Crazy Girl
by ABrighterDarkness

Summary

Marcus had learned some of her tells over that month. He had started to see some of the things that were so obvious to him that he had no idea how her so-called friends could miss them. And they called him simple.

Notes

Written for Sing-Me-A-Rare Volume 3.
Song Prompt - Crazy Girl - Eli Young Band
Winner for Best Female Characterization

Much love to the wonderful Lunamionny for alpha/betaing this story! It wouldn't be nearly what it is without her amazing help.

See the end of the work for more notes.

There was a bit of a crowd that night. After leaving Hogwarts, and the war that followed, there were a lot of people Marcus would rather have never seen again. But it seemed they had all descended on the pub that night for a celebration of some sorts and the mass of excitable bodies made navigating the room annoyingly difficult. Especially for a man the size of Marcus Flint. He was determined to get to the bar though, since he could see a very curvy witch that he was sure he could sweet talk into bed for the night.

As he wound around a table, Marcus felt his left elbow collide sharply against something solid and heard a surprised, feminine gasp of pain. He paused briefly to offer an apology to the girl seated at
the table he had been edging around when he'd accidentally elbowed her in the head.

"It's okay, Marcus," the witch answered, her tone idle.

The wizard studied her curiously for a moment, puzzled by the fact she knew his name when he really, for the life of him, couldn't place her. She was thin and modestly endowed, as far as he could tell. Her pale blonde hair fell all the way down to her hips and Marcus could see a smattering of small, randomly placed braids in it that were tied off with small ribbons of various colors. Her startlingly blue eyes were watching the room and a small, absent smile played on her lips. The bright, vibrant yellow of her shirt, which had some sort of neon pink and green designs that looked to have been hand painted, and bold purple of her long skirt seemed to be an odd combination but somehow she managed to make it work. Long, thin fingers—piano fingers his childhood tutor's voice echoed in his mind—tore absently at the napkin on the table by her nearly empty glass. When he glanced back up to her face he realized that the witch had been watching him look her over. Marcus felt his ears warm and he cleared his throat, nodding awkwardly before turning back towards the bar.

"She's married," the witch's airy voice called after him. He frowned and turned back, giving her a questioning look, and watched as one corner of her lips quirked upwards slightly. "The witch at the bar? She's married."

Marcus blinked and glanced back towards the girl at the bar who was chatting with the bartender, before making an impromptu decision and taking a seat across from the colorful mystery witch, "How did you know I was going for her?"

Her lips twitched again and her eyes glinted with amusement. She shrugged. "You ought to be careful anyway, you're still not fully healed."

Marcus stared at her blankly, his mind attempting to catch up with the words she was saying. She wasn't wrong, there had been an accident involving a rogue bludger during training just two weeks earlier that had left him in pretty rough shape. Tonight was the first evening since then that he hadn't been confined to his home because of it. However, the incident hadn't been publicized, just the opposite in fact. The team had made a point to keep his injury as quiet as possible. Marcus shook his head in confusion, "Do I know you?"

"Oh, I very much doubt that," the witch said, seemingly unconcerned that she was unnerving him. "Okay," he frowned. "What's your name, then?"

"Luna Lovegood," she replied, the idleness never leaving her tone.

"Well, it's a pleasure to meet you, Miss Lovegood," Marcus replied. "What about you? Are you married, too?"

A startled laugh escaped the witch and he smirked, enjoying the unexpected sound. "No, of course not," Luna replied. "But I don't think I'm quite your type anyway."

"Oh? And what's my type exactly?" he questioned.

She tilted her head to the side and her blue eyes studied him intently for a moment. Marcus didn't know what to make of her examination. On the one hand, he felt rather confident considering that he knew he looked good. On the other hand, however, he couldn't help but think he was being measured against a completely unknown standard and was being found wanting.

"Disposable," she finally replied airily, shrugging her thin shoulders once more and standing up.
Her eyes flickered towards the empty glass he had forgotten was in his hands and then back up to his face. "Have you finished? Would you like another?"

Marcus found himself staring blankly at the girl for a moment. She dumbfounded him and he wasn't entirely sure why. "Wha…I…yeah, yeah another would be nice, thanks," he finally managed. The witch, Luna he reminded himself, smiled absently and drifted easily through the crowd to the bar. He took the opportunity to observe his unconventional companion who had gotten him so uncharacteristically mixed up. She was surprisingly tall, taller than her slight, willowy frame had suggested on first glance. Granted, she was still considerably shorter than him, but most people were. Even so, he imagined that she might come up to at least his chin, which was rather impressive if he were honest. The tiered, flowy skirt she wore hid what Marcus guessed to be a fantastically long set of legs considering the distance between her slight hips and the floor. Curves on a witch were obviously a wonderful thing but Marcus had always found himself…fond of a nice set of legs. He realized that he was rather curious about what that flowy skirt hid from view.

His musings were cut off when the witch in question deposited a full glass in front of him and reclaimed her seat. Pushing aside the tattered napkin, she absently toyed with her glass, turning it in alternating clockwise and counterclockwise directions with no discernable pattern that Marcus could tell, as she watched the various clusters of boisterous drinkers around the pub with a small, serene smile and eerily vacant eyes. Marcus took a long gulp of his drink and cleared his throat awkwardly. He really ought to move on, find somewhere else to be rather than pestering this interesting yet unsettling witch, but he found that he was reluctant to do so, though he wasn't sure why. It was odd, he thought, how unsure and awkward this woman had managed to make him feel.

"So, why are you here alone Miss Luna?" he asked, attempting for some levity to hide his genuine curiosity.

Her gaze slid over to him and her lips quirked upwards again, "I'm not. You're here. And Ginny Weasley was kind enough to invite me along for a witch's night out."

Marcus frowned and glanced over his shoulder, spotting the Weasley witch, the Granger girl and a couple of other faces that he vaguely recognized from Hogwarts. They were laughing engagingly with one another on the other side of the room. Confused, he turned back to Luna to see her gazing over his shoulder with that vacant expression again. He was beginning to suspect that that expression - the serene, airy, vacant one - was as much a defense mechanism as it was anything else.

"So, why are you all the way over here, putting up with an obnoxious wizard all on your own then?" He questioned.

"I'm not," she answered with a smile that was only slightly more pronounced than the small twitches he'd seen so far.

"You're not sitting over here on your own on your witch's night out?" Marcus attempted to clarify.

"Oh, I'm doing that," she nodded. "But I'm not putting up with an obnoxious wizard. Just a complex one."

Complex? That was new. It was widely believed that Marcus Flint was rather simple. And that wasn't usually meant in a complimentary way either. What a peculiar witch. "Why aren't you over there with them?"
"Ginny was kind enough to invite me," Luna shrugged, with that bloody vacant look on her face again. "But I don't have much to contribute to those types of gatherings. I find that I detract from the occasions. It's better that I enjoy them from afar. It's the thought that counts, after all."

"Somehow, Luna Lovegood, I doubt that you have nothing to contribute," he insisted. Marcus was surprised when the vacant expression disappeared and those blue eyes darted to him, studying his face with a surprising intensity.

"Luna!" A voice interrupted them. Ginny Weasley, though Marcus supposed it was actually 'Potter' now, not that it particularly mattered, had bounded over to their table. Her eyes narrowed suspiciously at Marcus, before turning abruptly to Luna. "Everything okay, Luna?"

"Of course, Ginny, why wouldn't it be?" Luna asked smoothly, with her head tilted to the side and a small smile that Marcus somehow instinctively knew was forced. "I was just telling Marcus about the importance of considering the effects of Heffledings on weather patterns, to help him decide on strategies for his next match."

"Oh," the ginger witch nodded with a confused glance towards Marcus. "I just wanted to let you know that we're all heading back to Angie's so I'll see you tomorrow, alright?"

"Of course," Luna nodded. "Thank you for inviting me, Ginny."

"Anytime!" Ginny smiled distractedly, squeezing the blonde witch's hand before bouncing off again towards the group of witches that were gathering their belongings.

Marcus watched the interaction curiously and was astounded when the ginger witch left. He was sure that it was common practice among women to move in packs and look out for one another, especially when alcohol was involved. He would know, considering how many times, following a winning game, his plans for sweet talking one witch or another had been ruined due to their friends' constant interference. Yet Ginger had just told one of her supposed friends that she was going and proceeded to just leave her in the company of some strange man. Or, at least, Marcus hoped that Ginger hadn't recognized him and thought he was just some random wizard because knowingly leaving Luna alone with a man that she recognized, remembered unpleasantly and clearly found suspicious made the entire thing that much worse. Despite being the wizard that Luna had been left with, Marcus was offended on her behalf.

He watched as Luna's expression shifted once again, losing some of the vacancy and becoming rather sad instead, whilst her shoulders dropped noticeably. He frowned, "You could have just told her the truth. That I invited myself here to bother you."

"Why would I say such a thing?" Luna asked, looking genuinely confused. "Invited and welcomed can be two very different things, Marcus."

Marcus took a moment to think about Luna's words because he felt that, like with many things she said, there seemed to be a hidden meaning behind them. He concluded that she meant that, just because he had invited himself didn't mean he wasn't welcomed, and that just because she hadn't been invited out didn't mean that she was welcomed. He was pleased for the former but the latter bothered him more than he was willing to admit, even to himself. He searched his mind for ideas of how to remove that look on Luna's face that he was starting to loath. Hit with sudden inspiration, he stood from his seat and downed the remainder of his drink. When he noticed that she was watching him warily, he maneuvered around the table and took her hand to pull her to her feet. As she rose, he fleetingly registered that he had been correct in his earlier assumption: she was taller than originally expected, the top of her head coming level with his chin.
"Are you hungry?" Marcus asked decisively. Luna smiled brightly and nodded in response. It was the first time Marcus had seen her full, genuine smile and it was rather disarming, how much it changed her face and lit up her eyes.

Luna tucked her hand into the crook of his elbow as Marcus began to lead her out of the busy pub. But before they could make it to the door, Luna was roughly knocked off course by a group of rowdy wizards who were in an apparent rush to get to the table they'd just vacated. Marcus was quick to steady the blonde while she attempted to regain her balance. But when another wizard, who was trailing behind the group, aggressively shoved Luna out of the way with an irritable "Watch it Loony", Marcus had officially had enough. Automatically, his arm wrapped around Luna's slim waist and he pulled her into his side protectively.

"Watch where you're going, arsehole," he snarled after the rude wizard, who immediately paused and spun to face the pair. Marcus felt his face twist into a sneer when he found himself looking down at Draco Malfoy. It figured that he had no compunction against manhandling women.

Malfoy glanced curiously between Marcus and the witch he was holding close to his side, before smirking condescendingly. "Loony, Flint? Really? I hadn't thought you'd get that desperate."

Marcus made to step towards the other wizard, his intention for violence clear to both blondes. Luna's arm quickly slipped around the front of his waist and gripped his shirt on the opposite side to halt the motion. At the same time, Malfoy took an instinctive step backwards, his eyes widening. "Think really carefully about your next words, Malfoy," Marcus growled threateningly.

The blond wizard drew himself up arrogantly and opened his mouth, undoubtedly to make another snide comment, before eyeing Marcus's aggressive stance. Some of Malfoy's instinct for self-preservation must have kicked in then, because he quickly turned and maneuvered his way to his friends.

"Marcus," Luna spoke softly, drawing his attention away from Malfoy's retreating form. He could feel her fingers slowly releasing their hold on his shirt as she began to withdraw from the contact. "Are you alright?" He asked, tightening his hold around her waist, while trying to look her over to make sure she was okay. At her hesitant nod, Marcus moved his hand to rest at the small of her back and carefully guided her from the pub, this time hyper-vigilant for those who couldn't be bothered to watch where they were going.

After a brief discussion, they ended up at a small restaurant a just a few streets away. It was only once they were seated and had placed their order that Marcus realized he had no clue what he was doing. Spontaneous dates were not something he had experience of, unless it was a planned 'spontaneous' trip into his bed.

He shifted awkwardly and fished around for something to say, "So, if you were out with Granger and Weasley, were you a Gryffindor too?"

"No," she answered with an odd, almost expectant smile, "I was a Ravenclaw. You were in your sixth year during my first."

Marcus frowned and studied her curiously. He wasn't sure if it was her response, her tone, her piercing blue eyes, or something else entirely that prompted a particular memory from his sixth year at Hogwarts, some ten years earlier. He wasn't clear on the details, but he could remember that he had been on a walk through the castle to clear his mind and his temper. He thought that it
might have been after a verbal altercation with Wood, the Gryffindor Quidditch captain at the time, but he couldn't be sure.

He had come across a handful of second and third year Slytherin boys crowding in towards a stone wall not too far from the entrance to the library. Thinking back now, he was fairly sure that Malfoy and his goons were among them. As he got closer, he remembered seeing a small body curled on the floor at their feet, the person's arms protectively covering their head from a succession of stinging hexes that were bursting from the wands of the Slytherins surrounding them. A satchel was lying on the floor a few feet away, it's belongings spilled out across the flagstones. Marcus had used his size and reputation - by that time in his school career, he'd become feared amongst most of his peers - to chase the younger boys away before crouching to help the tiny, shoeless, first year Ravenclaw.

Marcus remembered bright, albeit tearful, blue eyes looking up at him gratefully as he helped her to gather her battered belongings and walked her to the Hospital Wing, so that Madam Pomfrey could look her over following the assault of stinging hexes. "Thank you, Marcus," the girl with astonishing blue eyes had said.

Loony Lovegood. His memory echoed Malfoy's taunts from earlier, making him irritated with his own thoughts.

"They left me alone for a while after that, after you stopped them," Luna stated thoughtfully. He wasn't sure if he would ever get used to her seeming to know exactly where his mind was. But he wondered if he would get the chance to find out. He was quite certain that he was just as bemused by the girl at sixteen as he was at twenty-six.

"You remember that?" he asked, surprised.

"Of course," she said. Her eyes lowered to the table top and she shrugged slightly. "That was the first time someone helped, rather than joined in."

Marcus grimaced inwardly at the thought of her mistreatment over the years and carefully turned the conversation back to safer territory by asking her to explain what a “huffleding” was. After having shared that uncomfortable reminiscence, the ice seemed to have broken between them and the conversation flowed seamlessly from topic to topic. Hours later, they were both surprised when the staff started to prepare the tables around them for the next day and they realized they were the only two diners still in the restaurant.

It was only after he got home - alone - that Marcus remembered he had initially hoped to talk a witch into his bed that night. He was surprised how his failure to do so didn't seem to bother him at all.

'Disposable' she'd said. And Marcus thought that she was more right than she knew. That was, indeed, how he saw most of the girls he came across on nights like those. But he didn't think that 'disposable' would ever come to mind in reference to Luna Lovegood.

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One month.

That's all it took for his life to turn completely upside down. Marcus Flint didn't do relationships. Yet he found himself unusually eager to finish practice on the days that he knew he would be seeing her, something that garnered plenty of jokes and teasing from his teammates. And the way that her eyes lit up when she got excited caused an odd twisting in his chest that he wasn't entirely
certain what to make of. Even more surprising, he'd not even slept with the witch yet and he found that he wasn't nearly as bothered by that as he would have normally been with any other girl. That wasn't to say that he wouldn't be eager should the occasion present itself. He absolutely would. In a heartbeat. The witch had no idea what she did to him.

Disposability. He knew that that word, and all that it meant, was still their biggest hang-up. He saw the surprised expression she tried to mask every time she set eyes on him at the beginning of a date. As though she hadn't expected him to actually show up. Or that awful vacant look she would hide behind when he would step away from one of their oddly circular conversations about rare creatures, or her roundabout way of stating what she knew would be a differing opinion. Or that one date she had planned that didn't go at all as planned. Only when he returned to the conversation or when he laughed in amusement rather than derisiveness at the disastrous date did her beautiful blue eyes warm back up and she would smile. Every time that happened, Marcus noticed how her shoulders would drop just a hair and she would glance away for just a second. Marcus learned to recognize the relief she felt hidden in those subtle gestures.

When he had kissed her the first time, he hadn't been able to help himself. That disastrous date where she had attempted to cook for him -- which he could since attest that she was typically quite good at -- only to have every little thing seem to go wrong. He'd seen her start to withdraw behind the vacant expression and her eyes become glassy with tears, which she had subsequently tried to hide from him by turning away and busying herself with cleaning up. For some reason, the idea that she would attempt to hide her distress from him made something twist inside of him. Rather than watch it happen, he had pulled her towards him and kissed her. When he pulled away to see how the affection was received, Luna's eyes were wide and she was studying him intently, a hint of confusion on her beautiful face. So he kissed her again. And again. Until the confusion was gone and she was smiling and laughing with him once more.

Marcus had learned some of her tells over that month. He had started to see some of the things that were so obvious to him that he had no idea how her so-called friends could miss them. And they called him simple. He wasn't sure if she was simply getting more comfortable around him and allowing him to see those things or if he was just coming to know her better. Truthfully, though, either way felt encouraging.

It had come on so naturally that he truly hadn't fully registered it happening.

They had gone for dinner, just as they had done many times before. He had been leaning back comfortably against his seat listening to his witch talk excitedly about one creature or another. Just as she had done so often in the months that he had known her. Her eyes were bright and she was talking animatedly, gesticulating so enthusiastically he was worried she might accidentally knock over her glass of wine. That vacant, aloof façade was nowhere to be seen. And her smile. Her smile warmed him all the way through. It didn't appear nearly as often as he would like.

She had noticed him studying her and something must have shown on his own expression because she tilted her head curiously. "What?"

"I love you, crazy girl." "

Marcus watched in fascination as her eyes widened in surprise and a flush rose up over her face. He had seen a lot of Luna Lovegood in the past months. He had seen her happy, sad, frightened, and angry. He had seen her passionate and utterly despondent. But he was sure that he had never seen her blush quite like that before.
He thought he might love that too.

"I'm not crazy," she responded, shyly. He saw her smile widen though and there was a slight sheen to her lovely blue eyes when she looked back at him.

"No, you're just as sane as I am," he replied with a smile of his own.

Later that evening, as she was gasping beneath him, Marcus put extra effort into translating his words into his actions. And for the first time in his life, Marcus made love to a witch. His witch. Once they had both come down from their highs, Marcus lay on his back with his witch draped over him, his hand stroking over the rapidly cooling skin of her lower back.

"Marcus?" she said, quietly. When he offered a small noise in acknowledgement, she tilted her head back to look up to him and gave a small smile. "I love you too."

Marcus found himself unable to speak, not the words he wanted to say anyway, the ones that would accurately express how he felt about her. So he showed her again instead.

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Marcus growled with rage, spun on his heel and stalked away from Luna, slamming the door of their flat firmly behind him. Luna slumped back against the wall behind her and sunk to the floor, pressing her hand over her mouth to stifle the sobs that wrenched from it. This was it. She just knew it. She should have known that it was too good to be true. Why couldn't she have just let it go?

Eventually, the witch managed to move herself from the floor to the couch. She had considered going to bed and willing the entire argument to have just been an awful dream but the thought of trying to sleep without her wizard's comforting warmth surrounding her caused her heart to break all over again.

She had been living in a bubble of contented happiness for the last year. Despite her wariness, Marcus had gone above and beyond everything that she had ever imagined herself finding. The wizard managed to see through every façade that she protected herself with. Being aloof around him just wasn't possible, she didn't even try anymore, especially when it was just the two of them. When her friends would drift away, he always stepped in just as the masks went up and kissed her until they fell once again. She didn't think that there was anyone else in the world that knew her as well as he did. Luna drew her knees up to her chest, wrapped her arms tightly around her legs and stared vacantly ahead in an attempt to shut her mind down. Because those types of thoughts were just unbearable just then.

It wasn't their first argument or disagreement. Luna knew that she was odd, eccentric and always tried to embrace her free spirit though, admittedly, she tended to hide behind it rather than embrace it. Marcus, on the other hand, was more solid and traditional. More confident and self-assured. It was inevitable that they would disagree. Sometimes emphatically. It had taken months, but Luna had finally stopped holding herself back and allowed herself to fully engage in the conversations, debates and arguments with him. She finally felt secure enough to do so. She loved that he loved the real her and not the masks that she wore for everyone else.

But this time? He was so angry. What if he didn't come back? What if this was the argument that destroyed it all? Logically, Luna knew that Marcus was under considerable pressure with Quidditch training and preparing for the start of the season, and that his anger was likely more due to the strain of that rather than their disagreement. Logically, she knew that Marcus loved her. But...what if it was too much? What if she was too much?
What if he didn't come back?

More than an hour had passed before he returned to their small home considerably calmer than when he had left. The living room was dimly lit but he could still see his witch's slight frame curled on the couch, her beautiful blue eyes staring vacantly ahead at some unknown spot on the wall opposite. Merlin, he hated that look. Even from where he stood in the entryway, he could see the tears slipping unimpeded down her pale cheeks. Aside from the flowing tears and the fingertips of her right hand toying with the edges of her long skirt, his witch was utterly still. Marcus sighed softly and felt his shoulders drop as he approached the couch and sunk himself down beside her.

"Luna?" The vacant blue eyes turned from the wall to settle on Marcus. He gently reached forward to cup her face with his hand, and his thumb brushed away the moisture on her cheeks.

"Where did you go?" she asked, her voice quiet and childlike. "I thought…"

"No, Luna, no," he replied softly after he mentally caught up with her thought process. "You know that I just have to walk away sometimes. Just…just because we had a row doesn't mean I'm going anywhere. I just went for a walk. I had to cool off and give us both some space before things heated up further."

"Come here love," Marcus quietly urged, pulling her into his arms and against his chest when a muffled sob escaped Luna and her body shook in an attempt to keep the emotion confined. He wrapped his arms snugly around the blonde witch and pressed a kiss into her hair. "I'm here and I'm not going anywhere. Surely you know that I'd lose my mind without you? I know I'm not the smartest, I'm no Granger to be sure, but, Luna love…the second cleverest thing I've ever done is stopping at your table at the pub that night to talk to you. The first cleverest was doing everything I could possibly do to make you all mine."

"I thought that - maybe - you were seeing what everyone else does in me and you'd started to think what everyone else seems to think about me - that I really am crazy - Loony," Luna whispered. "That maybe you were tired of it all."

"Silly witch," Marcus murmured affectionately against the top of her head. "I see what everyone else doesn't see. I love you, you crazy girl and nothing could possibly change that. Especially not a silly argument."

"I'm sorry," she whispered against his chest.

"Hey…I'm sorry too. For getting so angry that I had to storm off…like I've said before, we all go crazy sometimes, including me…" he said softly, nudging her slightly with his shoulder to encourage her to look at him. When she finally tilted her face upwards, he brought his hand to cup her jaw and pressed his lips to hers as gently as he could manage. Her hand slid up his chest and around the back of his neck to hold him to her. He could very nearly taste the relief and desperation in her kiss and it made his chest ache. That his witch still thought herself to be every bit as disposable as she once insisted she wasn't. Determined to make up for the events of the night, Marcus pulled his witch more fully into his lap.

"I love you, you wonderful, amazing, crazy girl," he whispered against her bare shoulder some time later, their rapidly cooling bodies still tightly intertwined.
End Notes

Baby why you wanna cry?
You really oughta know that I
Just have to walk away sometimes
We're gonna do what lovers do
We're gonna have a fight or two
But I ain't ever changin' my mind
Crazy girl, don't you know that I love you?
And I wouldn't dream of goin' nowhere
Silly woman, come here, let me hold you
Have I told you lately?
I love you like crazy, girl
Wouldn't miss a single day
I'd probably just fade away
Without you, I'd lose my mind
Before you ever came along
I was living life all wrong

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