, as if trying to read him. And then, like quicksilver, he was down the stairs.

John sat heavily at his desk and looked out the window for a long time, pen tapping against the quiz form.

Was it just any cock? John wondered. Or was it me?

Does he want me? Does he want anyone?

Had everything with Lena been an act? And if so, was sex always like that for Sherlock? Was he capable of genuinely feeling anything?

The idea bothered John. Because he didn't wish that for Sherlock. But of course, Sherlock was himself and no one else, and if that was the way it was for him, then John could understand why he'd chosen not to bother for so long.

And then John felt guilty that this competition was making Sherlock have sex, if he really struggled with it. No one should put themselves in that position. But he knew what Sherlock would say if John tried to suggest that they stop or pried into his 'feelings'. He would sneer that he wasn't a child. He would look at John like he was an idiot. And anyway, it might be totally different with Ryan, a man. Sherlock might really get off on it.

And anyway again, there was a sense to this whole thing now that it was a freight train; it had its own momentum and it wasn't going to stop, not until it had reached wherever the hell it was going.

And all of that was utter shite, because the simple truth was, John didn't want it to stop. Sherlock watching him... Him watching Sherlock... John knew it was pathetic and inexcusable but... he liked it. He was excited by it, terribly. He wanted to get to the bottom of it, find what was real.

He wanted it to happen again.

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Subject Name: Lena	Quiz Taker: John
Tester Name: Sherlock	
Date:	

221B Quiz Form

Complete the following rankings as honestly as possible in evaluating the tester. In each category 1 indicates 'least satisfactory' and 10 indicates 'most satisfactory'. If a given category was not part of the evening's activities, place a 0 in that field.

Category	Ranking (1 to 10)
Manual Stimulation	8
Oral Stimulation	10
Penetrative sex	8
Visual stimulation	10
Mental stimulation	10
Overall experience	9
TOTAL SCORE:	55

Subject Name: Lena	Quiz Taker: Lena
Tester Name: Sherlock	
Date:	

221B Quiz Form

Complete the following rankings as honestly as possible in evaluating the tester. In each category 1 indicates 'least satisfactory' and 10 indicates 'most satisfactory'. If a given category was not part of the evening's activities, place a 0 in that field.

Category	Ranking (1 to 10)
Manual Stimulation	9
Oral Stimulation	10
Penetrative sex	10
Visual stimulation	10
Mental stimulation	10
Overall experience	10
TOTAL SCORE:	59

You are a sex god. xx Lena

CHAPTER 8: Sherlock and Ryan

SUNDAY

John had made stir fry and rice. Sherlock was being cooperative enough to sit down at the table in the sitting room, but he was mostly pushing the food around with his fork.

As per usual, they were doing a bang-up job of not talking about the competition. It ought to have been weird, John thought, that they could sit around the flat, avoid biological hazards on the kitchen table, watch telly, eat, come and go, and in general live their normal 221b life, as if they hadn't both seen each other naked and shagging.

And, yes, well it *was* weird that they could do that. But they could, apparently. John looked up at Sherlock fondly. "Try the chicken. It's lovely. And I did slave for hours you know."

Sherlock gave him a raised eyebrow but speared a bite-sized piece of the chicken. "It took you forty-two minutes, from the time you entered the kitchen to the time we sat down with our plates."

"Nice of you to notice. But you've got to add the shopping in, and the time spent rearranging the fridge to fit the package of chicken in there without it being lethally contaminated."

Sherlock ate the piece of chicken and murmured something that was like a thank you, if you squinted.

"So..." John said. "Lena ranked you higher than she did me. You must feel pretty chuffed about that."

Sherlock gave John a bored look. "'Chuffed', no. In any case, we're still tied."

"Yeah, but only because you ranked me all 10's that first night." John took a bite and chewed slowly, watching Sherlock.

Sherlock shrugged. "You have an impressive array of techniques."

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“But despite my ‘impressive array of techniques’, Lena ranked you higher than me by 4 points even though it was your first time with a woman. I’m not sure my ego will ever recover. I do have a reputation to uphold, you know.”

“Lena is an idiot.”

John just looked at him, waiting for more.

Sherlock gave his ‘do I have to explain everything’ sigh. “I could see during her interview that she has a danger complex – obvious. Why else would a single, attractive woman respond to an ad like ours on a swinger site? She was aroused at the voyeurism and clinical sexuality of our experiment. I suspect she had a profound sexual encounter in her youth, probably not her first, with a man who was a little cruel and extremely verbally and visually explicit. It was the most arousing of her life and she’s tried to find it again. When you were with her she responded most strongly to your sense of command, to being manipulated, certain positions... she likes dirty talk and blatant exhibitionism. I gave her what she wanted.”

“Amazing,” John said, shaking his head. “Can you do that with anyone? Deduce exactly what they want in bed and give it to them?”

“I *could* do it with most people, if I chose to. Some people are harder to read. And some I can read, but I can’t give them what they want.”

“That’s hard to believe,” John said, neutrally.

Sherlock’s lip twitched in what, for him, was a sarcastic smirk. “I can’t change myself into a large, well-hung Jamaican.”

John laughed. “No, I guess not. Though if anyone could do, it would be you.”

“Or a Playboy centerfold.”

John didn’t say anything to that.

“Your *technique* was far superior to mine, John. You have a genuine passion for pleasing people. I don’t. That does not, however, equate to knowledge and authority on sexual matters – or winning this competition.”

“Apparently not. The fact remains, coming out of my best event, we’re tied. I doubt I will outperform you with a man. No doubt you know Ryan’s deepest fantasies already. They’re probably labelled in a pie-chart in Excel.”

Sherlock put down his fork and took a drink of tea. “Are you suggesting that you want to concede?”

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John snorted a laugh. “Give me credit for not being a total dick. I’m not going to quit because I’m not winning. You did what *you* were uncomfortable with. I’ll keep up my end. So to speak.”

Sherlock cocked an eyebrow at him. “The term ‘not winning’ is hardly applicable when the score is tied. As for the next round, Ryan kissed you. He finds you very attractive.”

John stopped eating and blushed, face going slack. “Oh, god. Sometimes I still stumble on moments when I *hear* us having conversations like this. And it’s--”

“My point was this: if you can avoid a sexual identity crisis mid-coitus, you’ll do well. I’ve evaluated your techniques in depth, and the majority of your skills, particularly oral and manual, are broadly transferable to the male gender. And of course, penetration is--”

John put up his hand. “Yes, thanks for that vote of confidence, Sherlock. And by the way, *creepy*.”

“Is it?” Sherlock asked, surprised.

John sighed. “No, you git. It’s... fine. Though please don’t ever show me the evaluation. Or publish it. Or talk about it. Now eat your dinner.”

* * *

Sherlock had his strategy prepared for round three, his night with Ryan. He knew precisely what he was going to do, and he was confident in his ability to execute the plan. But he still had butterflies in his stomach. Despite having reacquainted himself with sex through research and copious amounts of masturbation in the past weeks, having sex with another person was still a new and raw experience. And the stakes were high. Higher than they ever had been before in his life, possibly, outside of life-and-death decisions. And maybe even those. Because dead was simply dead after all. But *feelings*, they were torture.

It was a kind of sickness that had taken him over, like a craving for cocaine. It had started with his need to train for this competition, reawaken his libido, his discovery that only John could rouse him. But he might have been able to keep it all purely mental, to control it, never reveal it, if John had not been... the way he had been, that first night with Lena.

The combination of his beautiful (perfect, sturdy, compact) body, his thick cock, seeing him so confident and skilled, and, most of all, seeing that steely calm in him, the quiet *command*, as he took over his partner’s body and mind.... It was too much for Sherlock to deny or

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resist. That moment when John had looked at him and climaxed – that had been the moment when Sherlock understood that, perverse as he was, impatient as he was, demanding as he was, prone to addiction as he was, that he *must have John* or die trying.

It was frightening. He had never been in the grip of such a strong passion for someone's physical body. It was a hideous weakness, but he didn't know how to stop it. Worse, he didn't want to. He wanted to indulge it. Repeatedly.

The only thing that restrained him, the only hard limit for which he would give up trying to seduce John, was the possibility of losing John's friendship and companionship forever. Because as much as he wanted John's body, he could not live without John's mind, his heart, his good will. It was possible that John was simply incapable of wanting him, and that any approach on Sherlock's part would permanently damage the trust between them. And that's why he had to be so very, very sure.

The experiment was proving invaluable in this.

In the end, it all came down to a need to understand John, know what John wanted. Because, frustratingly, the more familiar Sherlock became with John, the less he was able to deduce John's feelings. John had been extremely aroused seeing Sherlock with Lena. And just when Sherlock had convinced himself that it had all been a reaction to Lena, to *a woman*, John had shocked him. He had understood Sherlock was struggling and he had exposed himself, stroked, touched... for Sherlock's eyes only. *John had touched his cock while looking into Sherlock's eyes and willing him to desire, to orgasm.*

John was undoubtedly a loyal friend, but would he have done that if his heterosexuality was unshakable? Sherlock didn't think so. But it was not 100% conclusive. He needed more data.

Tonight there would be no woman involved. And though John had accepted Ryan as a sexual partner, Sherlock was sure it purely a 'best of a bad lot' scenario. So if he showed definite arousal tonight, it would, at the very least, be promising.

Sherlock showered and dressed carefully, choosing clothes John would most closely associate with him, familiar black trousers, fitted white button-down shirt. He would be acting out a play tonight, as he had with Lena, but in this performance he'd be playing himself.

JOHN

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Sherlock had been really brilliant in the little details he'd put into the experiment – like the fact that each of them would lead with the gender they were familiar with, allowing the other to watch. Because it seemed like a good thing that John would be able to experience his first *live gay sex* as a spectator sport, giving him a chance to suss out how he really felt about it before it was 'batter up,' so to speak. Of course, having to spend a second Friday night in a row watching his flatmate get off while he could do nothing but stare was likely to give John the most sexually frustrating two weeks of his life. But tonight he was more than willing to take an auxiliary role.

He hadn't expected the low, soft glow of pre-arousal that already warmed his belly as he sat in the sitting room waiting for Ryan to arrive, or that his pulse would quicken when Sherlock strode out of his bedroom, buttoning the cuffs of an impeccably pressed white shirt. He looked... very Sherlock.

"Well?" Sherlock asked him, holding out his arms and doing a 360.

As if he's going out on a date, John thought. Which he sort of was. It was definitely a first in their friendship, but John nodded. "Yeah, fine. You look good."

It was a pathetic understatement. Sherlock wasn't wearing a jacket, and his shirt was very tight. Even his black trousers were fitted, showing off his lean body, long legs, and the puzzlingly unlikely swell of his arse. Sherlock nodded distractedly, not really looking at John. John looked away, pondering once again the cruel whims of biology that left him at 5'7" and his flatmate looking *like that*.

The warmth in John's stomach grew a little deeper, a little sharper at the fresh realisation that he would soon see that body completely unclothed and in various sexual acts. It was a little alarming how much he wanted to see it again, to get a good, deep, raw look into the enigma that was Sherlock Holmes. What would he be like tonight? With a man? Would he get lost inside his own massive intellect again? Would he be fully into it?

John felt a bit guilty about being so curious about it. It really was not normal, to want to understand your best friend's sexuality.

But this was the last time he'd see it anyway, so he might as well take the opportunity....

Unless they started doing this as a regular kink. But, no, not even *they* couldn't be that screwed up – him watching Sherlock, Sherlock watching him. And he had a hard enough time getting his girlfriends to put up with Sherlock when he was merely *texting* him.

John made himself calm down and just wait and see how the night unfolded. Reconnaissance. Basic military strategy. He would formulate a plan later. For now he needed to be alert and watch.

SHERLOCK

Sherlock let Ryan in at the door of 221B. The school teacher attempted a smile that was painfully awkward. Sherlock swept his eyes over the man while he stood on the door stoop, quickly deducing.

Ryan was extremely nervous, a 7 on a 10 scale. It had been just over a year since he'd last had a satisfactory sexual encounter (bad breakup preceded and teaching profession made being openly gay dangerous). He also found Sherlock sexually attractive (not as attractive as John, but Sherlock could not fault him for that). In other words, he was eager. Sherlock would have to be careful or the encounter would end prematurely. Then again, that conflicted with prime director A for this evening, which required not being careful at all.

"Come in," Sherlock said, faking a reassuring smile.

"Thank you," Ryan stepped in. "I brought some wine." He held up the bottle.

"Ah!" Sherlock eyed it with a frown, took the bottle.

Ryan started to remove his coat.

"No," Sherlock said, bringing up a hand to tug the coat back up.

Ryan paused. "Are we going out?"

"No," Sherlock said, stepping closer. "But you should remove the glasses I think." He carefully withdrew Ryan's glasses with one hand, folded them neatly and put them in Ryan's coat pocket, buttoning up the placket.

"Oh," Ryan said, blushing at the light contact. "Um..."

Sherlock put his finger and thumb to Ryan's chin to stop him from talking and kissed him.

It was a slow, careful kiss, designed to calm Ryan and make him cooperative. Ryan gasped in surprise, but Sherlock kept his lips firm and ran the tip of his tongue along the seam of Ryan's mouth. Ryan made a noise somewhere between a breath and a whimper and just sort of attacked. He parted his lips and thrust his tongue into Sherlock's mouth, grasping onto his forearms. Ryan had just recently brushed his teeth, but he tasted faintly of truly wretched teacher's lounge coffee. Sherlock allowed the kiss, sucking gently at Ryan's lips and tongue, until Ryan was hard and hazy around the edges. Sherlock pulled away.

"God, I can't believe I'm doing this," Ryan said, his breathing rapid.

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“Shall I pinch you?” Sherlock asked with a sexy smirk.

Ryan smiled – and then looked alarmed. Sherlock inwardly rolled his eyes. “That was a joke. No BDSM tonight. You’re entirely safe – assuming you have no objections to blowjobs and anal sex?”

Ryan’s eyes widened. He shook his head.

“Wonderful. Now come upstairs.”

Sherlock tugged Ryan up the stairs, holding his hand. He stopped outside the sitting room door. He placed the wine on the floor of the landing. “For later,” Sherlock said. He paused, his hand on the doorknob. “Are you ready?”

Ryan’s eyes flicked to the door, uncertain. “Ready for what?”

“I plan to snog you senseless once we’re inside.”

“Oh,” Ryan said, swallowing thickly. “Okay.”

“Good. Give me a moment.”

Sherlock closed his eyes for several seconds and took a deep breath. When he opened them again he was looking at Ryan completely differently, as if he was the last hors d’oeuvre on the table and Sherlock was starved.

Ryan flushed.

“Yes,” Sherlock said intently, and he opened the door.

JOHN

John thought he heard the murmur of voices outside the door, but he couldn’t hear what they were saying. And then the door opened and Sherlock and Ryan stumbled in and everything went rather fuzzy after that.

They had little more than crossed the threshold, Sherlock laughing at something and Ryan looking a little dazed. And then Sherlock stopped and stared at Ryan. His gaze was so heated that it could have illustrated a Wikipedia entry on “eye sex”. He grasped the lapels of Ryan’s coat, shoved him back against the door and crashed his lips down in a kiss.

Ryan whimpered and Sherlock moaned and something inside John’s stomach turned over, hot and slick. He stared, mouth agape as Sherlock ravished Ryan against their sitting room

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door. He was kissing Ryan, hungrily, luxuriously, and there was that mouth again, the mouth that had haunted John all week like a disembodied object of lust, nipping, sucking, feasting -- glimpses of a tongue in rich swirls and deep parries. And then Sherlock was slipping Ryan's coat off his shoulders, pushing it down his arms and off, to pool at Ryan's feet. He rubbed those long-fingered hands over Ryan's chest, his mouth never missing a beat in its plunder.

Sherlock finally withdrew to sear kisses across Ryan's jaw and neck and Ryan gasped in a breath. "*Christ*," he said. His palms were flat against the door behind him, either with shock or as an aid in staying upright. His eyes found John's and he gave him a bewildered, helpless look.

"I want you," Sherlock said, his voice deep and throaty as he kissed Ryan's jaw. His fingers smoothly worked at the button of Ryan's shirt. "Please let me have you." He sounded desperate.

"Oh, *god*. I—yes."

Something about the scenario – Ryan's hesitancy, Sherlock frontal assault against the door – was touching a nerve deep in John's brain. He found that he was biting on a knuckle and his erection was pressed up painfully against his zip. He was absolutely rooted, unable to look away. Some small, niggling voice told him this was *wrong*, but he pushed that away because right now this was exactly what he wanted to see, what John *needed* to see, and his body wanted more.

Sherlock had Ryan's shirt open, and he pulled it to either side, revealing bare skin. Ryan's chest was pale and sleek and trim, if a little soft. Sherlock ran his hands up and down, those fucking violinist hands rubbing and stroking over pale skin and brown nipples, and John shivered. And then Sherlock was kissing Ryan's mouth again, lavishly, groaning while tugging at his belt, as if he could not get enough. Ryan made a half-hearted effort to open Sherlock's pants but when Sherlock's clothed erection thrust up into his hand he whimpered and seemed to lose all motor control. Sherlock was hard and tenting the front of his trousers impressively. John stared.

Yes, okay, this was definitely different than Lena. If this was an act it was a bloody convincing one. Did Sherlock really want Ryan so badly? Was it because of Ryan, or just because it had been years since he'd been with a man?

And then Sherlock dropped to his knees, and John's brain stopped whatever modest attempts at thought it had been engaged in. He leaned forward in his chair, his heart pounding out of his chest, and the only thing running through his head was *yes, god, please*.

SHERLOCK

He was on his knees. He tugged the trousers and pants in front of him down to mid-thigh and pushed the shirt up. Ryan's cock was almost fully hard, but not as hard as John was, John who was sitting behind Sherlock fully aroused. Sherlock knew because he could hear John's ragged breathing and was acutely aware of stifled noises—almost inaudible gasps and breathy sounds in John's throat that he was not even aware he was making. John was responding to this scenario. So was Sherlock. He was achingly hard and now there was no thought, no plotting. He gave himself over to instinct and imagination and sensation and the feel of firm male flesh under his palms.

He ran his hands up Ryan's thighs and buried his face in his hip, stroking up and down, his hands moving thighs to hips to ribs, ribs to hips to thighs. He laid the left side of his face on Ryan's hip so that Ryan's cock, jutting out from his body, was lying against Sherlock's cheek. It was a very visual image and it was for John. Sherlock closed his eyes and breathed, smelling a trace of sweat and musk and, faintly, chalk dust and wood. He drank in Ryan's trembling beneath his hands, the cock warm against his cheek, the stifled sounds from John. Sherlock didn't have to look to know that John's knuckle was in his mouth, and that he was biting it in an effort to stay quiet.

Sherlock pulled away and slipped a condom from the pocket of his trousers. His own erection was strong and a large bulge was visible standing out from his kneeling form. He ran his hand over it, once, lightly, before opening the foil packet. He wanted to draw John's eyes to it, wanted John to know that he was as aroused by this as John was. Sherlock rolled the condom onto Ryan, and then Sherlock did what he had not done in 12 years - he took a man into his mouth.

He closed his eyes, groaning at the plump weight of the glans as he sucked just the tip between his lips. Ryan's hips shuddered, and he hissed a curse. His head fell back on the door with a thump. And it was as if John was behind him, watching, and also above him and under his tongue. Sherlock had imagined doing this to John many times since seeing him with Lena. He knew the size and weight of John, had a faint idea of his smell and had tried to conjure up his taste. And now there was something real, something tangible, a hard length in his mouth. The feel of it sent a spiraling wave of pleasure through his groin.

Ryan (John) in his mouth. John watching him.

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This is what I want to do to you. This is me, John, worshipping your cock. Feel this, because every lick, every suck, every hot breath I breathe on this flesh belongs to you.

Sherlock moaned and licked Ryan from base to tip, lathing with the flat of his protruded tongue. Then he used his hand to control the first few inches of Ryan's erection, rolling it in his open mouth, against his tongue, rubbing it along his lips, lavishing it with long licks, pushing it in, left, right, feeding it into his cheek with teasing thrusts. He knew the moment the bulge in his cheek was visible to John because he heard a sharp muttered curse from behind him. The blowjob was as blatant and visual and erotic as Sherlock could make it. And the thought John watching him doing this, helpless to stop himself from imagining what it would feel like, was so intense Sherlock could have come right then if he had allowed it.

Ryan was watching him, too, his head tilted down as his muscles were drawn tighter and tighter. Ryan did not do dirty talk but a regular stream of 'ohs' and 'ahs' and huffs were streaming from his mouth, and he was thrusting lightly now, unable to help it, a hand loosely in Sherlock's hair, trying to get *more* than the torturous teasing. He was too sensitive, already too close, but Sherlock couldn't stop now. He closed his index finger and thumb tightly around the base of Ryan's cock to keep him from coming and sucked him all the way down, pulled almost off, sucked him down again, hollowing his cheeks, taking Ryan in deep.

Behind him John whispered, *god, yeah*, in a voice that went right to Sherlock's cock. He whimpered and clutched Ryan's thighs with both hands, taking him in hungrily, his own need tightening in his belly -- *more*. But already Ryan was pushing Sherlock's shoulder, urging him back. Sherlock froze. He stopped sucking and let Ryan's cock fall heavily from his lips. He leaned back on his heels, arms behind him to brace on the floor and looked up at Ryan, eyes half-lidded, chin wet. The position caused the bulge in Sherlock's pants to jut obscenely and he almost wanted to laugh at the thrill it gave him, being hard, being *seen* hard. Ryan gazed down at him, looking a little like a deer in headlights – a very aroused and debauched deer in headlights.

"I can't – I'm sorry," Ryan said. "It's been so long and you... *God*, your mouth. I don't want to come yet."

Sherlock rested his weight on one hand and with the other he cupped and stroked himself through his trousers. "All right," he said, his voice dark and rough. "Then, please, will you fuck me?"

He heard John exhale a growl through bared teeth. Sherlock didn't look at John, but he wanted to. He felt a bubble of triumph at the sound, at what he was doing to John. He could not be mistaking those sounds, the need in them. But he kept his eyes fixed on Ryan.

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Ryan's throat worked anxiously. "If you really want me to, I will. Or I can bottom. I don't mind."

"I'd really like it if you would fuck me. I've already prepared myself."

"Okay," Ryan said.

"Bedroom," said Sherlock.

JOHN

It took several long seconds of silence before John blinked and realised that Sherlock and Ryan had left the room. Hearing Sherlock Holmes say 'please will you fuck me' had short-circuited his handle on reality as we know it. He sat in the chair, frozen in shock and hard as a rock. And then Sherlock strode back in and pulled him up by the arm.

"Come *on*, John," he said, impatiently, without really looking at him.

"I—Sorry," John muttered.

Sherlock dragged him to the bedroom doorway, shoved him inside, and abruptly turned away. John found his own way to the chair, thinking briefly about how difficult it was to walk in these jeans when he was this erect. His hands were shaking. He stared down at them numbly.

Sherlock was stripping by the bed, with even less ceremony than he had with Lena. His eyes never left Ryan for a moment. Ryan was on the bed. He'd already removed the shirt Sherlock had unbuttoned and was now shoving off his trousers and pants. There was an expression of disbelief on his face as he stared at Sherlock's increasing nudity, as if he couldn't quite comprehend who he was with or how he had got here.

And John did have enough coherency to think, *fuck yes, you bastard*. This was a red letter day for Ryan. John looked him over, with some recognition that he himself would be making love to that body next week. Ryan was quite nice-looking, smooth-skinned, clean lines, not overly muscular but not out of shape, body hair either non-existent (on his chest) or downy and fine (on his legs). His brown hair was soft and long. His face was attractive and mild. As men went, he was appealing enough.

But he did not rate the pale perfection, the unearthly beauty, the crackling sensual energy of Sherlock Holmes, and everyone in the room knew it.

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And then Sherlock was completely naked and erect. He ran a palm over his own cock and gave it a few slow strokes as he leaned smoothly over to grab a bottle of lube from the bedside table.

John stopped thinking about Ryan.

God, he is so... Beautiful? Hot? Perfect? John really didn't have words or even an understanding of what he was feeling, why he was so fascinated. Except that he'd always been fascinated by Sherlock and this was Sherlock as exposed as John had never seen him, as it was humanly possible to be.

Sherlock crawled onto the bed, bottle in his hand. Graceful as a cat, he lay down on his side next to Ryan, his erection bobbing elegantly (the prat). Sherlock tossed the bottle between them.

"It shouldn't take much, but you should make sure I'm still open."

Ryan propped himself up on an elbow, facing Sherlock. "Okay." He starting kissing Sherlock again, as if drawn irresistibly to that mouth. They kissed languorously, and Ryan shifted closer until they were lying, both on their sides, pressed together. Ryan stroked down Sherlock's side, ran a hand over his arse. He shifted his hips to press their cocks against one another. Sherlock made a low 'mmm' sound, and Ryan moaned as they rutted their cocks together with greedy thrusts. Ryan's was still sheathed in a condom and Sherlock's long, dusky pink cock was bare and hard. They both seemed to find the sensation... extremely enjoyable.

John's mouth went dry. Yes, *this* was gay sex. A blowjob was a blowjob, even if the person giving it had a raging hard-on, but this, two cocks in direct contact, was most definitely gay. It felt nothing at all like the videos John had watched. It was real and it was slow and it was... really, really erotic. The way watching two women together (only on video, mores the pity) had always really turned John on. There was something about the sight of those two cocks thrusting against one another (and, oh god, now Sherlock was wrapping those long fingers around both of them and stroking them with his fist), that was purely sexual, primal.

Ryan pulled his hips back, out of Sherlock's hand, nuzzling down his chest. "Jesus, you're incredible. We'd better do this."

He fished around on the bed for the bottle, flipped the lid and squirted lube on the fingers of his left hand. John stiffened in his chair, feeling anticipation and a little dread. This was *definitely* gay sex, and he watched as Sherlock brought up a leg to put his foot on the bed and Ryan touched him, softly, running his slick fingers between the cleft of that beautiful arse, before circling in and pushing.

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Sherlock arched his back a little and groaned as Ryan inserted a finger. Ryan fucked him with it, gently, and then inserted another.

“You’re still open,” Ryan said with a hushed voice.

“God, yes, more.” Sherlock closed his eyes and tilted his head back.

Ryan complied, and now only his thumb and pinky were visible as his fingers slowly thrust up and inside.

Fuck. John’s cock pulsed painfully in his jeans. He had never seen anything like this, nothing. It was dirty and obscene and crazy hot.

Ryan hastily removed his fingers. His hand shook on the bottle as he squirted out more lube and slicked up his cock.

“I don’t know how long I can last,” Ryan said, as he moved over Sherlock. “God, you’re – you’re so beautiful.”

Sherlock, impatient now, rolled onto his back and parted his legs, holding his arms up to receive Ryan. And then Ryan was aligning himself and pushing in. He seemed to hesitate at first, but Sherlock was having none of it. He pinned the back of Ryan’s thighs with his feet and thrust his hips up and Ryan slid in deep with a strangled cry.

Oh, Christ. Holy bloody hell. Ryan was fucking Sherlock. Sherlock Holmes, on his back, being fucked and looking for all the world like a wanton wood nymph while doing it, straining up, wild and so incredibly sensual.

John was gripping his thighs with both hands, fingers digging into the muscle. His cock twitched, so fucking desperate, and he wasn’t sure he had ever been this painfully hard and unable to do something about it. He wanted more than anything to unzip and touch himself, toss off as he watched them, imagining what it felt like to thrust into that tight, slick heat. It would feel so good to touch himself. They weren’t paying attention. And it wouldn’t take him long and he, fuck, he *had to*.

His fingers were on his button when Sherlock turned his head to the side and looked at him. It was the first time Sherlock had looked at him all night, and his eyes were blazing with lust and intense pleasure. John blushed and his hand froze.

He felt locked in that gaze, unable to look away or move as Sherlock’s white body arched under Ryan. Sherlock’s hands slid down to grab Ryan’s arse, pulling him in deeper, tighter on the in thrusts, grinding up against him.

“God, please,” Sherlock said, his eyes never leaving John’s.

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John clenched his jaw, clenched his hand into a fist, shook his head at Sherlock helplessly. *I can't. Fuck, you're killing me.* Sherlock would not look away, his gaze burning into John's, clutching Ryan tighter, thrusting his own hips up harder.

Ryan fucked him with a mix of slow and fast strokes and grinds, his face buried deep in Sherlock's neck, his shoulders heaving. Sherlock met him thrust for thrust, bowing his spine, clutching at Ryan's back, at his arse in a way that was not at all gentle, not at all the way a woman would be. It was rough and hard and desperate. John swallowed but he never blinked, never broke Sherlock's gaze. *Come for me, John thought, God, you're perfect. I want to see you come.*

Before long, Ryan drew a shuddering breath, his body shaking. "Christ, you're so tight. I'm not going to last."

Sherlock broke eye contact with John then and moved a hand down to his own prick and began stroking. Ryan stopped moving entirely and, holding himself up on one arm, reached down to wrap his free hand around Sherlock's as it stroked. Sherlock looked down at himself, at he and Ryan's hands moving more and more rapidly over his stiff cock. His stomach muscles clenched. Ryan watched. John watched. The contraction of Sherlock's lean abs under their moving hands grew closer and closer together as he strained and Sherlock began to quiver. "Oh god," he said bowing his back and nearly unseating Ryan. "Oh fuck, oh... oh --" He bit his lips, eyes screwed shut, and his cock pulsed, throbbed. Ribbons of semen shot over his stomach and chest.

John blinked, stared.

And then Ryan was pounding into Sherlock once, twice, three times and he froze with a groan.

John was out of the chair and out of the room before Ryan had finished coming. He pounded up the stairs to his room, slammed the door shut and fell back against it. He ripped open his jeans with both hands, and grasped himself hard. He was so damp with pre-cum and so slick with sweat that he needed no lubrication. He fucked up into his fist, head thrown back, his mind flitting from image to image, unable to stop, unable to focus -- Sherlock rubbing a cock against his plump lips, that voice saying *'please fuck me'*, Ryan thrusting into that pale body, Sherlock staring at John as he was fucked, his eyes hungry, Sherlock stroking his own cock to orgasm while all of them watched, bowing his back in ecstasy as ribbons of come splattering on his stomach, Ryan pushing into that pale body, thrusting deep, thrusting... John gave a choked scream as an intense orgasm peaked, sending wave after wave of bliss crashing through his body.

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* * *

John came back to himself slowly. He was extremely uncomfortable, laying on his hard bedroom floor, shivering violently and with a crushing weight on his chest. He felt like he'd been hit by a truck.

He managed to push himself up and make his way over to his bed. He lay down, still shaking violently, and briefly wondered what was the matter with him, before he realised his face was wet and his pulse rate was over the moon.

He had PTSD, he knew the symptoms of a panic attack. He was having one.

He pushed the blankets down and got under them, rolling himself into a ball. He used his therapy techniques to slow his breathing and pulse, forcing himself to calm down.

Jesus Christ, so this is what a sexual identity crisis feels like? He thought to himself, half amused, half amazed at his body's physical response. *Bit late, that.*

He had just watched two men have very, very gay sex, and he'd liked it. Not just liked it – let's get real here, John Watson. He'd been hard as a rock throughout the entire thing and had just had a stupendous orgasm wanking over it. So... not straight then.

It really was a shock, finding out something you never knew about yourself, like maybe that your parents aren't really your parents and you were adopted all this time and never had a clue.

But his body's reaction was ridiculous, because this whole competition, this 'experiment' had never been 'straight' from the start. Not from the night Sherlock had announced the plan and John had agreed to fuck a man. But still, he'd thought he had a handle on it, just a little late-life experimentation, something not all that appealing but something he would 'soldier through' and be done with it. When had it stopped being that?

He thought back as his shivering subsided, replaced by a warm ache in his muscles. That night he'd been with Lena, that's when it had stopped being that. The instant he'd looked up and had seen Sherlock watching him, two fingers in his mouth, hard, wanting, shattered.

Because this wasn't about being gay. He didn't really want, say, Ryan. This was about *wanting Sherlock*.

John groaned and pushed his face into his pillow. *Fuck*. Okay, yeah, panic attack well deserved then.

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There were so many reasons why having the hots for his flatmate was a spectacularly bad idea, even if John really did want it, which he was not at all sure he did on an emotional level. What if Sherlock didn't want it? Maybe Sherlock wanted Ryan. Maybe he'd go back to clubbing or whatever he used to do. Or maybe he'd stay married to his work and return to celibacy. That was hard to believe, seeing the sensual creature he'd been tonight, but John knew the body-denying discipline of which Sherlock was capable. And then there was the simple fact that it could ruin their friendship, or the complicated fact that Sherlock was an infuriating genius with an ability to be petulant, cruel, dismissive, bored and completely insufferable and was, by his own admission, completely uninterested in 'feelings' and 'relationships'.

And none of that did a damn thing to negate the fact that John Watson wanted Sherlock Holmes, physically, sexually, repeatedly. He wanted him *badly*.

Shit.

* * *

Ryan was gone and John did not reappear for ninety minutes. Sherlock assumed he must have fallen asleep after masturbating, but it was rather inconvenient. He paced in the sitting room and as soon as he heard John's slow steps on the stairs (tired... very tired?), he picked up John's quiz form. He shoved it at him, along with a pencil, when he walked into the room.

"I was about to come get you," Sherlock said, trying not to sound irritated. "You're supposed to fill this out within thirty minutes of my climax."

"Right." John didn't look at him. He took the form to his desk but didn't bother to sit down. He filled it in quickly and dropped the pencil. "Done."

John went into the kitchen. Sherlock picked up the quiz and glanced at it. He felt a flush of triumph. He forced the smile from his face and followed John into the kitchen. John was looking in the fridge and rubbing his stomach unconsciously.

"There's not much edible in there. Your ranking of me, John...."

"I don't want to talk about it."

"But you filled out the quiz in less than twenty seconds. You might want to reconsider..."

"No. You earned those marks. I don't want to discuss it."

John shut the fridge door with a sigh. He went for the bread. He'd be making toast then.

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John wasn't looking at him so Sherlock stepped closer, determined to get his attention. "But I need to understand. What is it precisely that you liked?"

"I said I didn't want to talk about it, Sherlock." John was getting irritated. "You never told me why you ranked me so highly with Lena. That's the point of a ranking, it's a number on a 1 to 10 scale, which, you know, means it has a specific mathematical value and thus doesn't have to be explained!"

Sherlock frowned. "I did tell you. I admire your technique and—"

"Okay, fine. What do you think 10s mean, anyway? It means I liked *everything*, okay? And if you think I'm going to get more specific than that, you can bloody well kiss my arse!" John was raising his voice. He glared at Sherlock.

Sherlock felt a cold trickle of fear. "Something's wrong. What is it?"

"Nothing's wrong! I'm just... I really hate watching."

Sherlock studied him. John was lying. He did not hate watching. He found it frustrating but highly arousing. Nevertheless, he was clearly upset. "You wanted this, John. You've been looking forward to tonight all week. I'd say with a high degree of anticipation."

John blushed. "Yes, Sherlock, I know. Why do you always have to point out the things I wish you wouldn't?"

He said it sharply and it sounded a bit too much like *freak*. Sherlock looked away and didn't have an answer. He made his face go completely impassive.

John sighed. "So, will you see him again?"

"Who?"

"Ryan!"

Sherlock blinked. "Me? Of course not. Well, I'll see him again when he comes over next week for your session, but... not the way that you mean, no. Why would I?"

John's face went dark. "Why would you? What about 'I want you', 'Please fuck me.'?"

Sherlock went very still. He looked down at the sink. He didn't answer.

"No, that's okay, I get it," John said. "It was all just part of an act, right? Something you deduced Ryan wanted to hear?" John's hands were shaking. He was angry. He was *so* angry. Why was he so angry?

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“Sherlock, you—you bloody bastard. You can’t just do that to people! You can’t play with their emotions like that. Don’t you realise, that poor man, he’s probably head over heels in love with you now?”

“John—”

“And you don’t care! You’ll just ignore him and insult him and stomp all over his heart the way you do to Molly.”

“John—”

“No, it’s not right, Sherlock! Are you capable of feeling anything? For anyone?” John was truly shouting now. And his words, the look in his eyes... it was like a punch in the gut.

The silence that crashed around them was deafening.

Something in Sherlock’s chest was twisting and hot and he thought he might throw up. How had this gone so horribly wrong? He’d wanted to show John... To make him *see*. And John had wanted him, *he had*. And this was what they’d agreed to, wasn’t it? Sex with Ryan, he was *supposed* to do that. And yes, he had used Ryan, but not the way John was suggesting, and he couldn’t possibly explain *now* why he’d said those things, not when John was already so angry, when he might leave.

This is why Sherlock didn’t do this, couldn’t do emotions, relationships. It all went wrong, and he hated feeling like this, like his insides were on fire. Anything was better than feeling like this. Being dead was better.

Sherlock’s hands were shaking. He stuffed them into the pockets of his trousers. “John, there was never the slightest danger of Ryan falling in love with me. Look at his quiz if you don’t believe me.”

Sherlock tried to school his features, but he knew he wasn’t entirely successful. As he turned to leave, he caught a glimpse of John’s angry face dissolving into concern, and John said, “Fuck. I’m sorry. Sherlock—”

But Sherlock couldn’t stand it anymore. He grabbed his coat and ran out into the night.

* * *

John looked at the two quiz forms, side by side, on the kitchen table.

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His ranking of Sherlock – a solid line of 10's, 60 points. The man had been perfect. Fair was fair.

But Ryan had only given Sherlock 52, the lowest score of the competition so far.

John felt a burning sense of regret. The things he'd said... horrible things. And that look of hurt on Sherlock's face... God. John felt like he'd kicked a kitten or something. Which was ridiculous, because Sherlock Holmes was one of the most dangerous men in London and an impervious, arrogant git, and he couldn't be hurt with a few ignorant words.

And they *were* ignorant because Sherlock was right. Ryan hadn't been all that impressed. Why? How could he not be? Seriously.

But then John remembered Ryan looking at him from the door, helpless. He thought of Ryan's lack of control all night. Ryan couldn't handle Sherlock, he'd been mowed over, overwhelmed.

John smiled at the thought, quite pleased about that. What would it take to 'handle' Sherlock Holmes? To leave him completely shattered and satisfied?

But no, focus, John -- that wasn't the point. What was the point?

John looked at the quiz forms, frowning.

Blood supply dangerously diverted from brain tonight. Apparently has side effect of turning one into a horse's arse. Forgive me? JW

Are you leaving? SH

Not unless you toss my stuff out the window and change the locks. I'm starved, btw. Dinner? JW

Btw? Bring the whip? Break the window? Bolsheviks taking Warsaw? SH

Too faint with hunger to type things out. May expire. JW

That was much longer than 'by the way'. FWIW, am walking by Angelo's now. SH

Be right there. JW

Subject Name: Ryan	Quiz Taker: Ryan
Tester Name: Sherlock	
Date:	

221B Quiz Form

Complete the following rankings as honestly as possible in evaluating the tester. In each category 1 indicates 'least satisfactory' and 10 indicates 'most satisfactory'. If a given category was not part of the evening's activities, place a 0 in that field.

Category	Ranking (1 to 10)
Manual Stimulation	8
Oral Stimulation	9
Penetrative sex	8
Visual stimulation	10
Mental stimulation	9
Overall experience	8
TOTAL SCORE:	52

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Subject Name: Ryan	Quiz Taker: John
Tester Name: Sherlock	
Date:	

221B Quiz Form

Complete the following rankings as honestly as possible in evaluating the tester. In each category 1 indicates 'least satisfactory' and 10 indicates 'most satisfactory'. If a given category was not part of the evening's activities, place a 0 in that field.

Category	Ranking (1 to 10)
Manual Stimulation	10
Oral Stimulation	10
Penetrative sex	10
Visual stimulation	10
Mental stimulation	10
Overall experience	10
TOTAL SCORE:	60

CHAPTER 9: John and Ryan

By week four, John and Sherlock were reaching new heights in their battle of wits called “who can most successfully pretend that there is nothing unusual going on?”

John found himself glancing at Sherlock and wondering *What the bloody hell is going on in your head?* a half dozen times a day. Because Sherlock had never behaved more neutrally, politely, coolly than he was acting now. He said “Yes, John” when asked about things like tea and food. Said “Thank you” when John prepared them. He read the paper and typed furiously on his computer. He rarely looked John in the eye for more than two seconds.

It really was a bloody marvel. John watched him with a kind of mute fascination. That Sherlock could pretend so well that they had not looked into each other’s eyes last Friday night while Sherlock was being fucked by another man, that there wasn’t a tension in the flat that was so thick John practically had to wade from the kitchen to the sitting room.

John drank tea, smiled slightly at the bizarreness of it all, and was determined not to crack first. He, too, was quite good at the “nothing’s changed” game. Maybe because, in fact, everything *had* changed, and some quiet time to adjust was very welcome.

When John was positive Sherlock was not paying attention, though, he allowed himself to look. On Wednesday morning he came downstairs early, dressed for the clinic. He found Sherlock dead to the world, asleep on the couch on his side in his blue robe and pajamas. John stood silently over the sleeping figure and allowed himself the luxury of a long, shameless stare.

John was still unsure of the reality of it all, if what he’d felt Friday night had perhaps been a short-lived aberration, a temporary insanity caused by the imposed denial of voyeurism. He looked at Sherlock’s tousled dark curls, the pale perfection of his soft skin over the structure of his cheeks, his cupid’s bow mouth slightly open in sleep, his hand with those long fingers curled on the pillow next to his head.... He imagined Sherlock opening those eyes and looking up at him with desire, the way his eyes had been that first night with Lena. He imagined Sherlock rolling onto his back, legs slightly spread, holding out his arms to invite John down...

John had to put a hand on the back of the sofa to stay on his feet as his body was rocked with desire. *God, yes*, he wanted that. What was almost more surprising was that it wasn’t just

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lust, though it certainly was that, but a tenderness that was so acute it hurt. And it almost felt real, almost felt possible. And then John reminded himself that Sherlock and he were not like that. Outside of those sessions with Lena and Ryan, Sherlock never looked at him like that, never acted like he wanted anything from John at all, and certainly not a touch, not intimacy.

There was just one more round of the experiment to go. John had something to prove, to himself most of all, but also to Sherlock—that he could be with a man and enjoy it, that he could be *good* at it. He wanted to make Sherlock want him as badly as he'd wanted Sherlock, watching him with Ryan.

John tried not to think about what would happen if this whole thing ended and they had to go back to what they'd been before. He didn't know how he could find a way to put this aside. But he would deal with that if he had to. Not yet.

FRIDAY

John went down to let Ryan in. Ryan looked more confident than he had the week before and more relaxed. "Hi, John."

John gave him a smile. "Hello, Ryan. Come in."

Inside the hallway, where there was no one to see, John pressed his lips to Ryan's cheek, lingering a moment. It was still very strange, this idea of inviting a stranger over for the sole purpose of having sex. He felt himself compelled to act a little courtly about it.

Ryan's eyes were warm. "I've been thinking about this all week," he admitted, stroking John's arms through his red button-down shirt.

"Have you? I'm flattered. Come on then." John led the way up the stairs.

Inside the sitting room, Sherlock was perched in his chair, feet up on the edge, hands pressed together near his chin.

"Hello, Sherlock," Ryan said, looking at him with a bit of a blush.

"Ryan," Sherlock said, perfectly neutrally.

This is so bloody weird, John thought. But it was almost a vestigial morality. In truth, he was already excited about tonight, his body on a low burn of anticipation.

"Let me take your coat." John helped Ryan out of it and hung it up over his own on the rack by the door. "Can I get you a drink? We're got wine, beer, brandy...."

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“Wine would be lovely, thank you.”

“Care to come with?”

Ryan followed John into the kitchen. Sherlock did not follow.

“So how was your week?” John asked as he opened the bottle.

The two of them chatted casually about Ryan’s school and the new principle he really liked. John poured the glasses. They migrated back to the living room.

John waited until Ryan sat down on the couch. He took a spot not overly close but not far away. Close enough to kiss, when it was time to. Not so close that it had to happen right away. John let Ryan finish with his story about an upcoming lecture series. Then he decided to move things along.

“I have a confession,” John said, rolling his wine glass in his fingers deliberately. “I’ve never been with a man before.”

The room went silent. It was not an awkward silence, not a comfortable pause either. It was more like an all-the-oxygen-sucked-out-of-the-room silence.

Ryan’s eyes had gone wide and his wineglass was forgotten in his hand. “Are you serious?”

“Yes.”

“You’ve never had sex with a man.”

“Not even close,” John said, looking back at Ryan calmly. “Nothing.”

Ryan swallowed. “What about... kissing? We—”

“That was my first. With you.”

Ryan took a deep breath. “My god, John. Why... why now? Why me?”

“Well, my flatmate and I have this bet, as you know. And... it’s something I want to try. With you.”

Ryan set his glass down very carefully on the coffee table. John noticed that his hands were unsteady. And maybe John had picked up some tips after all this time with Sherlock, because it was obvious to him the tells that Ryan was showing –a reddening on his cheeks and neck, expanded pupils, rapid breathing. John had made a guess, but he was surprised at how right he’d been.

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Ryan took John's glass out of his hand and placed it on the coffee table. He clung to John's hand as if unwilling to let go, smoothing the groove between John's thumb and index finger with his thumb. It was not a chaste touch.

"John, I'm really... flattered. I'd like to show you. If you're sure."

John didn't answer. He tugged on Ryan's hand and Ryan came towards him immediately, placing a hand on John's neck and kissing him. John could feel the tension in Ryan, a sort of nervous thrill. Oh, he was most definitely getting off on this, on the idea of seducing (corrupting?) a straight man. He wanted John, and Sherlock was watching.

John felt the first slow stirrings of heat and swelling in his prick. He deepened the kiss.

SHERLOCK

Patience was not one of Sherlock's inherent virtues, but he'd trained himself to it. He trained himself to restrain his body and harness his mind during long hours of stake-outs, waiting for the suspect to appear, waiting for their guard to be down *just so* before making his move. He trained himself to patience through a thousand experiments where he had to wait for the passage of time, the morphing of elements, the slow appearance of results that would not be hurried, no matter how much he wanted the answers.

Despite this training, it was still torture, watching Ryan with his hands on John, with his mouth, his tongue, caressing John's. It should be Sherlock's hands, his mouth, his tongue –but... he must wait and watch. The stakes were too high to make a mistake. He needed this data, needed to study John's reactions. If he moved too soon, and John pushed him away, *I can't, I'm not, I don't feel that way*, all would be lost. If John pushed Ryan away, it would be merely a disappointment to Ryan (and to Sherlock). But if John pushed Sherlock away, *this disgusts me*, Sherlock would shatter into a million pieces. It would end them, their friendship. Maybe it would end him. Absurd. Pathetic. True.

He had to watch. Collect data. Be patient. Calculate his move. He had to restrain his hands from lifting Ryan bodily and throwing him down the stairs. Ryan was a test ingredient, nothing more. Sherlock had to harness his mind from getting lost in the riptides of lust and jealousy, desire and imagination. He didn't have the luxury for that. *Must observe*.

Already, John had been smart, surprisingly so. Ryan taught sixth form. He taught boys, nubile young men, perfectly ordinary ones and the occasional beautiful ones. A moral man, he's never indulged with a student. But he's fantasized about it, about a student or past student, a boy flush with hormones and confusion, coming to him –*I think I might be gay. Show me*,

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please. Ryan was a teacher, after all. He liked the act of giving information to others, opening their minds, expanding their worlds. To educate a boy's body was not so very far off. He would never. But he wanted to.

Yes, well done, John. Unexpected.

He watched as John kissed Ryan, deep, slow kisses, *drugging kisses*. John liked to kiss. He was very good at it. Sherlock has seen his kisses before – with Lena – the way John captured her attention completely with the offering of his mouth, making her wet and pliant without ever touching her breasts, between her legs, only with the promise and pleasure of his lips and tongue on hers. John was no different with Ryan. He was sensual and slow, calm and in control, like the eye of a storm. He was in no hurry. He wound and unwound the tension in the body under his hands, giving and withholding, until Ryan was strung tight as a stretched bow. Now he kissed Ryan deeply, giving everything, indulging Ryan with the heat of his tongue, with the sweet suction of his mouth. And now he drew back, returning to plump, light kisses, closed mouth, mere promises, ghosts of promises, until Ryan grasped the back of his neck with a whimper and pushed against him desperate for more. John showed Ryan what was possible, what pleasure was to be had, then took it away, again and again, deliberate, unyielding, until Ryan was squirming, straining, grasping for it.

Sherlock blinked at this unhurried, inexorable seduction. It was like watching the slow-motion slide of a cliff as it loosened from its foundations and began to fall into the sea. That John could do this, that it was completely in keeping with his being, that it revealed the core of him – that slow, steady, focused, relentless being, so *unordinary*... It was a core that Sherlock had only glimpsed before briefly, like the night John shot the cabbie. This hidden being was so arousing to Sherlock, to his body, to his mind, that he could scarcely stand it. It was like glimpsing the answer to the perfect puzzle, like finding a key that precisely fit one lock and that lock was buried somewhere deep inside himself. There has never been anyone like John. There never will be. And maybe there had never been anyone else who saw John as Sherlock sees him, the beauty and the power masked by under an unassuming façade. It was fascinating.

Stop. Don't feel. Observe.

Sherlock blinked, forced himself to the task.

There was no question that Ryan was aroused. Was John? Or was he very good at faking it?

Ryan was covering Sherlock's view of John's lap, half his face, but Sherlock has seen John aroused before, for the past three weeks (*last week when he looked at me and held my eyes,*

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so hard, so desperate to touch himself as he watched Ryan thrust inside me). Sherlock recognized the way John's hands, stroking Ryan's back, have grown ever so slightly firmer, noted the absent tracing of John's thumb on the cloth of Ryan's shirt, the slight flush at John's hairline, the flexing of his thigh muscles (an unconscious, pre-thrust action).

Yes, John was aroused. He was aroused by kissing a man.

As if reading his mind, John's eyes, which had been closed for some time, now opened. His was still kissing Ryan, but he looked past Ryan's cheek, directly into Sherlock's eyes. His gaze was calm and hard, heated. He ran a hand up to Ryan's jaw, and used a thumb to hold him as he gently pulled his mouth away.

"I want to take you to bed," John said, his eyes on Sherlock's. Sherlock felt the words run through him, causing his cock to pulse painfully. He was unable to stop his eyelids from lowering slightly, his lungs from taking the deep, startled breath he knew John would see.

Ryan slowly opened his eyes, and John looked down at him, thumb rubbing his jaw.

"You've done this before," Ryan said, stupidly.

John laughed. "Snogging? Yes, lots. But always with women."

"I'll make it good for you," Ryan said, touching John's chest.

John said nothing. He kissed Ryan's forehead, gently, and guided them both to their feet.

JOHN

Sherlock slipped past John to the bedroom chair. John did not look at him. That moment in the sitting room—he knew Sherlock had understood, and he knew Sherlock, in that instant anyway, wanted him. Or at least, Sherlock was turned on by the frankness of his words. But John could not afford to look at him now, not without giving everything away. And that would not be fair to Ryan.

I'm touching you, but I'm thinking of him.

No, that wouldn't do. Ryan deserved better. Even if John was, very consciously, making love to both men in the room, it would be better for Ryan if he didn't know that.

They stood by the bed. John started unbuttoning his own shirt. Ryan was still flushed from the session on the couch, his erection tenting his dress trousers, his eyes hazy with

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desire. He began unbuttoning too, but his eyes were fixed on John's slowly-revealed torso as the red shirt came down and off, was cast aside, Ryan threw his next to it without a second thought.

"You're very pretty," Ryan said. His fingers traced the lines of John's torso.

John couldn't help but grin. "That's a first."

"No one's ever told you you're pretty?" Ryan ran his fingers over the curve of John's pectoral, recently accentuated by all the gym visits. His fingers drifted down to John's side.

"I get 'cute'," John said, shivering at the touch. "Occasionally a patronizing 'adorable'."

"To a gay man, you're definitely *pretty*." Ryan kissed John's chest, licked. "Sweet."

"I'll keep that in mind," John said, feeling the inexplicable urge to punch something. But it passed. He pulled Ryan in tighter as Ryan sucked a nipple. John hummed in appreciation, ran light fingertips down Ryan's back.

Ryan's hands went for John's belt and John stopped them.

"I'd like to play for a bit," John said. "Pants on?"

Ryan frowned, surprised.

"You in a hurry?" John raised an eyebrow, letting his very carnal intent show on his face.

"No," Ryan said, flushing.

"Good. Take your trousers off." John raised his chin and gave Ryan a look that was part military authority, part I-am-so-going-to-fuck-you. He took a step back and unbuckled, undid his zips and pulled his jeans down and off. Ryan hastened to remove his own trousers.

John was left standing in a pair of well-fitted white cotton briefs that left nothing to the imagination. His erection was quite heavy and it lay to the left, kept hidden by the elastic of his waistband.

Ryan stopped pushing off his own trousers mid-thigh and stared. He reached out and stoked his fingers along John's length. Then he pushed down his trousers distractedly and sank to his knees. He reached out with both hands to pull John's briefs down, clearly with a specific idea in mind.

But John grabbed his hands. He held both of them by the wrist, firmly. Ryan looked up at him. John gave a hard smile, eyes narrowing, let the moment hang.

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“Yes, you may. But. Not. Yet.” He accented his words by stepping forward, one small step, and rubbing the ridge of his clothed cock on Ryan’s jaw.

There was always an instant during good sex in which John could feel his partner’s complete and utter surrender. There was not a better high than that moment. Although John loved a lot of things about sex, one of which was actually getting off, that moment when he triggered his partner’s dissolution of will was the very best part. It gave him a mental thrill that outweighed the physical release of mere orgasm by leaps and bounds.

What it took to cause that moment was different with each person, and, occasionally it never happened at all, not as such. Ryan had been pliant on the couch, yes. But his moment was now. He sagged, still held up by John’s grip on his wrists. He didn’t want to lose the contact with John’s groin, but he couldn’t help it. He slumped against John’s thigh, all the strength leaving him. A visible shiver ran through his body.

“Oh christ, *John*,” Ryan said, sounding dazed and needy.

John smiled at the top of Ryan’s head.

“Right. Up you go,” John said quietly. He put his hands under Ryan’s arms and half lifted him onto the bed, arranging him on his back. He finished pulling off Ryan’s trousers and removed his socks, taking his time. He left Ryan’s boxers on. Then John crawled onto the bed. Ryan’s legs were already parted a bit. John nudged them apart further as he climbed over him. He kept himself raised up on his hands and knees.

“Let’s play,” John said darkly, and he started with a long lick up Ryan’s neck.

John was in the zone. He was having no difficulty sustaining arousal or enjoying taking his time, being in the moment. That was not really a surprise given the way the memories of Sherlock and Ryan had been making him desperately horny for the past seven days. He’d denied himself release, not until that morning. As a result, he’d walked around half-hard most of the week. If that weren’t enough, he only had to focus on Sherlock’s silent presence in the room, imagining Sherlock’s eyes on him, his cock aroused, and John was game for anything. He only had to picture Sherlock’s mouth, tongue, hands on Ryan, to make him want to explore the same ground. It was like a pilgrimage to shrine where Sherlock had been. One degree of separation.

But even though he hadn’t been seriously worried about performing, it still felt important to actually be doing it, in practice, to be making love to a man and to be able to do it well and sustain his own arousal. It was a relief to know that he was not facing some kind of psychotic break where his mind would be willing but his body would be weak.

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Sherlock's mouth had been here, on Ryan's neck. Could John still taste him? Sherlock's hands, those long fingers, had stroked Ryan's chest, just here. Sherlock's cock, that beautiful long, dusky pink length, had been pressed against Ryan's thigh, *like so*. At times he was Sherlock in his own mind, touching, tasting Ryan, and at times he was able to pretend that the body beneath his hands was pale, fragile and yet rigid with hidden strength, thrumming beneath his fingertips.

Sherlock.

SHERLOCK

This time it was infinitely worse than it had been with Lena. Sherlock knew it would be more difficult, seeing John with a man, and he had tried to steel himself against it. It had worked, to a point. But his self-control had shattered about the time Ryan's had. It wasn't seeing John rub his cotton-clad ridge along Ryan's jaw that had done it – though the image immediately fueled a dozen fantasies – Sherlock on his knees, hands bound behind him, with John teasing him just like that, only letting Sherlock feel his hidden erection on his cheeks, his jaw, his throat, but not see it, not taste it, not *have* it. God, it was maddeningly good. But it wasn't that. It was the glint of steel in John's eyes as he told Ryan *not yet*. It was the slump as Ryan crumpled, giving in to John's will completely—mastered, conquered.

John had done that, to Lena, to Ryan. The idea that he might do it to Sherlock, too. Hell, *already had*. John did not just have sex with his partner's body, he had it with their mind, and Sherlock had never imagined anything like it. There was nothing he wanted more than to surrender to John, for John to *make* him surrender.

And then he wondered if he could do that to John. The idea of a shattered John, of breaking his rigid control, was intoxicating.

Ryan was loose and incapable of little more than low moans and light touches anywhere he could reach on John. And still, John methodically took him apart. That John took his time with this, even when his partner was so clearly beyond the needs of foreplay, kissed, stroked, teased... was a kind of sweet sadism that Sherlock had glimpsed in him before. God, he was brutal. John had left on those enticing white briefs and Ryan's boxers, and he used them like some sort of medieval torture device, only occasionally brushing his clothed length against Ryan—against his stomach, his thighs, his arm, as he moved over him, kissing, licking, touching. He gave Ryan direct caresses, but unpredictably and always using the fabric as a barrier. Here – John stroking up Ryan's thighs, pushing his briefs back a bit to nuzzle at the joint of thigh and

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groin, finally giving in to Ryan's begging with a firm thumb run up the length of Ryan's tented erection while Ryan cursed and bucked. Or later, stroking the backs of Ryan's knees and leaning forward to nuzzle his mouth against Ryan, sucking, lightly biting, but only teasingly, only through the cruel filter of the cloth.

Sherlock was hard as stone, and his mind was in turmoil. One instant he would be pleased that John was no different with Ryan than he had been with Lena –no different in enthusiasm, no different in his own arousal, in his skill. If John could do this, there was a chance... perhaps... a chance he would be willing to do it with Sherlock, now and then, if Sherlock were very, very clever. The next moment, Sherlock would be drowning in need, seeing John's hands and lips, and wanting them on his own body, *now*, unable to bear not having them another second. And the next moment he would be so suffused with jealousy that he wanted to take Ryan apart for daring to experience this pleasure, for daring to touch *his John*, for having what Sherlock could not. And in the next Ryan didn't exist and Sherlock could see, think of, nothing but John, watching John, bare and golden except for those briefs, wanting to crawl inside his skin, wanting to know everything, wanting to claim him, wanting him to take off those goddamn pants!

Sherlock made a strangled sound. It seemed to jolt John from some kind of erotic trance. He looked at Sherlock and whatever he saw could not be good because something pained flickered on his face. Then John looked down at Ryan. Ryan was literally writhing on the bed, his face red and contorted.

"Please, John, *please*, I need to come. I need you inside me."

John made a soothing sound and pushed Ryan's sweaty hair back from his brow. "Shhh. It's okay. I wanted to suck you a little first."

"No," Ryan said, shaking his head. "*God*, no. I'm too close. Please. I really want to come with you inside me. Will you?"

John stroked his jaw and kissed his forehead. "You sure that's what you want? You can top if you like."

"*No*," Ryan said, clasping John's biceps. "You. I need you *on* me. That's what I want."

John kissed Ryan's forehead again, pulled him into a chaste hug, slowing him down, rubbing his back firmly. "Yeah. I'd like that. You'll be the first man I've ever fucked. Do you know that?"

John looked up at Sherlock over Ryan's shoulder as he said this. Sherlock gritted his teeth, his hands clenched. John did not look away. His jaw was set. Sherlock knew it was a

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question. He could stop this now, if he chose to. It took a supreme effort of will but Sherlock nodded once, a bare tilt of his chin. He had to see this through, needed to know, all the way. There was no room, not the slightest margin for error.

Besides, watching John like this was an exquisite torture, like having a dose of cocaine on the table in front of him and resisting. Like a wound he pressed at and watched bleed. Like denying himself food. He was just feeling dark enough, turned on enough, to want the pain. As much as it hurt, he wanted to watch.

John stared at him a moment longer, licked his lips, then looked away. "Let me get you ready," John told Ryan.

JOHN

He had earlier placed lube and condoms on the bedside table. He got the lube now and gently removed Ryan's boxers. Ryan's cock was so dark with blood that it was nearly purple and it had leaked a large amount of precum. John felt a bit guilty. Men were easier to arouse than women, there was no surprise there, but he had perhaps pushed Ryan too far. He badly needed release.

John was relieved that Ryan wanted him to top. If John was ever going to bottom he really preferred it not to be with Ryan, a one-night stand. But even so, this felt incredibly intimate. He began preparing Ryan the way he'd done with a girlfriend, years ago, as he had seen Ryan do with Sherlock just last week. He held him close, one arm around Ryan's back, chest to chest, kissed his cheek lightly as he inserted one lubed finger, then two. It was so tight and so hot. It was a bit of a shock. He worked his fingers into Ryan, avoiding his prostate as he stretched him. Ryan was too far gone for that.

"I haven't done this in over a year," Ryan said, panting and pushing up into John's fingers.

"You're tight," John said. "Relax. I have you."

When Ryan had relaxed around two fingers, John decided to move him. He knew what he wanted, how he wanted this to go. He gently pushed and pulled, moving Ryan so that he was on his back with his head facing the foot of the bed. He placed two pillows under Ryan's hips. Then he took off his own white briefs, his erection heavy and flushed, growing even harder in the rush of cool air, harder at having Ryan and Sherlock's eyes fixed on him. He sat on his

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heels between Ryan's legs. His erection tipped up towards his belly of its own accord, but too heavy and full to quite reach it.

"Oh," Ryan said, staring at him. He leaned up on one elbow and took John in his hand. John hissed. As often happened, his sexual self was at times so deeply in his own mind, in pleasing his partner, that he didn't realize how aching and sensitive his own cock had become.

"Beautiful," Ryan said. He stoked John appreciatively. "God, John, you're lovely."

"So are you." John couldn't bear to look up at Sherlock just then, because Ryan was watching and because it was too much.

Ryan seemed to have forgotten his desperation to be fucked. "Can I kiss you? Just a bit?"

John smiled but he kept his eyes hard. He placed his own hand over Ryan's, stroking himself firmly. "I said I would let you. I'm a man of my word."

Ryan leaned in.

"Condom," John said. He ripped open a foil packet held the open end towards Ryan. Ryan glanced at it, but took another moment to look at and feel the weight of John, bare, running his thumb up the underside. It was clear from his expression that he really wanted to taste John's skin, but that wasn't going to happen. Ryan finally took the condom and rolled it on.

John shifted up onto his knees. "Show me what it's like to be in a man's mouth," he said.

Ryan gave him a heated glance, reminded again that he was John's first, and he took John into his mouth with a moan.

John closed his eyes, resting one hand lightly on Ryan's head. Immediately his brain conjured up images of Sherlock on his knees, Sherlock's lips around Ryan's cock, licking, sucking, running it over his lips. He doubted he'd ever be able to get a blowjob again without seeing that. Didn't want to.

"Oh, *fuck*," John hissed.

Ryan's mouth felt good, not as good as the mouth in his mind, but a far better approximation of it than John's hand. And for a moment John let himself be lost in the sensation, to receive rather than give, to feel the liquid fire coiling in his belly. It built quickly, too quickly, with the steady tug of Ryan's sucking, and the intense desire he'd formented around these images all week. But just as it became too much, and he was about to push Ryan back, Ryan pulled off of his own accord.

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He flopped back on his back, panting. "I want that in me –*you*. Please."

John bent back to the task immediately, putting more lube on his hand, resuming with two fingers, then pushing in a third. He sat down on his heels and pulled Ryan's hips, roughly, into his lap, feeling no need to be gentle now, not as he would with a woman. Ryan groaned in appreciation. He was relaxed, the tight clench of his internal muscles had given way, and the doctor in John marveled at the wonders of the human body. What had been closed was now open, grasping.

"I'm ready." Ryan said, echoing the evidence of his own flesh. "Now."

John lubed up his cock. He pulled Ryan in tighter, positioned himself, and slowly sank in.

Ryan gave a greedy cry as the head of John's cock breeched him. John took it slow, the physician in him extra vigilant. But Ryan did not seem to be suffering anything but blatant desire. He locked his legs around John's waist. And soon John was fully embedded, his balls tight against the cheeks of Ryan's arse.

Jesus. It was not like a woman, or even how he remembered anal sex being with a woman. Ryan was tight and very hot, the skin dryer, the lube slicker than a woman, the body fuller. The friction around John's cock was exquisite.

"Good," John said, rocking his hips against Ryan in a slow circle. "So good."

"Oh, god. The way you fill me. That's incredible," panted Ryan. "I feel everything."

John opened the lube bottle with one hand, holding Ryan's hips tight against him with the other, and squirted a generous amount onto Ryan's cock and belly.

"Oh, God," Ryan said in desperation. "I won't last if you touch me."

"Trust me," John said. And he began to thrust.

SHERLOCK

John entered Ryan. Sherlock shifted in his chair, unwillingly imagining the sensation, the feeling of John entering him, splitting him in two, filling Sherlock with his own flesh. Ryan's thighs, parted to either side of John, were bent, feet on the bed. John's length vanished somewhere between them, invisible to both Ryan and Sherlock and yet the most powerful force in the room.

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Sherlock was breaking apart, little bits of himself floating away, rendered useless. *John*. He'd wanted this, but now he had no idea what to do with it, how to watch this, and not have this, how not to die.

John with a man, *fucking* a man. Sherlock wanted to laugh for joy—that John was not completely removed from him, that winning John was least a remote possibility and not one lost to him forever because of what hung between his legs.

That he and John could be more than their bodies, *were* more than that, transcending gender, unlimited. That the possibility could (perhaps, maybe) be real and not only exist in his mind.

But to watch this, watch John's narrow hips thrust and thrust, circle, imbedded in the body of another, to watch as John was given intense pleasure by someone else... *Jesus*, it would kill Sherlock. He would snap.

Ryan tilted his head back, moaning. He threw his forearm across his eyes, the other hand clenching the bed sheets. Sherlock knew it was because the visual of John threatened to make Ryan release too soon. He could only lift his hips, groaning words like *yes, more*, as John thrust steadily into him.

And then John's eyes shifted up to fix on Sherlock.

John's eyes were burning, fierce. He looked pointedly at the dresser beside Sherlock's chair. Sherlock followed his gaze. On top of the dresser was another bottle of lube. John must have put it there just before Ryan arrived. Sherlock stared at it. Some bloody detective, he had not noticed it when he came in.

Sherlock looked back at John, frowning.

John pointedly dropped his gaze to Sherlock's crotch, then he looked back into Sherlock's eyes, his gaze steely, calm.

Sherlock shook his head, *God, no, I won't*.

John didn't flinch, his gaze as sharp as a razor's edge. *Do it*.

His eyes never left Sherlock's, his hips never stopped thrusting, undulating, pulling out and pushing in deep. He clutched the joint of Ryan's hip with his right hand, glanced down at Ryan and, with his left hand, dipped a thumb into the lube he had squirted on Ryan's belly, tracing it in a slick path on Ryan's skin just to one side of his cock. He looked back at Sherlock.

It was hard for Sherlock to exactly catalogue the look on John's face. He had seen it perhaps a half-dozen times before, when he'd been an utter prat, and John had reached his

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limit. He might have called it a *not-one-more word* face or a *don't-you-dare-fuck-with-me* face. But seeing it in this context he realised it was more of a *I'm-John-Watson-and-you-will-do-what-I-say-now* face. It was effective.

Sherlock pursed his lips obstinately. But his hand was on his zipper and he undid his trousers. He pushed up his shirt, up to his ribs, pushed his trousers and pants down to mid-thigh, freeing his cock. He touched himself, lightly, still looking at John defiantly.

John stared at his cock, his eyes going half-lidded. He licked his lips. His eyes met Sherlock's briefly and then flickered up to the lube on the dresser.

Sherlock took down the lube and squeezed some onto his cock. He was still glaring at John but now he was also shaking, his hand, his thighs, were trembling. His insides felt like jelly.

John glanced down at Ryan and ran his fingertips through the lube. He took ahold of Ryan mid shaft, his fingertips on one side, his thumb on the other, and gently massaged the turgid length, circling his fingertips in place. Ryan's groans intensified into a little shout and he lifted his hips, trying to press up into John's fingers.

John ignored the request for more, looking back at Sherlock.

Sherlock clenched his jaw and placed his own fingers on his cock, in the same position as John's, massaged. *Christ*. It took everything he had to keep his hips on the seat of the chair. His pulse was racing.

John moaned, took two quick pants of breath, his head tilting back for a moment, thrusting into Ryan harder. "Oh, *fuck*," he muttered.

Sherlock's cock pulsed under his fingers with a rush of lust, knowing that John was responding *to him*. He might be buried in Ryan, but it was the sight of Sherlock touching himself that was really getting him off. He watched John for the next move, wanting it now.

John slid his fingers around the shaft, gripping it lightly. He circled around and around the frenulum with his thumb. Sherlock mirrored him, biting back a groan of pleasure. John pushed his thumb up onto the glans, circling, slicking lube and precum over the slit. Sherlock did the same, biting his tongue to stay silent.

"John!" Ryan shouted, jerking his hips up. "Don't stop! Harder, *please*."

John's eyelids fluttered. He glanced down at Ryan, but Ryan was out of it. His forearm was no longer over his eyes, but he had them squeezed shut, his mouth clenched in concentration, thighs trembling. John ran his fingertips up and down Ryan's cock, still teasing,

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but with the hint of a stroke now. Sherlock mimicked him, imaging John's fingers were on him. John lifted Ryan's hips higher. He bent down a little to curl his strong right arm under Ryan's buttocks, changing the angle and pulling in and out in long, fast thrusts so that Sherlock could see him now, see his shaft as he entered, and he was now hitting Ryan's prostate, because Ryan gave a short scream and started chanting *there, there, harder, more*, as if every thrust was choking the words out of him.

John starting stroking Ryan's cock in earnest, but still slowly, sweeping his thumb over the head on every third or fourth stroke. Sherlock matched his moves exactly, slouching down in the chair, so he could rest his head on the back, no strength left to hold it up, all of his energy focused on the feel of his hand as he stroked himself, on the sight of John's hand on Ryan, on John's thrusting hips, on the teasing glimpse of his thick length as he pulled out and thrust back in, on the intense pleasure winding and coiling inside him like a living thing. And there was nothing left in the world but this moment.

Oh, god, John, oh my god, don't stop, don't ever stop.

Ryan was chanting *more, more*, and John's eyes were locked on Sherlock as he increased the tempo of his stokes, his thrusts. John was getting close to orgasm, Sherlock could see it in the color of his face, in the slackening of his mouth, the pleasure unknowingly trembling in the muscles of his face. Sherlock bit back every groan, every word that his tongue wanted to utter. John knew what he needed, he'd seen what Sherlock needed, and he moved his (Sherlock's) hand faster and faster until Sherlock was bowing off the chair.

Ryan gasped as he came and arched up, perfectly rigid. John's fingers slowed, coaxing him through, even as Sherlock's hand flew faster. And then Sherlock felt his orgasm rip through him and everything fell away into silence and darkness. He barely heard John's strangled cry as he climaxed and forced his eyes open to watch. John's head was thrown back, hands tight on Ryan's hips, every muscle in his chest and stomach contracting.

God. Perfect.

And suddenly, Sherlock could not face him, could not face Ryan. He zipped his trousers and headed for the door.

* * *

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Sherlock was gone. John cleaned Ryan off with a flannel he'd parked close by for the purpose and cuddled with him briefly. But he wondered where Sherlock went, if he was okay. So, he kissed Ryan gently, told him it had been amazing, perfect, wonderful, and offered him tea or wine.

Ryan voted for wine. They dressed and moved into the kitchen.

Sherlock had left the flat, apparently. John was disappointed, but he knew Sherlock. He knew what had happened would need to be analysed, catalogued, processed. Sherlock would probably be feeling raw and awkward. How else to explain their magnificent ability to ignore these evenings when they weren't actually going on?

John left Ryan alone with a glass of wine to fill out his quiz form. He gazed out the window at the street below, but there was no tall figure lurking in the shadows, no sign of Sherlock.

When Ryan was done with his wine and his quiz, and there was little else to say, John walked him downstairs. He was a little nervous of Mrs Hudson seeing him with another man in the hallway—he didn't think she'd approve. So when Ryan took John's hand in the doorway, John squeezed it a bit reluctantly.

"I don't know if this is against the rules," Ryan said, "But I'd like to see you again, John. I really would."

John's distracted mind snapped to attention, and he really saw the man he'd just fucked. Ryan was looking at him with... hope, his eyes warm and shining. He was a very nice man. And John suddenly felt guilty. He kissed Ryan's cheek.

"That would be nice but... I think—I think there may be someone."

The look on Ryan's face was painful. It struck John that only two weeks ago, he'd been in a very similar situation, trying to talk Lena into seeing him again. It felt like rather cruel karma. And had the world really shifted so drastically in only two weeks? Hell.

"Is it Sherlock?" Ryan asked.

John sighed. "I don't know. Maybe."

Ryan said nothing, only kissed John, softly, and left without another glance back.

John ran a hand through his hair. He felt like an arsehole. It was about as low as he'd ever sunk, mostly likely. Anyway, it was pretty low.

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He was suddenly very glad this experiment was over. *It was over.* He never wanted to do that to someone again. Then again, Ryan had known what he'd signed up for. Then again, that didn't make John feel any less of a shit.

He climbed back up the stairs and looked at Sherlock's desk, hoping for some clue as to where he'd gone. He noticed a white sheet of paper, turned over on the keyboard. He picked it up. It was Sherlock's completed quiz form.

John didn't look at the ranking. He took it into the kitchen and made himself a cup of tea, taking his time, trying to gather his scattered thoughts.

What had they done tonight?

He'd had sex with a man, full-blown gay sex. And he'd got his flatmate to masturbate along.

Jesus. What the hell are you doing, John Watson?

John sighed. As if he bloody well knew. He turned over the quiz forms and studied them.

Ryan had ranked him 57. Brilliant. That was 5 more than he'd given Sherlock.

But Sherlock had ranked John only 55. John felt disappointed. He'd wanted to impress Sherlock, and he thought he'd done a pretty bang up job. But then Sherlock had given him only a 7 for oral, and John *had* failed to give Ryan head. So he guessed he deserved that. Especially considering how good Sherlock was at it. One point off, too, on mental stimulation and overall. Overall could hardly be a 10 if oral was 7. The logic of it soothed John's hurt feeling a bit. Sherlock was nothing if not logical.

John did the math in his head, huffed a sarcastic laugh. He picked up his phone.

Bollocks. We're tied. JW

Are we? Interesting. SH

After all that. Ridiculous. JW

Sherlock didn't respond.

Are you all right? JW

Yes, fine. SH

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Coming home soon? JW

Later. Don't wait up. SH

So what do we do now? JW

I'll think of something. SH

* * *

John woke up at 7am to the sound of the violin. He had been hearing it, in his dreams, a soft, haunting melody, and now he let it ease him awake. He lay in bed listening to it for a while, half dozing. Sherlock was capable of playing so beautifully, so hauntingly, though he rarely did.

Finally John woke up enough to realize that he wanted to see Sherlock, make sure he was okay after last night. Also, the loo and tea would be good, in that order.

John got up and decided to dress. He pulled on jeans and a jumper, socks and shoes. It gave him a small sense of control.

Sherlock was standing in the window of the sitting room in his blue robe and pajamas. He continued playing when John came in, not looking his way. John went to the loo then into the kitchen and made tea. He took his time with the ritual, enjoying the music.

How one man could be so gifted was a mystery. How so few people could know and appreciate him was even more puzzling, even if he ordinarily acted a complete dick.

John went back into the sitting room with the two cups, put Sherlock's down next to his empty chair.

"Tea," John said. He sat down on the sofa to listen. But Sherlock stopped playing abruptly.

John drank his tea, watching Sherlock's long form in the window, the violin still on his shoulder, bow in his hand. He leaned against the window frame, lanky and slovenly as a teenager.

It felt... fine. It felt like a normal, quiet morning. Sherlock still hadn't said a word.

"So... it's over. And we're in a dead heat."

"It would appear so," Sherlock said.

"It's just insane enough that I guess I should have expected it. Well, then. Is it a draw?"

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“We could call it a draw. Neither of us gets our prizes. When it comes to sexual issues on our cases, I’ll defer to your opinion on heterosexual sex and you to me on homosexual.” Sherlock sighed. He sounded completely normal, rational, a bit tired, unemotional.

“That’s fair, I guess.”

“I agree, it’s fair. That’s the first option.”

Sherlock stopped speaking and just looked out the window. He still hadn’t looked at John. A strange, heavy silence filled the space. It felt to John almost like a creeping fog, only it wasn’t visible and it was hot, not cold and damp. Maybe that explained the sweat that suddenly broke out on his brow.

That’s the first option.

John’s stomach decided to be traitorous and roiled in a wracking case of nerves. His mouth went dry. Because if Sherlock has a ‘first option’ he had at least one more.

Say it, please say it, urged a voice in John’s head. Another part of him was praying to god Sherlock *wouldn’t* say it, suddenly terrified of what would happen if he did.

“What’s the second option?” John asked.

Sherlock didn’t answer for a moment. He looked completely relaxed, staring out the window, violin tucked under his chin, bow raised in his right hand but not touching the strings.

“There’s something called ‘sudden death’ in sports,” Sherlock said. “An overtime tie-breaker. The first team to score wins.”

“Right. So what would our ‘sudden death’ round be?”

“You and I have sex. The first person to cause the other person to climax wins.” Sherlock never turned from the window. His voice was completely steady, as if it didn’t matter to him at all.

But John’s pulse was pounding. His palms grew damp. His stomach stopped roiling and started imitating a very large stone in his gut. He had a momentary thought, *at least I’m not aroused*, and then he realized that he was, in fact, very aroused. He was hard and at least part of his nausea was related to just how fast the blood in his body had gone there.

Despite all they’d been through this month, despite how Sherlock had looked at him while Ryan was taking him, what they had done last night, John still couldn’t *quite* believe Sherlock had said it, just now, out loud. Because everything they’d done so far, well, that was

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all stone-cold bonkers, but there had still been a barrier there, an illusion, *this-isn't-about-us*. The things they'd done could be put down to the heat of the moment, egging each other on, helping each other out, even trying to up the opponent's ranking. But this... "sudden death" or not, this was John and Sherlock, having sex.

"If you can think of a third option, by all means suggest it," Sherlock said, and his voice was now tight. "I suppose we could look for two more subjects, but I found the interview process tedious, frankly. Or shall it be the first option then? A draw?"

The tension in Sherlock's voice snapped John to attention. He realised that he'd been sitting there frozen for far too long, and that a response had been expected. And now Sherlock's voice was... Now, he thought....

"Sudden death," John said, without any conscious decision made. His voice was low but it was steady.

Sherlock turned to look at him, sharply. John met his eyes. Calm was returning to him, spreading through him warmly and surely. His life-or-death-situation instinct had kicked in. He'd never been so grateful for it in his life.

He tried to hold Sherlock's gaze with a raised brow—*yeah, well?*—but Sherlock turned quickly to look back out the window. John saw him swallow. Neither of them spoke for a long moment. The bow hung loosely from Sherlock's long fingers.

"When?" Sherlock asked, neutrally.

Now, please. Oh, fuck, right now, John's lizard brain whispered. John ignored it.

"Fridays have worked out well so far. Next Friday then?"

"Fine." Sherlock made as if to play something, raising the bow, then he abruptly put the violin down and stalked to his room, shutting the door quietly.

John stared at the bedroom door and blinked. He had an overpowering physical urge. It was to walk to that door, kick it open, shove Sherlock onto his bed and....

He could do it, too. He could pretend he was just trying to psych Sherlock out. He should shove him onto the bed, crawl over him on all fours, take one bone-wrenching, lascivious kiss and then leave him there with a cheeky grin. *Friday, then. Prepare to die.* It would be completely in keeping with the competition. It wouldn't mean anything.

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John found himself halfway across the room before he realised his body was acting on that thought. He stopped dead in his tracks. Because... he wouldn't leave. His mouth on Sherlock's, that body beneath him on a bed, and there's no way John would leave. The way he was feeling right now, edgy and desperate, he would have his cock buried deep, one way or the other, before his brain cleared enough to have a single coherent thought.

John closed his eyes, digging his nails into both palms hard enough to draw blood.

He grabbed his coat and left the flat.

Subject Name: Ryan	Quiz Taker: Ryan
Tester Name: John	
Date:	

221B Quiz Form

Complete the following rankings as honestly as possible in evaluating the tester. In each category 1 indicates 'least satisfactory' and 10 indicates 'most satisfactory'. If a given category was not part of the evening's activities, place a 0 in that field.

Category	Ranking (1 to 10)
Manual Stimulation	10
Oral Stimulation	9
Penetrative sex	10
Visual stimulation	9
Mental stimulation	10
Overall experience	9
TOTAL SCORE:	57

Subject Name: Ryan	Quiz Taker: Sherlock
Tester Name: John	
Date:	

221B Quiz Form

Complete the following rankings as honestly as possible in evaluating the tester. In each category 1 indicates 'least satisfactory' and 10 indicates 'most satisfactory'. If a given category was not part of the evening's activities, place a 0 in that field.

Category	Ranking (1 to 10)
Manual Stimulation	10
Oral Stimulation	7
Penetrative sex	10
Visual stimulation	10
Mental stimulation	9
Overall experience	9
TOTAL SCORE:	55

CHAPTER 10: Sudden Death

Over the next week, John kicked himself a dozen times a day for suggesting the following *Friday*. What had he been thinking? It was the longest seven days of his life. He was edgy, horny and plagued with doubts and confusion all week. It was miserable. And Sherlock was apparently doing no better, because he either ignored John or was an absolute dick, snappish and insulting.

More than once John thought that if he made it to Friday without killing Sherlock first, it would be a miracle.

Despite all the hostility, or maybe because of it, the sexual tension between the two of them when they were in the flat was so kinetic John was surprised it didn't spontaneously start a house fire. He even put the fire department on his mobile's speed dial (though granted, it was as much for the possibility that he'd toss Sherlock out the window as it was concern about a literal fire).

The worst of it happened on Monday evening. Sherlock was sitting at his microscope in the kitchen, staring down into it. His hands trembled as John walked by to the fridge. John just barely restrained himself from stopping and licking the pale exposed skin on Sherlock's neck, just below his ear, on his way past. And when he demanded to know, in a sudden rush of rage, why there was approximately two drops of milk left in the milk carton he'd bought *yesterday*, Sherlock proceeded to explain why he couldn't be arsed in a fit of vitriol that left John seeing red. He either had to leave the room or strangle his flatmate. He left the room.

On Wednesday, John came out of the bathroom in his robe, toweling off his hair from the shower, and ran into Sherlock in the hall. Sherlock looked down at the floor, frowning, and blocked the center of the hall like a tall, gangly, anthropomorphized highway cone. John said "Excuse me" and Sherlock mumbled "Of course" and then didn't move. And John said "I need to get past" and Sherlock said "Yes" without looking up or seeming capable of movement. And finally John took him by the upper arms and swung him back against the wall as if he were a door. John walked by, still toweling his hair.

On Thursday, Sherlock, in revenge, came into the sitting room in his blue robe. The fact that he was wearing nothing underneath was made obvious by the loose tying of said robe and

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the glimpses of a pale stomach and dark pubic hair that peeked out as he strode restlessly in the room, talking angrily on his mobile to Lestrade. John had been innocently sitting in his chair, reading the paper, but by the time Sherlock stalked back into his bedroom, never once looking at John, John was fully hard and had to go up to his room to wank, even though he'd tried not to all week. There was only so much a man could stand.

The strange thing was, at home they didn't talk about the upcoming competition, not once. But they did over texts.

On Tuesday:

I have one rule. JW

Of course you do. SH

John let him sit on it for twenty minutes.

Well? Do you intend to tell me or must I guess? SH

No acting, not like with Lena and Ryan. This is you and me. It's real, or it's not on. JW

John's hand shook as he sent that. Sherlock let him stew for an hour.

You have no idea what you're asking of me. SH

Don't care. JW

I agree to try. SH

And later that day:

My bedroom. JW

John didn't say "because Lena and Ryan were in yours". Sherlock answered immediately.

Yes, that's preferable. SH

On Wednesday:

Sherlock sent a photo to John's phone of a lab report in Sherlock's name dated a week ago showing no STDs or blood diseases. Following this, a text:

Requesting no condoms. SH

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John's mouth went dry at this, and he felt a wave of nervousness and lust. He typed back.

No condoms except for penetrative sex. JW

Only on penetrator, obviously. SH

Yes. JW

Agreed. SH

On Thursday:

Either way is satisfactory, but my assumption is that you would prefer to be the penetrator. Am I correct? SH

At the clinic, John's knees went weak and he had to sit down. Sherlock Holmes, asking if John wanted to fuck him. He thought his head might explode. John pondered a number of answers, including, oh, hell, yes, and, alternatively, acting coy about it. He finally went with—

If you're amenable. JW

Fine. SH

FRIDAY MORNING:

John was in his bed upstairs sleeping late since he didn't have to work that day. He was having some very pleasant dreams when his phone woke him up. It was Lestrade.

"John, I need Sherlock on a case."

"What, today?" John said fully waking up.

"Yes, today. As soon as possible. And he's refusing to come. I need you to talk to him."

"He refused to come? Really?"

"Yes! Wouldn't tell me what was so bloody important, but I've got the chief inspector breathing down my back on this one, and I need to call in a favor. I'm desperate."

"No. Not today."

"It's in—what?"

"Listen to me, Greg. Sherlock is always at your beck and call. And if he owes you some favors, well, I think it's fair to say that you owe him more--"

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“But I really--”

“And on any other day, I’d be willing to convince him to drop whatever he’s doing for you, but, no. Not. Today.”

Lestrade was quiet for a moment. “What’s going on, John?”

“Don’t bother Sherlock again today, and I’ll have him to the precinct tomorrow first thing, and I’ll owe you one. Understood?”

Lestrade gave in with a sigh. “Christ. Yeah. All right.”

John pulled on his robe over his pajamas and went down to the kitchen. He started making tea. He felt rather than heard Sherlock slip into the room and stand in the doorway.

“Lestrade?” Sherlock asked.

“Yeah.”

“I told him no.”

“I seconded the motion.”

John heard a slight sigh. Relief? Frustration?

“We haven’t discussed a time,” Sherlock said. “For the sudden death round. I should have asked earlier.”

John didn’t look at him. “I thought we might go out to dinner. Angelo’s?”

“I can’t imagine I’ll want to eat.”

John turned his head to give him a smile. “You should eat. I should eat. No good fainting from low blood sugar.”

John didn’t mean to hold Sherlock’s gaze because it really wasn’t wise, but he couldn’t seem to look away. Sherlock was in his pajamas, his hair was rumpled from bed and he looked so young. Hell.

“If I faint, I doubt it will be due to low blood sugar,” Sherlock said, slowly.

John felt warmth curl in his belly, and he couldn’t stop a smile or the promise that lurked in it. “I’ll make you some toast now if you like. But we’re still waiting until after dinner.”

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“Yes, do let’s wait until dark like ordinary people,” Sherlock said with a verbal eye roll. He crossed the room and leant against John, snatching the piece of toast John was currently spreading jam on right from under the butter knife.

“Oi!” John said.

Sherlock’s move got jam onto John’s knuckles. Sherlock held the stolen toast in one hand and took the knife in the other, pulling it from John’s grasp and putting it down. Then he brought John’s hand up to his mouth.

John said nothing as Sherlock licked the jam from his knuckles and then lightly sucked them. His gaze was fixed on Sherlock’s mouth and his breathing turned ragged.

Sherlock leaned in to whisper in his ear. “Remember your training plan. You’ve already had your ‘morning of’ wank, so hands off until tonight.”

He strolled away, calmly eating the toast, and John’s grin grew.

Oh, he was so going to make that man beg.

* * *

They did not make it to Angelo’s after all. John came downstairs at 6 PM, freshly showered and carefully dressed in a button-down shirt, jacket and jeans. Sherlock was standing in the kitchen against the sink with a glass of water in his hand. He looked elegant and posh in a tight silver-gray suit and a burgundy satin shirt.

John stopped in the kitchen doorway, his mouth going dry at the sight. It was not that Sherlock looked so bloody gorgeous in those clothes, his pale face glowing above the deep red of his shirt. It was not the fact that John knew for certain that he was going to take him to bed tonight. Either of those things he might have resisted another hour or two. No, it was the look on Sherlock’s face. His expression was completely open and unguarded. It was full of hunger and uncertainty, maybe a little fear. But oh, the hunger... Sherlock wanted. Sherlock wanted him. And he was allowing John to see it.

Suddenly, waiting even one second longer was a physical impossibility.

John took three firm strides across the kitchen and slid his hands onto Sherlock—one hand went around the back of his neck and the other pressed deliberate fingertips along his jaw.

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John rubbed his thumb just below Sherlock's mouth, looking at those plump, succulent, (surly, cutting) lips. He felt a lingering shred of disbelief about who he was with and what he was about to do. Then he looked into Sherlock's eyes. The hunger that had already been there now burned at an even brighter pitch, consuming all traces of fear.

He looked edible.

"I'm going to kiss you," John said.

"Do it." Sherlock's voice was low and dark. His eyes went half-lidded, and he parted his lips. Dear God in heaven. John went in.

At the first touch of his mouth to Sherlock's, John had to suppress a moan. His lips were firmer than John had imagined, yet warm and luxuriantly plush. John needed to taste too badly to mess about, and his lips were already parting to create a light suction, his tongue at the gateway to his mouth. Sherlock did the same, and they lightly drew against each other, the tips of their tongues stoking in a lazy rhythm, hot and sweet.

Somewhere far away, there was the sound of a glass shattering on the floor, but John barely registered it. A wave of roiling heat washed through him, starting at his toes and moving upward. It was like the surge of lust he'd felt watching Sherlock with Ryan, but this was thicker and more tangible now that Sherlock was against him, real and solid. And it was heavy with undefined emotions. His cock pulsed as it surged and filled.

Sherlock made a sound deep in his throat, a needy groan, and arched up into John, trying to press against him.

And fuck. One kiss. One kiss and John was desperate for him. Desperate. He wanted to touch everywhere, taste everything. He could not remember being so turned on by a kiss, ever. And he was going to have to sort through that, eventually, but right now he just wanted to revel in the heady sensations coursing through in his body, making him feel incredibly alive.

Sherlock's hands slid around John's back and pulled him in as he arched up again with something like a whimpered plea. Everything about Sherlock, the greediness his mouth, the sounds he was making, his hands clutching at John's jacket, his hips pushing forward as if of their own volition, all of it was saying take me, John, take me right now. And John's every instinct was to take.

He moved his hands to Sherlock's waist and lifted him away from the sink. The kiss broke as Sherlock was pushed higher above John's head. John swung him to the side, took two steps and landed Sherlock's long, lean back, hard, against the kitchen wall. Sherlock gave a

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shuddering moan and sank down to seek John's mouth again, pulling John's lips to his own as if they were the air he needed to breathe.

John sank into the kiss, light-headed with desire. He gave them both what they craved, pressing in tight and rubbing himself against Sherlock, chest to thigh. His skin was so sensitive, the friction felt fucking fantastic. He dragged his palms along Sherlock's hips to his beautiful arse and tugged up on one thigh, to bring Sherlock's leg up. He pressed it against his hip with a forearm while stroking the juncture from gluteal to hamstring with his fingertips. The move opened Sherlock and John pushed in further.

And, oh, fuck, John could feel him. Sherlock was fully hard, as was John. For the first time John felt the sensation of another cock against his own. Sherlock took in a shuddered breath against his mouth and plunged his tongue deeper into John's mouth. He pressed up. Oh God, so, so good. John circled his hips, trying to feel every inch of him.

It was one thing to see Sherlock naked. It was another to feel him intimately pressed against his most sensitive, aching flesh. It couldn't possibly feel this good just to rub their erections together through two layers of clothes. It just wasn't physically possible, not at his age. But he ground them together again, and once more, unable to believe the aching pleasure of it.

Sherlock's mouth tore from his with a cry.

"John." He sounded desperate.

John's lips went to Sherlock's white throat, licking in a broad swath, sucking. He ground them together again, again. Spikes of bliss washed through him. Oh, holy hell.

"John, please!" There was a hard edge in Sherlock's voice and John stilled immediately, pulling back to look at him.

"What's wrong?"

Sherlock shook his head. His eyes were bright and there was such a look of... devastation on his face that John's breath grew short. "Sherlock?"

Sherlock managed a self-deprecating laugh. "I severely miscalculated. I... you have an unfair advantage."

"What?"

"I like men. You don't... You--you're going to... to make me come before we even get our clothes off. Have pity."

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John just blinked at him. He hadn't seen Sherlock look this... emotional since Baskerville. He was trying to sound like he was joking, but he missed it by a mile. He looked vulnerable, and there was a note of panic in his voice.

Sherlock looked away. "We should... fill out the quiz at the end. That's more accurate. That way—."

"Stop. Stop talking." John put his hands on Sherlock's neck, leaning in to touch foreheads and nothing else.

Sherlock stopped.

John was breathing hard, slowing himself down. "You're so bloody tempting. Christ. I was going too fast. I'm sorry."

"No, I want you to. I want you to just push me and... but, I... I don't want this to be over."

Sherlock had got his voice under control, but he was trembling under John's hands. John took a deep breath.

"Listen to me," John said firmly. "I don't need the threat of a sodding quiz to want to make love to you very slowly and very, very thoroughly. I'm going to take you to bed, and that's exactly what I'm going to do. And I won't make you come until you want me to, and we'll bloody well take hours. All right?"

Sherlock shuddered and closed his eyes. He nodded.

"And about that so-called handicap of yours--I want you, too, in case you hadn't noticed." John pressed himself lightly against Sherlock's hip to demonstrate his point. "Seeing you with Ryan, Sherlock.... Bloody hell."

The words, and the memories they evoked (and probably a bit of the pressing cock thing as well), were too much. Sherlock made a breathy sound and pulled John in, and they were kissing again, wet and deep and half-starved. Another jolt of lust rolled through John. He had to force himself to stop before he mitigated everything he'd just promised. He pushed himself off the wall.

"Jesus, you're really going to test my limits, aren't you?" he said, shaking his head with a grin. "Bedroom, Holmes. Now."

SHERLOCK

Sherlock's brain was capable of incredible focus. When something caught his attention completely, he could block out everything else, narrow down like a laser beam of light. And now his perception had narrowed to this moment --to skin and pressure and *John*.

God, *John*.

It was almost overwhelming, to *touch him*, to *be touched by him*, after all this time of wanting it. And now Sherlock understood that he'd not just been wanting John since this experiment began. It had started long before that. All the times he'd had an urge to reach out and lay his hand on John's shoulder, to stand too close to him, times he'd caught himself wondering about the texture of his hair, itching to see him without his shirt to examine the scar. All those things he'd dismissed as some minor human impulse for contact, now he saw in a different light. His body had always craved John, it was his mind that had resisted.

And now that his body had its way, it seemed determined to greedily take in every sensation and amplify it, the way the first bite of food can burst upon the tongue with unmatched flavor when a body has been starved. Even though Sherlock knew it was a trick of chemistry, a way his body had of telling him *yes, this, do more of this*, it didn't make the sensations any less intense, any less achingly sweet.

He'd wanted John to take him, hard and dirty and gasping with lust, up against the wall. God, he wanted that, to see John lose control, to feel desired, overwhelmed. But this might be his only chance to have John, and he was determined to see, touch, taste, catalogue everything. He wanted to hold John in his hand, to memorize the heft and texture of him, to find the caresses that made John moan. He wanted to taste him, to know exactly how he fit in his mouth. He wanted to have John inside of him, to feel his thrusts when they were measured and when they were erratic and desperate. He needed to know John's kisses and the feel of his fingertips on his thighs, on his prick. He demanded to experience everything John had given Lena and Ryan, and more. And he would deny his own pleasure as long as possible to achieve that.

When they reached the bedroom, Sherlock began to take off his jacket, but John put his hand over Sherlock, stilling it.

"Let me," John said.

Sherlock swallowed and nodded.

And because John always did what he promised, he now shifted into a lower gear. He was not in a hurry as he removed Sherlock's suit jacket, laying it over the dresser. He

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unbuttoned Sherlock's shirt from the top and every few buttons, John would look at the newly revealed skin and trace it with a fingertip or kiss it.

Sherlock wanted to be naked *right now*, to feel John pressed against him ankle to crown, but he accepted the pace as a sort of mutual torture. He was hyper aware of John's fingers on his chest even as he ran his own fingers through John's hair, cataloguing it, watching John's eyes flicker in pleasure when he lightly tugged. He ran a thumb over the slightly swollen redness of John's lips and wanted to make them redder, wanted to press against them until they hurt.

When John finally had Sherlock's shirt open, he ran his hand over Sherlock's stomach to his chest. His fingers skimmed a nipple and Sherlock bit back a moan. He tightened his grip on John's hair, pressing his head down. John's hands rested lightly on Sherlock's waist as his mouth closed over the hard nub, lathing it with the flat of his tongue and scraping it with his teeth. The sensation made Sherlock's prick throb and he held John's head tight, his hips arching up. John pressed his hands down on Sherlock's hips to keep them still.

"God, *John*."

John kept at it, sucking and lightly pulling, first one and then the other, holding Sherlock's hips chastely in place with an iron grip until Sherlock couldn't take it anymore. He grabbed John's arse and pulled him in, giving his aching prick contact. "John!"

John pulled away. "Let's finish the shirt I think," he said, through gritted teeth. He deftly undid Sherlock's cuffs and pulled the shirt off, placing it on the dresser.

He stood back and looked at Sherlock. Sherlock looked at John.

This. John's eyes were bright with hunger but his jaw was clenched, his face locked in a determined expression the likes of which Sherlock had only seen a few times. His hands though, they were steady, in control. John would always do what was necessary, what was right, and do it like an unstoppable force, no matter what emotions (desire, anger, fear) raged inside him. And that was why he was so endlessly fascinating and why Sherlock could want him like no one else.

And *God*, Sherlock longed to break down that control.

He could have reached out to undo John's shirt, but he was starting to get a feeling, now, for what really pressed John's button. So instead Sherlock put his hands on his own chest, splaying his long fingers, running them across his chest, across both nipples, hard, allowing himself to moan at the sensation. Then he moved them down to his flat stomach, fingertips just dipping inside his waistband and up, tilting his head back to stroke up his long neck. His eyes remained fixed on John, allowing him to see how much he wanted John's hands on him like this.

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John swore under his breath. “You bastard,” he said shakily. Sherlock smiled.

John stepped closer and ran his tongue up Sherlock’s neck. “God, the things I’m going to do to you.”

Sherlock felt the dark words pulse in his prick as John moved around behind him. John ran his fingers lightly down Sherlock’s spine.

“You’re stupidly beautiful,” he mused with a kind of wonder.

Sherlock couldn’t see him and wasn’t prepared when John moved in to lick and suck at Sherlock’s shoulder blade. Sherlock’s body responded with a wave of endorphins and his knees went a little weak. John caught him up with one strong arm around his waist, never pausing his mouth’s teasing presence on his back, licking, tasting, lathing like it was an erogenous zone.

Dear god, it *was*.

Sherlock swallowed. He scrambled to regain his footing.

“I... I want to suck you, John.”

Behind him, John froze.

“I want you in my mouth. I want to take you down my throat.”

John’s grip on Sherlock’s waist tightened, holding him in place as John’s breathing grew ragged. He slowly pressed up against Sherlock. His cock, hard and thick, found the bottom of Sherlock’s arse and pressed into the cleft. Even through all the fabric, Sherlock could *feel him*, feel the head of John’s cock. Sherlock’s legs spread wider and he groaned, his head falling back against John’s shoulder. His hips pressed back into the contact, *yes, god yes, more*.

“I want to *be* in your mouth,” John said against the skin of Sherlock’s neck, his breath hot. “I want my fingers on your jaw so I can feel your lips wrapped around me as I move. The thought of it has made me hard for the past two weeks.”

Sherlock whimpered. It was John’s voice, blunt and rough with desire, but he could hardly believe John was saying those words *to him*, nor could he stop the images those words conjured in his mind, John’s fingers lightly on his lip, *feeling it* as he thrust inside. Sherlock’s head felt dangerously light.

John’s hands were undoing Sherlock’s belt. “But first, I want to taste you *here*.”

With one hand, John unbuttoned and unzipped Sherlock even as the other hand pushed his trousers down in the back. He ran his hand underneath the band of Sherlock’s pants and over his bare arse.

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“I want to taste you and think about how amazing it’s going to feel when I push inside you with one long thrust.”

And with those words, John slid his hand down Sherlock’s stomach to cup his erection through his pants, palming him firmly as John’s hips thrust against Sherlock’s arse.

And Sherlock went down. The world went a bit white. He was vaguely aware that he had lost it, that his legs were no longer holding him up, but that it was only John’s strength that kept him upright. His body had physically surrendered. His head was dizzy, his ears ringing, and all he felt was unrelenting, pulsing *want*, an aching throb between his legs and the absolute dissolution of his will. It was incredible.

John cooed in his ear, his words heavy with desire. “Yes, that’s it, I have you. *So beautiful*. Want to be inside you. I’m going to make you feel so good.”

“*John*,” Sherlock whispered. He didn’t recognise his own voice.

“I’ve got you. God, you’re brilliant. You feel so perfect, so right. Want you so bad.”

Sherlock slowly regained enough of his senses to realise John was holding nearly his entire weight. One hand was reaching around and cupping his groin, the other was locked around his waist and Sherlock was slumped, partially lying on John’s firm thighs. John seemed to have no trouble maintaining this as he kissed and lathered Sherlock’s neck and ground himself lightly against his arse. The thumb of the hand that cupped him ran up and down Sherlock’s shaft over the silk of his boxers. Sherlock’s head was back limply on John’s shoulders. The slowly cohering realisation of what John was doing to him, of his sheer muscular strength and the power of his touch had some small logical part of his brain standing up and applauding even while his body was swimming in a buzz of mindless craving.

Sherlock had never experienced anything like this, except, perhaps, the first potent rush of a heroin hit. How did John *do* that?

Sherlock managed to bring an ethereal-feeling hand up to caress the back of John’s head, pulling him in tighter to his neck. *More. Please, more.* John took the hint and lightly bit, sucked harder at Sherlock’s throat.

“Need to feel you,” John said. The hand that was cupping Sherlock’s groin vanished (*no fair, no fair*) and John was undoing his own belt with one hand and pushing down his trousers. He pulled down Sherlock’s pants in the back, and Sherlock felt... *oh, oh...* John’s cock was warm and hard and bare, pressing against his skin.

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“God, you feel so good,” John said, circling his hips. His hand moved back around to stroke down Sherlock’s erection, cupping him once more for leverage, pulling him up as if he weighed nothing, to bring John’s cock more deeply in line with his cleft. “*Ah. Fuck. Want to be inside you so bad.*”

At the touch of John’s hand again, stroking him, and the intense sensation of his bare cock, Sherlock felt a heavy throb of bliss and a tightening in his balls. His brain scrambled as he realised he was going to come if John continued. He flailed, trying to push up.

“John, goddamn it! Bed! Now!”

John stilled behind him and held on as Sherlock thrashed weakly, but both arms were around Sherlock’s waist now and he had stopped thrusting. He could feel John’s chest shaking with laughter.

“All right. Stop. You’re going to—”

Sherlock thrashed harder, his annoyance bringing some strength back to his limbs. “If you don’t--”

“*Okay, relax,*” John chuckled. “If I let you go you’ll be on the floor so just--hang on.”

And with that, an arm was suddenly behind Sherlock’s knees and John lifted him, carried him to the bed and placed him on it.

Sherlock glared up at him. “I’m going to get you for this.”

John grinned. “I know.”

John pulled off Sherlock’s shoes and socks, tugged down his trousers and pants and tossed them aside.

“I mean it,” Sherlock said, still glaring.

“Looking forward to it.” John quickly removed his own clothes and climbed onto the bed, his lovely cock hanging heavily between his legs as he pushed Sherlock’s knees apart.

Sherlock groaned at the sight. He felt that tingling dizziness again, his body’s pull into pure surrender. He didn’t want to take his eyes off the image of a bare John Watson on all fours between his legs, because it was possibly the best thing he’d ever seen, dead bodies notwithstanding. But he suddenly didn’t have the strength to keep his head from falling back onto the pillow. It landed with a soft *thwunk*.

“*John,*” he breathed.

“I know,” John soothed.

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Sherlock felt John's hands stroking up the inside of his calves and thighs, felt the press of a mouth against his knee.

Sherlock gasped and arched his hips. "I wanted to do this to *you*," he complained.

"You will," John said agreeably.

And that was the last rational thought Sherlock had for a while as John kissed up the inside of his thigh and then nuzzled into his groin like a heat-seeking missile.

JOHN

God, it was a revelation. How had he not *known* this? How could he have lived with (and admittedly worshipped) this man for over a year and not have seen a flicker of this sexuality in Sherlock before? And even given Sherlock's cold, aesthetic exterior, how could John himself not have looked at Sherlock and thought *yes, given the chance, I'd tap that*. Had he been bloody well *blind*?

Or maybe the bigger question was, how, after over thirty-five years of enjoying women, exclusively, could he now be so incredibly turned on and so perfectly, thrillingly happy to be licking a man's cock?

Fuck, he didn't care.

The truth was, Sherlock was the most beautiful human being John had ever had spread out before him. He was incredibly responsive, and he seemed to want John as much as anyone had ever wanted him. And for that John was prepared to just shut the fuck up and thank his lucky stars. The fact that Sherlock was also the most brilliant and compelling man John had ever known, and his best friend, was a bit much to think about at the moment, not without descending into a kind of emotionalism that would not serve the task at hand, so John didn't.

Instead, he focused on pleasuring this beautiful body to the best of his ability, on pouring his appreciation and his devotion through his hands and mouth, to showing Sherlock how much he was desired, how perfect he was.

He nuzzled into the damp, clean heat of Sherlock's groin, nose and mouth ghosting along the incredibly soft texture of his sac. Sherlock had showered before getting dressed tonight, and he still smelled of soap along with a light tang of clean sweat, a smell that was uniquely Sherlock, and the musk of desire. The lovely mix made John's mouth water. He swept his tongue over the perineum and then along the crease of Sherlock's groin up to his cock. John looked at it--it was as he remembered--and the incongruous word 'pretty' came to mind, so long

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and sweet-looking. He had not done this with Ryan and thus, not with anyone, but he felt nothing but a throb of interest now. He glanced up at Sherlock who was trying to look at him without really raising his head. His face was tense with worried anticipation.

John smiled and licked thickly from base to tip. Sherlock bit his lips, his thighs trembled.

“Mmm...” John hummed with pleasure. He licked up Sherlock’s length again and this time he continued licking when he reached the tip, swirling his tongue around it.

“Oh, *hell*,” Sherlock said, somewhere above him. John didn’t look.

He used a hand to steady Sherlock’s cock at the base and bring it towards him. He experimented, drawing in just the tip and sucking lightly, moving the tip of his tongue around the bottom edge.

Sherlock groaned and shifted his hips restlessly. “*John*.”

“Mmm,” John said, deciding he quite liked this. He varied bouts of light sucking with open-mouthed licking, still working only on the tip. He knew Sherlock did not want to come like this, so he didn’t have to worry about taking him deep or keeping up a persistent rhythm. He only had to tease, and John was very good at teasing.

Nevertheless, by way of a test, he gripped Sherlock more firmly at the base and tried taking him in. He managed to take about half Sherlock’s length, in and up against his soft palate. He sucked lightly on the withdraw and applied a bit of tongue, the way he liked it himself, mixing it up with open mouthed licks and kisses. Sherlock started making needy noises, and his fingers dug into John’s hair. John continued until Sherlock’s hips were thrusting erratically and his moans were constant. It didn’t take long.

Sherlock suddenly stilled. “John, *stop*.”

John smiled and pulled off, happily content to lick his way back down to lower areas. Yes, that had gone rather well. He would definitely like to do that again.

He tugged on one of Sherlock’s thighs, bringing it up until the foot was flat on the bed and then pressing it out a bit for good measure. With his hands he rubbed the sweet under curve of Sherlock’s arse and softly spread him further apart.

“For God’s sake, John, you’re a menace,” Sherlock said with a shaky sigh.

“I know,” John agreed. He began licking that sweet rounded curve where arse met hamstring, working his way inward.

Sherlock gasped a deep breath. “You’re going to make me beg, aren’t you?”

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“Am I?” John eyed the pink flesh before him with enormous satisfaction, planning his attack. Finally he just licked a broad stripe up the middle of Sherlock’s cleft and then went right for it, taking little nips of the flesh on either side as Sherlock squirmed before flicking his tongue, lightly, where it was most wanted.

“Oh, dammit,” Sherlock gasped. “Oh, *hell*.”

John smiled around his tongue. Sherlock so rarely cursed.

“Is that the best you can do?” John asked. He settled his tongue in more firmly, wiggling it.

Sherlock was silent for about two minutes as John wiggled and licked, coaxing the tight ring of muscle open and taking breaks to kiss and suck on either side, on his balls and on the inside of Sherlock’s thighs. He tasted so clean and good. He had obviously prepared well for tonight, making this an absolute delight. Really, John loved oral sex, and it didn’t get much better than this. Finally the muscle relaxed, and John thrust his tongue inside.

“Oh, *fuck*!” Sherlock shouted.

John went in for the kill. He slid both hands under Sherlock’s arse and curved them around to grip his hipbones, holding him firm. He kissed and sucked and fucked Sherlock with his tongue relentlessly until he was breathless and Sherlock was a quivering mess beneath him, moaning his name interspersed with lots of ‘pleases’.

John pulled up. He was so hard he thought he might burst. Sherlock had a hand over his eyes and he was taking deep, shuddering breaths. His cock was rock hard, flat against his stomach and leaking onto a patch of pre-cum. John had never seen anything as thoroughly debauched and wantonly gorgeous.

And *fuck*, John wanted him. He had an almost overpowering urge to put his hands on the backs of Sherlock’s thighs, tilt him up and sink in, *right the hell now*.

No Watson. Not yet. John sank back on his heels and shut his eyes, taking long, deep breaths and thinking about Margaret Thatcher.

When he felt a little more in control, he opened his eyes and saw Sherlock watching him. He was nibbling on his lip and looking vulnerable and desperate. He didn’t say anything.

John ran his hands up Sherlock’s thighs, pushing both his legs gently to the bed. He gave Sherlock’s cock a brief, closed mouth kiss as he crawled up to straddle Sherlock’s waist, just below his ribs. Sherlock’s hands rose to stoke his thighs. They looked at each other for a long moment.

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"Not sure how much longer I can hold out," John said, giving a breathless little shrug.

Sherlock just nodded. *I know.*

"Would you like to.... What would you like to do?"

"Everything," Sherlock said with a sad, wry smile. His voice was deep and soft and it touched something in John's chest.

He couldn't resist bending down for a kiss. The kiss was sweet, achingly sweet--until Sherlock slid his tongue, hot and greedy, against John's and flicked it.

John's cock throbbed in response, and a fresh wave of lust rushed through him. He pulled up. "*Christ*, yes."

Sherlock seemed to consider their position for a moment, then he pushed lightly, and John rolled off. Sherlock's hand steadied John onto his side, and he shifted down, taking a pillow with him.

"For God's sake, John, what did you do to my *limbs*? I can barely move."

John just huffed a laugh.

"I'm glad you're amused. Now let's see how you like it." Sherlock parked himself so his head was level with John's groin and resting on the pillow. John clenched his hands into fists and wondered how the hell he was going to control himself enough to last.

Well, there one thing he sure as shit *couldn't* do, and that was watch.

SHERLOCK

Sherlock's body and mind were in a strange state – a blissed out mental silence matched with an aching physical need that was so acute it hurt. He would have to research more about the chemicals and hormones crowding his bloodstream later. At the moment, he could only wonder at the quietude of his mind, how it had focused down to John and his own physical sensations in a way that was simply, serenely content. It was incredible, fantastic.

What John had done to him... what he was capable of doing, it was almost frightening. Sherlock could see now how people could become addicted to another human being, would do anything -- lie, steal, kill -- to keep them. *He* could get addicted to this. Surely, John must feel it too, would want it again. Surely it wasn't possible for John to touch him like that, kiss him like that, to *open* him with his tongue, and not feel something of what Sherlock felt. But then, John had slept with many people. Maybe he didn't feel anything special.

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Sherlock shuttered off that thought. He wasn't going to think about that now, not with John in front of him, his to explore.

He didn't take John's cock into his mouth right away. Instead he ran his fingertips along its length and placed it in his flat palm, weighing him. He was so lovely. The thickness of him was *perfect*, Sherlock decided, just unusually thick enough to be remarkable, mouth-wateringly plump, but not so much as to be impractical, ridiculous.

And now he had a chance to really study John, without a condom in the way, and he committed it to memory--the way the shaft was thickest at the very base and fractionally narrower at the top. He was uncircumcised, unlike Sherlock. His foreskin was almost fully retracted now, revealing the plump head, red and a bit moist-looking. The skin over his shaft was so soft it almost didn't register under Sherlock's fingertips. Remarkable.

Sherlock had read in his research that uncircumcised men were more sensitive and he wanted to know exactly how sensitive John was, what would be the right amount of pressure and what would be too much. He ran his thumb lightly over John's frenulum. John hissed and shifted his hips just a bit. Sherlock next circled his thumb lightly over the tip, spreading precum around in a circle. John moaned.

Hm. Delicious. He could never get enough of this.

Sherlock wrapped his fingers around the base, noting that his thumb and fingertips just barely touched. He took an experimental stroke up and down, and again. John held himself perfectly still.

"How's the pressure?" Sherlock asked. "Do you prefer it firmer? Looser?"

John buried his face in the sheet. "Oh God, the sound of your voice. Stop talking."

"But I need to—"

"That's good. Perfect. Like that."

Sherlock stoked him some more, adding a twist and slide of his thumb just lightly over the head. John made a noise in his throat, and his hips starting moving in jerky little thrusts.

"Oh, *John*," Sherlock said, his own cock pulsing, hardening even more painfully as he watched his fingers moving over John's length. Stunning. Perfect. He sped up his strokes, loving the feel of it, loving the grudging, unwilling stutter of John's hips. And faster.

John reached down and gripped his wrist, painfully hard. "Stop."

"But I wanted to try--"

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“No. You can practice your technique another time, but if you want me to fuck you, not tonight.”

His words seemed to ring in the silent bedroom and both of them stilled. Sherlock’s heart gave a crazy leap. *Another time.* Dear God, did he really say that?

John started back-peddling. “What I meant is—”

But Sherlock didn’t want to hear it. He didn’t want John to take it back. So he leant forward and took John into his mouth, ravishing him with his tongue and sliding him in deep.

“Oh, *fuck!*” John said, writhing on the bed. “Oh, Christ, Sherlock!”

Sherlock didn’t let go. He grasped the base of John’s prick and sucked at him hungrily, then pulled back and ran the head along his lips, his chin, down the skin of his throat, moaning wantonly at the way he wanted this, how he worshipped, lusted after this part of John. He looked up to find John watching him with something like dazed shock and so he sucked him back down, as far as he could, feeling him hit the back of his throat.

“*Fuck!*” John said, “Oh my God.”

John put a hand in Sherlock’s hair. Sherlock’s fingers pressed John’s hip, urging him to move and John didn’t resist. He began to lightly thrust, then fucked into Sherlock’s mouth as Sherlock sucked greedily. He flattened his tongue along the underside on every withdrawal, flicking the tip before it plunged back in.

John’s thighs started shaking and his lip twitching. His eyes never left Sherlock’s face, as if he *couldn’t* look away. “Oh God, *your mouth,*” he chanted. “So good. *Fuck*, so good.”

He looked like he was drowning, like he had abandoned all hope of control and Sherlock gazed back up at him fiercely, so turned on by John’s discomposure that he almost rutted against John’s leg. *You want me. Mine. You’re mine.*

John slid into his mouth, again and again, making puffy little sounds. His thrusts grew faster, the sounds becoming grunts, his eyes wild, face contorting. The trembling in his thighs increased into wracking shudders, and Sherlock knew he was close. He was very close.

John wasn’t going to stop. He was going to come, and he wasn’t going to stop. And what was more, Sherlock was sucking him as if he wanted him to. Sherlock pulled off abruptly and scrambled back on the bed, putting a foot of space between them.

For a moment they just stared at each other, panting hard. John’s fists clenched in the sheets, and he let out a painful moan. “Oh, *fuck!*”

XistentialAngst

He flopped over onto this back, his cock standing nearly straight up, bright red and slick with Sherlock's saliva.

"God, you're going to fucking *kill* me!"

"I'm--I still want--"

"This is *insane*!" John said with a sorrowful little laugh. "Absolutely bonkers. You could have won right there, you know. No way could I have made myself stop you. Not if I had sodding well been on fire could I have stopped you. *Christ*, your mouth. The way you *look*. Oh my god!"

Sherlock didn't say anything. He was very pleased that he had made John lose control. But he also wondered if John really didn't want to... if he would have preferred it had ended there.

His own prick was a dull, throbbing ache between his legs, every nerve ending begging for contact. He flopped down on his back, too.

"If you don't want to... do the penetrative portion I can finish you with my mouth if you like."

"Hell yes, I want to, you maniac," John said with a huff. "Penetrative portion! How can you make that sound so damn sexy? Just give me a minute, would you?"

John reached over to the bedside table and grabbed the lube.

He tossed it at Sherlock. "At the risk of being a complete bedroom arse, how do you feel about prepping yourself? I'm not sure I could take it, not after that. In fact, I might need to go downstairs and get a bag of frozen peas to take the edge off."

Sherlock picked up the lube and looked at it, then down at himself. "Er... not sure I can manage it either, not without climaxing," he said honestly.

John giggled. "Christ, this is going to last about two seconds, isn't it?" He sighed and sat up. "All right. I'll do it. Come here."

Sherlock snuggled closer and John wrapped one arm around him. Their faces hovered inches away for a moment, and John looked at his mouth. A shiver ran through him. "Nope. Can't kiss you. Can't even look at your mouth right now. Sorry." He pushed himself up and moved down the bed, settling between Sherlock's thighs, cross legged.

And when did it start to feel so wonderfully normal that John Watson was naked between his thighs? But it did. It was *fantastic*. Sherlock grabbed a pillow and pushed it under his

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lips. John looked at the ceiling for a moment, his mouth moving --an elementary times table, Sherlock decided.

God, he loved this. *His John*. That he could be so turned on, could turn Sherlock on so violently, and also laugh and be completely at ease in bed. Sherlock was not nearly as comfortable with all this--but in John he saw a glimpse of what it could be like. It made his heart stutter painfully in his chest.

John opened the lube and put some on his fingers, still looking at the ceiling. "Yup, here we go," he said, and then he slipped a finger inside Sherlock--and clenched his jaw painfully tight.

Sherlock tilted his head back and let his mind go, shutting out everything but the sensation of John's finger, so gentle and sure inside him. He was still somewhat open from John's tongue, and he felt only pleasure.

"More," he said.

Gently, John slipped in another. Sherlock raised his knees and put his feet on the mattress but resisted pushing up. John worked him gently, circling his thumb on the outside of the muscle to soften it while his fingers thrust. He was avoiding the prostate, but nevertheless, Sherlock's aching prick was starting to feel directly connected to what was going on inside, and all the muscles in his pelvis contracted in painful need. The contact was just enough that he could feel his balls tightening.

Sherlock rumbled a groan, deep in his chest. "More!"

"Don't rush it."

"I'm fine! Another."

John withdrew his fingers to add more lube, pushed in two again, slow, and then added a third, pushed them in all the way. There was a slight burn, but all Sherlock could think about was that a part of John was now inside him and that John's cock soon would be there, that they would be joined in a way that he wanted, that would surely be irreversible?

It would be for Sherlock. It would be irreversible. He felt a heavy ache in his chest. *John*.

He opened his eyes and held up his arms. He didn't say anything, but he let what he was feeling show on his face. He'd have to mask it after tonight, but right now, he simply wanted.

John stared into his eyes. A slight frown appeared between his brows and he swallowed. He removed his fingers and kissed Sherlock's knee sweetly.

XistentialAngst

“Let me get a condom on. If nothing else it will help me last a bit longer.”

He opened a foil package with shaking fingers and rolled the condom on, put lube over himself and carefully added some to Sherlock’s cock while he was at it. Then he wiped his fingers on the bed and looked up into Sherlock’s eyes.

Sherlock was still holding out his arms. John took his left hand and kissed his palm tenderly. The mood between them had shifted into something weighty and thick with meaning as John lowered himself over Sherlock, holding himself up with his good arm as he used his other hand to guide himself to the entrance.

Sherlock placed one hand on John’s shoulder and the other on his ribs and they looked into each other’s eyes.

“Ready?” John asked quietly.

Sherlock nodded.

John pushed in.

JOHN

There had to be an angel on John’s shoulder tonight. An angel with a soft spot for really good sex. Because despite his fear that he would not last at all (conviction more like), he did. Maybe it was the way Sherlock looked at him, face open and vulnerable, almost childlike in its pained longing, the way he drew him in like a lover. It suddenly shifted this from incredibly hot sex to love-making, bringing down the pace, bringing in the heart, which was a much slower organ.

John thrust in, slow and sweet, and it was perfect. He lowered himself completely on top of Sherlock, belly to belly, chest to chest, and they kissed deeply as he rocked inside. Sherlock was so tight and hot. His cock was hard and slick against John’s stomach and it was wonderful, as if this was always the way it should be, his lover’s desire stiff against his belly as he was buried inside. *Sherlock*, stiff against his belly. John varied from deep grinding circles to long slow thrusts, building the pleasure between them to a lovely plateau and holding them there as long as he could.

Sherlock never stopped kissing John, breaking contact only long enough to breathe his name, *John, John*. His legs wrapped tightly around John’s waist, and his hands roamed over his back, caressing.

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John was trying not to give Sherlock's cock too much stimulation because he didn't want this to end. It was strange. With a woman, he might make her come several times but with Sherlock... he would feel a bit odd about continuing if Sherlock were "done", worry about overstimulation. And then there was the whole silly competition angle. In this moment, when Sherlock was so vulnerable, and everything was so sweet, John didn't want to make him lose. Ridiculous, but true. So he eased his stomach off Sherlock cock when he got too close. After a while, it became clear that Sherlock would no longer be denied. He was trembling and straining up, trying to keep contact. His nails bit into John's back anxiously.

Sherlock pulled his mouth away from John's, panting. "Please, John, I'm ready. *Please*. I don't care, I need it."

"Yes," John whispered, kissing Sherlock's temple, and only barely stifling the "love" that wanted to come behind the "yes". He was suddenly right at the edge himself, though whether he had already been there or whether Sherlock's plea had put him there was unclear.

John stopped moving and kissed Sherlock's forehead, his temple, his cheek. "Let's go together then, shall we?"

Sherlock nodded, hugging John tight.

John brought his mouth back to Sherlock's and began to thrust, harder now, using just his hips as he pushed his stomach out to allow Sherlock to rub against him. Sherlock began thrusting in short, tight bursts timed with his own thrusts. It was fast and desperate.

"Oh, John, oh!" Sherlock gasped into his mouth, and John was there.

For a long, timeless moment they flirted at the edge, both gripping hips, back, with finger-digging intensity, pushing, taking what they needed.

And then Sherlock whimpered and stiffened and John was coming, coming, coming, awash in the bliss of it and tearing his lips away to shout Sherlock's name.

* * *

John collapsed and lay boneless on top of Sherlock. He could feel the wetness between them and wondered listlessly how long he'd have to lay here before it dried and stuck them together. Another first.

XistentialAngst

With a sigh he rolled off and tossed the condom. Sherlock still held one of John's hands, and he didn't let go. They lay there, lightly touching at the shoulder and thigh as their breathing returned to normal.

A thought struck John and he started giggling low in his belly.

"What's so funny?" Sherlock asked, sounding like he would be insulted, if he weren't too spent to manage it.

"Us," John giggled. "We're still tied. Buggery fuck."

Sherlock rumbled a laugh. "Clash of the titans."

John giggled some more, feeling absurdly light.

Sherlock coughed a bit. "Well then.... 6 out of 10?"

That struck John as insanely funny. He laughed harder. Sherlock did, too.

"Sod it, all right," John said. "You're going to be the death of me, aren't you? But next time let's not try to do it all in one go. My dick might fall off."

"Are you're suggesting theme nights?"

"Something like that."

Their laughter died off into a post-coital haze. Sherlock's hand was still warm in John's. It felt like it belonged there.

John gradually became aware that Sherlock's silence was, well, meaningful, maybe a bit dark. He squeezed Sherlock's hand. *All right?* Sherlock took a deep breath.

"I don't expect you to... If you'd like we could do this. Sometimes. When you want to. I realise you won't give up women, John. I don't—I know that's what you want, in the end. So we could just... do this when it makes sense. For as long as it makes sense."

Sherlock's voice cracked at the end. He shut up. He took his hand out of John's and turned his face away.

John felt something inside his chest ache. There was tightness behind his eyes.

John knew. He'd had an inkling of it, that night with Lena, when he'd looked up to find Sherlock watching him with such raw, naked hunger. He'd suspected, looking down at he and Ryan's performance evaluations on the kitchen table, side by side. And he'd known it for certain tonight, when he'd seen the panic in Sherlock's eyes when, backed against the kitchen wall, he'd said *have pity*.

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Have pity. He wasn't referring to the sex, or not wanting to come too soon.

Somehow, by some miraculous circumstance, John held Sherlock's heart in his hands. He wasn't sure when it had happened, and he was pretty sure Sherlock hadn't wanted it to. But John held it all the same. He thought about that for a moment, just dazed at the idea of it. He wondered if anyone else had ever held it like that before. They must have, and they must have broken it, for Sherlock to have guarded it so brilliantly for so long, for him to have convinced everyone it didn't exist.

"Come here," John said. He rolled onto his side and pulled Sherlock into an embrace, fitting him tightly against him, chest to chest, thigh to thigh. Sherlock complied, but he was tense, and he tucked his head down into John's shoulders so John couldn't see his face.

John stroked his hair. "Do you have any idea, Sherlock, what I would do to someone who did that to you? Who took you to bed when they felt like it and saw other people and slowly destroyed your dignity and your heart? Because I can assure you, I would get to them well before Mycroft did, and they would find themselves buried very deep in a place where no one would ever find them."

Sherlock stiffened against him. "John! I'm perfectly capable of having casual sex if I choose to. I'm not a fainting flower."

"And I'm not an idiot," John said softly.

Sherlock stilled. John could feel his chest rising and falling erratically as he sought for control over his emotions. John rubbed his hand on Sherlock's back, reassuring him, giving him time.

After a while, Sherlock's breathing eased and a sigh escaped him. He brought up his hand to place it, flat, against John's chest, over his heart. He knew that John knew. He was asking.

John's heart thudded below Sherlock's palm. His life had just jumped the rails again. Completely. He wasn't sure where it was going next, but it was too late to change a thing. And... he didn't want to. Because this was Sherlock bloody Holmes, the most remarkable human being in the world, and sometimes life just smacked you upside the head with a gift you were too idiotic to realise you wanted and that you in no way deserve.

And because he was John bloody Watson, he felt the calm spread through him in a warm tide. His pulse slowed. His hand was steady as he placed it over Sherlock's hand on his heart.

XistentialAngst

“You do realise that my girlfriends could never compete with you even when we *weren't* having mind-blowing sex?”

“But you’re not gay,” came Sherlock’s muffled reply.

“Just because I’ve eaten fish and chips my whole life doesn’t mean I wouldn’t switch over to steak if given the opportunity.”

“John. Are we going to start with bad analogies again?”

John giggled. “Better not. Look where it got us last time. So here it is then: I’m yours, and only yours, for as long as you want me.”

Sherlock raised his head and looked into John’s eyes. His face was soft, his eyes serious and bright. “John, have a care what you are saying. Because I will never not want you.”

“You're stuck with me then,” John said, kissing him softly.

They kissed, sweetly, and then not so sweetly, for long minutes.

John pulled away, smiling. “You know, this whole competition we went through – it has to be the most ridiculous courtship ritual ever engaged in, by anyone, ever.”

“Hard to make such a claim without an exhaustive list.”

“I’m making it anyway.”

“It does seem a tad excessive, looking back,” Sherlock admitted.

They looked at each other and started laughing.

THE END