

## Masks

Author: CK

Rating: T

Contents: Not even the magic of the moment can overpower the demons of the past.

Disclaimer: Nothing mine; this absolutely fabulous show belongs to Bruno Heller and his team :)

A/N: The idea came out of nowhere, and I'm not all that satisfied with the story, but I hope you'll like it nevertheless. That's one scenario I can imagine for Jane and Lisbon. I don't see them as a couple in near future, but maybe TPTB will nevertheless acknowledge the attraction between them.

*"May I drive you home?"*

The question had been innocent. Simple and polite. *She should have known.*

Lisbon and her team had been called to investigate a series of murders; the victim had always been the host if a costume party - stabbed into the back once, knife still in the body, and the famous 'scream-mask' placed on the back of the head. Clues, eye witnesses and logic had lead them to all sorts of places, but in the end, they had all proven to be wrong. Until hobby profiler Jane had found - again - the one clue, the one connection of crucial meaning between the victims that had lead them to the right place for the next planned murder.

There had only been one problem - for the team and especially Lisbon, that is, not exactly for Jane - it had been a theme party. And every visitor had to wear typical Indian dresses. For the women it mostly meant a sari, for the men it was a salwar kameez.

Lisbon had complained, unwilling to wear the clothes, but in the end had given up, knowing that Jane had the much better arguments. Investigating undercover meant - assimilating.

"Your car is waiting for you, Milady," Jane had politely told Lisbon with a light bow when she had opened the door. They had agreed that it was better to pick the ladies up; driving in these for them unusual clothes was too dangerous. So Jane had come for Lisbon, while Rigsby had been taking care of Van Pelt's ride. "For a stunningly beautiful lady," he had added when he had gotten a full sight of her, his facial expression and voice speaking of genuine surprise. Not that he hadn't expected her to look so beautiful in this Indian dress they called Sari; he had been very sure of it. Nevertheless, the strong emerald green with golden glitter was simply perfect for her. And her slender body in it made her look like a fairy.

They had arrived at the party, they had eaten something, danced a bit - and caught the murderer. And because it all had happened without drawing much attention from the other guests, they had stayed another short while after police officers had taken care of the murderer.

After the job had been done, Rigsby and Van Pelt had been almost inseparably and the rest of the team had silently hoped they would make it home in time.

Cho had found some beautiful brunette company he was chatting with - an unusual sight for Jane and Lisbon, but also an amusing. They themselves had decided that some more dancing was the best way to kill a bit more time before they, too, would leave to catch some well-deserved sleep.

While the party had mostly offered a joyful and lively musical accompaniment, the late evening had come with slow songs. Slow and, in some way, magical songs. It had been a magic that had also enthralled Jane and Lisbon as soon as the first notes had been played; not a moment too late, but exactly when they'd entered the dance floor.

Every touch they had shared had left a tingling on their skin; Patrick's fingertips unconsciously found their way under the part of the sari that was hanging down Teresa's back and caressed the naked skin there; their fingers entwined and seemed to speak sweet nonsense in an own language of secret movements; their hearts beat faster; their eyes got lost in the other's ones.

The spell that had made them forget their surroundings for a short while had been broken when the song had ended; but the magic remained. They had shared another dance after that, another few minutes of enchantment, before Lisbon had decided to leave.

She turned around when she heard Jane's voice behind her while she was standing in front of the building the party had taken place in. She had wanted to take a cab home, but his offer sounded better. Although she couldn't exactly explain why. She watched him for a moment, but later she wouldn't be able to recall what she had been thinking about.

"Sure. Thank you," she finally nodded slowly, then slipped her arm through his and let him lead her to the parking area.

He stopped half-way and turned to her.

"Something I have learned today," he told her cryptically, and then pulled out some churis. He took her right arm and gently pushed the jewelry over her hand. She winced slightly because they were a bit too small. "I'm sorry, this has to be a bit painful," he continued whispering, and then explained in a louder, but still low voice, "It has a very special meaning when a boy does this to a girl." She looked at her wrist, then at him, and back again at her wrist; for a moment, the spell was back and silence full of known and yet never acknowledged tension stretched. Until she shook her head.

"You're impossible," she commented, bringing them back from a meaningful to some lighter mood, and pulled her arm away, but smiled nonetheless.

"And you haven't noticed this until now?" Jane asked grinning. They continued their way and when they reached his car, he opened the passenger's door of the Citroën for her. She refused his offer of help and made him almost laugh out loud when she quietly swore at her sari because it resisted her when she tried to get into the car without getting it dirty. "So, nice evening, Lisbon," he continued with a challenging tone of voice when he seated himself on the driver's seat.

"Glad you liked it," she answered shortly, looking out of the co-driver's window and not paying attention to him anymore to avoid any further comments. There was a comforting pause as they drove silently through the night.

Fifteen minutes later Jane pulled up in front of her apartment building, turned off the car and shot her a side glance; which she returned, frowning at the sparkle in his eyes. The dark-haired woman followed him with her gaze when he got out and went around the car, opening the passenger door and offering her a hand to help her out.

"Thanks," she said sweetly.

Without any further requests, he followed her inside her apartment, which she commented dryly with a "Come in." after she had closed the door. He put on a winning grin and slowly but surely, his behavior was making her nervous. That wasn't normal; she knew him well enough to tell so, and to expect anything possible. He was about to do something he shouldn't and she couldn't guess what it would be. *Talking about trust*, it crossed her mind for a moment, but she chased away the thought quickly.

"Tea?" she offered, a bit helpless.

"Would like that," her team's consultant simply answered in a deep, low voice that made her swallow hardly.

She was on her way to the kitchen, but when she passed him, he grabbed the part of her sari that was thrown over her shoulder and hanging down her back, and a few steps further, she was stopped by a resistance that was her own clothing.

"Jane, aren't we a bit too old for this?" she said without any need to check what had caused her attachment.

She never got an answer. Instead, he whirled her around by pulling at the cloth and made her land against his body. He caught her easily, his arms winding around her delicate form. The one end of her sari he had been holding and let go of when he had embraced her she caught with one hand. She was still holding it when she laid her arms around his neck - half covering him with the green and golden glittering cloth.

"Jane... what is this about?"

"Magic," he whispered, his voice suddenly somehow unsure, but also full of affection.

And he was right. There it was again.

A magical atmosphere, like on the dance floor earlier.

When his lips brushed hers, once, twice, the touch innocent and questioning, her mind couldn't decide whether to go blank or to race in the expectation of the upcoming. It was somewhere in between when Patrick captured her lips fully in a real kiss, leaving her breathless and yet hoping she would never have to breathe again.

Teresa almost clung to him; to him and his lips and the passionate motions. He tasted of the food that had been served this evening, sweet and spicy at the same time, and the tea they had been drinking added a slight bitterness. Suddenly, he picked her up, easily, like she was a feather, never breaking the kiss, and laid her down on the couch. He came to kneel beside it and finally ended their longing, passionate embrace, showering her face with soft, slow kisses full of love.

But then, he stopped.

Pulling back, he caressed her face with his one hand, while the other entwined with one of hers above her head. Deep blue eyes met green ones, open and honest.

"Sweet Teresa," he began quietly and his fingertips drew the lines of her lips while she longed to possess his once more. Eyes locked and souls open, they understood what this evening would lead to if only they let it. The dark-haired woman thought the decision was made when he stole another gentle kiss from her; yet his words following the loving touch of his lips proved her wrong. "I'm sorry. I thought this night could be ours, but..."

"You don't need to explain," she interrupted him softly and gently squeezed his hand. "I know." And she did. She understood how the demons of his past didn't let him have his happiness. The magic of one night, as strong as it may be, wouldn't heal all the wounds inflicted on these pained souls - his and hers. But she was willing to wait.

Simply nodding, he raised and helped her standing up as well.

"We've got so much time, Patrick." Standing on her tiptoes, she left another kiss on his lips, before she hugged him. He buried his face in her neck and for a while, they simply held each other. Only after a few minutes, Jane carefully loosened the embrace.

"Time for me to go home," he smiled, and added, "Good Night, Teresa." The gentle use of her first name by this wonderful voice of his made her shudder slightly.

"Good Night, Patrick. Sleep well," she answered - and meant it, knowing that most times, he didn't sleep much, as nightmares were still haunting him.

Lisbon watched him leave, looking back only once with eyes full of sadness, but also love. Feelings they had finally acknowledged, but which would nevertheless have to wait to be explored.

When she raised her fingers to her lips where the feeling of his sweet touch still lingered, the churis around her wrist jingled softly and promisingly.

The END

---

Sari: traditional clothing for Indian women; it's a piece of cloth that is between five and eight meters in length and one and a half meters in width and is wrapped around the hips, leaving about an meter to throw over the shoulder

Salwar kameez (also kamiz): a combination of trousers and top/shirt for men and women; depending on the material it is made of, it can be casual wear as well as a bridegroom's clothing

Churi: Part of traditional Indian jewelry; often simply called bangles. They are usually worn in pairs by women, one or more on each arm.