**Summary**

Written for the Sick!Wilson Fest prompt, “Wilson wakes up one morning with wry neck (acute torticollis). He could really benefit from a massage, but he won’t go to a masseuse because it gets him ‘excited’; House supplies the massage.”

**Notes**

See the end of the work for notes.

Wilson came to work with his head turned to the left.

“You look like a flounder,” House snickered.

“I slept on it funny,” Wilson mumbled as he disappeared into his office.

House frowned, bounced his cane for a minute, and followed him in.

Wilson was slouched in his desk chair, staring miserably in the vicinity of his couch. His hair was curling in directions it never dared go when it had been blow-dried into submission; the shirt-tie combo was awful — even for Wilson — and wrinkled to boot.

“You should get a massage or something,” House grumbled so he wouldn’t sound too concerned.

“I took some aspirin,” Wilson said to the couch. “It’ll go away.”

“How soon?”
“A day or two. Maybe longer.”

It was moderately irritating to talk to someone facing away from him. House stomped his way around the desk until he could see Wilson’s face. Wilson gave him a look so exhausted and mournful that he escaped out the balcony door.

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Fingers clenched in his thigh, House thumped his head on his desk. He had to take pity on Bleeding Eyeballs Whatever-the-heck-she-had Girl, had to chew out her abusive boyfriend… and Foreman would stand there and watch the cripple-kicking.

At least Chase had the decency to help him up when he could move again.

The Vicodin was taking too long to kick in; he fumbled through his desk drawers for his heat pack. Although the microwave was miles away, he couldn’t wait for his team to come and rescue him. He thought about calling for Wilson, but the memory of those dark-circled puppy eyes…

It was better not to think.

House used the desk for leverage until it ran out; then, watering eyes on his goal, he staggered across the expanse of floor, broken only by one measly door and the occasional chair — all of which served as resting points. His hands were shaking as he flung the pack into the microwave and set the timer. He collapsed into the nearest chair to wait.

House scooted the chair backward towards the microwave when it beeped and slapped the heat pack on top of his jeans before it could burn him. Aspirin. What Wilson needed was a massage, or something like House’s heat pack, to ease some of the stiffness out of his neck. But, there he was, stubbornly suffering just on the other side of the wall.

It was annoying. Almost as annoying as being preoccupied with hurt Wilson while he himself was in pain.

House was not a selfless person, not at all, and cute hair and puppy eyes were a lame reason to do something stupid and entirely against his nature.

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Dangling the newly-heated pack by one corner, House lurched the last step to the support of Wilson’s door. Out of curiosity and self-preservation, he peeked through the nearest window while his breath caught up with him. Wilson was pushing a pen around his desktop with one finger, clearly bored and still miserable. Didn’t the man have dying patients to fuss over? Or was he too embarrassed to keep his appointments? House couldn’t imagine why he would be; Wilson managed to look attractive, for a dork with an ugly tie, even though his neck was going for “pretzel.”

He scowled at his tacky-motorcycle-printed bag of flax seeds. He could stay out of Wilson’s line of vision — post-cry House was not a pretty sight, especially next to Wilson. And Wilson did look pathetic. He cleared his throat and meekly pushed the door open. He made it around to Wilson’s side of the desk before his friend noticed him.

Wilson tried to swivel his chair, but House blocked it and positioned himself accordingly. “Um… House?”

“Got something for you,” House offered as he surveyed the wrinkly-shirted shoulders before him for the best spot to heat.
Wilson sighed, “You came in so quietly.” Much of the tension House had been evaluating dissolved right then and there.

So, by hiding, House had scared him. That’s what he got for trying to be nice.

He carefully molded the heat pack around Wilson’s neck in a sort of apology, but all he let himself say was, “You smell like Bengay.”

“This thing doesn’t smell much better,” Wilson retorted while checking it out with one hand. “Where did you buy it?”

“Didn’t, I lovingly hand-stitched it all by myself,” House sneered, “and you’d better not be laughing at me.”

“I’m not laughing,” Wilson laughed.

House realized he still had his hands on the heat pack and, by extension, the oncologist’s shoulders. He couldn’t think of a comeback.

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By the end of the day, Wilson’s neck had seized up again.

“I keep telling you,” House hollered back over his shoulder as Wilson trailed behind him, “a massage would make your life a whole lot easier.”

“It’d keep you from talking?”

“Depends on what you’re massaging. But that wouldn’t help your neck.” He turned around to add an exaggerated wink, but his satellite had fallen out of orbit several yards back, staring at a Vermont license plate with his hands in his pockets. “You okay?”

“Yeah,” Wilson mumbled, “just really done with looking like a giraffe.” He shuffled past House and wandered further into the parking lot.

House was torn between asking what giraffes had to do with pretzel necks and pointing out — again — that a massage would fix all that, when he was distracted by a more intriguing question. “Hey, how did you get here?”

“I took a taxi. Can’t exactly drive like this.” Wilson made a vague, almost apologetic gesture in the direction of his neck.

Rolling his eyes, House jerked his chin toward his car. “Come on, I’ll buy you pizza.”

“With my money?”

“Of course.”

Wilson smiled. “Okay.”

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Wilson was angled away so he could face the TV, which he’d long since stopped watching. His sleepy slide down the couch had been interrupted by that awkward twist of his torso; every time his head began to droop, he jerked it back up with a wince that bounced the cushions and jostled House’s leg.
House was completely awake, in a manageable but relentless degree of pain, and very frustrated.

After a spectacular, full-body flinch that resulted in the flight of the pizza box and a bewildered Wilson, he decided that this had gone far enough. “You’re not going to be able to sleep with your head stuck like that.”

Wilson just sat there and blinked for a while, before rubbing his eyes and mumbling something about pillows.

House eased his protective grip on his thigh. Oh, he couldn’t resist. “A nice, soothing massage might—”

“Hooose,” his friend whined through his hands, “just drop it, please.”

Really, annoyed and sleepy Wilson was too adorable not to provoke. House flung one arm over the back of the couch and continued, undeterred. “What have you got against massages, anyway? You’ve been deflecting all day, resisting a perfectly good treatment — a couple of minutes, maybe some heat, and your neck will be healed.” Well, improved, at any rate.

He expected at least one more protest, but Wilson was apparently as bored with avoiding the issue as he was of listening to excuses. The oncologist heaved a sigh of longsuffering, shuffled his shoulders, and said at length… “I can’t.”

…And? House quirked an eyebrow. There had to be more than that.

Wilson’s gaze flicked to his face, away, and back again, this time with a glare. “You’re never going to let this go, are you?”

“Nope.”

After additional squirming and huffing, through which House kept up his most piercing stare, the younger doctor finally gave in. Loudly, almost daring him to laugh, he announced, “I get… excited. Okay?”


When Wilson wrapped his arms around himself and tried to look away, House exploded into giggles. “It’s not funny, House,” he warned.

House ignored him and bent over his own lap, wheezing. “You— you— so sad…!”

“I never would have said that if I’d been more awake,” Wilson sulked.

When he, at long last, could catch his breath enough to speak, House wiped his eyes and gasped, “What exactly did you get massaged?” At his friend’s glower, he bit both his lips and almost stifled the next bout of laughter.

“It wasn’t anything like that, just my neck… I don’t know, I guess the intimacy or whatever— Ugh, this is so embarrassing!”

Rather than sending him into more giggles, the sight of Wilson trying to cover his face sideways made him feel sort of warm. He took a couple of deep breaths to help control the leftover tremor in his voice. “So, a harmless neck rub — from a stranger — turns you on, seriously?” He couldn’t help grinning. Wilson could not be that easy.
“Well…” Wilson was doing his best to avoid looking at him even though he was stuck turned that way. “It’s never actually been strangers, a couple of girlfriends… and I felt kind of bad asking, so I haven’t had too many…”

“Girlfriends?”

“Massages, you know what I meant.”

House’s smile softened in spite of himself. “You’ve denied yourself some relief because of that? Wilson, you’ve been in love with all your masseuses. Don’t you think that might have something to do with it?”

“I guess… Yeah, maybe.” Wilson smiled back a little, sheepishly. “Well, it’s too late to find out today, anyway.” Those sweet, off-center eyes seemed liquid-black in the lamplight, and when he looked up through his lashes just like—

“I’ll do it.”

“What?” Wilson snatched at him and missed. “No, House, you don’t have to—”

House hobbled away across the room, ignoring the pang of protest from his leg. He couldn’t leave an opportunity to second-guess himself. “I had to watch you pout all day,” he scolded in what he hoped was a playful tone. “The least you can do is give me a chance.”

“I—I don’t think this is a good idea—”

“Hey! I’m finally offering to take care of you for a change, and you’re complaining about this?”

Something akin to hurt flickered across Wilson’s profile. He held his hands up in appeasement. “I didn’t mean for it to sound like that.”

“And take off your shirt!” House waved back at him on his way to the bathroom. He had some massage oil stashed, which he wouldn’t have admitted to for anyone else, and, while he never noticed it doing anything special when he used it on himself, the orangey-woodsy smell was nice. Though that anxious expression stuck in his mind, he thought it would be better not to aggravate Wilson’s weird sense of guilt by calling attention to it. It was having enough problems with “accepting comfort at the expense of cripples” to add his pathetic “don’t reject me, Jimmy, I just want to make you feel better” to the till. His goofy friend would never take care of himself unless someone forced him to. That someone was going to be House.

Bottle in hand, he headed back to the couch. Wilson had turned off the TV, and was holding his shirt closed and regarding him warily. House sat against the left arm of the couch, swung his leg up, and beckoned. With a sigh, his friend scooted back between his legs so they faced the same direction. He let his shirt slide off his shoulders, and House forgot how to breathe.


His first touch was shy, little more than a caress. Wilson’s breath hitched; his heart almost climbed out his throat.


“Sorry.” He poured a little oil in his palm, rubbed his hands together to warm them, and began in earnest. He hoped his friend couldn’t feel his fingers trembling; if his leg hadn’t worn him out so
much, he’d be in big trouble. Wilson’s skin was warm, so soft. House inched closer, bowing his head toward those gloriously untamed curls, savoring the blend of citrus oil and the scent of his friend. He let his eyes drift closed, all the better to concentrate on the muscles beneath his tingling fingertips — firmer pressure across Wilson’s shoulders, gentler touches to the tender spot on his neck…

Rather than relaxing, Wilson was growing tenser by the minute.

House tapped him between his shoulder blades while he cleared his throat so he could tease properly. “Hey, you’re supposed to loosen up — this has to be doing something.”

“Oh, it’s doing plenty,” his friend growled through clenched teeth. “I told you this would happen.”

Intriguing. House peeked over a hunched shoulder — sure enough, Wilson’s trousers were decidedly tenting. He had an awkward moment between amused and confused, before it sank in.

Could Wilson (precious, beautiful Wilson) be in love… with him?

Wilson, in love, with him — it had been too much to seriously contemplate outside of the haze between waking and sleeping. Now, he had no idea what to feel. Disbelief? Then again, Wilson had lousy taste in love. Happiness…? All-out fear?

Then he noticed that the other man was still hunched over his own lap, with his eyes squeezed shut, waiting for the worst. He could break Wilson’s heart — and maybe his own — if he didn’t do something, and soon. He swallowed, hard, took a deep breath, and said, “I’m supposed to massage what’s stiff, right?”

…Oh, so lame.

Wilson turned around to squint at him suspiciously. House tried to look as sincere as he could, to convey what he didn’t trust himself to say any better than that last cheesy line. Tentatively, he reached out to touch the other man, stopping just an inch from his chest. Wilson searched his face with wide, dark eyes, and nodded.

“Okay?”

“Okay.”

House braved that last inch and laid his hand over Wilson’s heart. His own chest was aching with the fear and wonder in that simple touch. He skimmed his palm down his friend’s stomach, held his breath, and trailed just the tips of his fingers across the front of his trousers. “Can we take these down?” he whispered.

Wilson nodded again, then unzipped them and lifted his hips for House to push them and his underwear down to his knees.

There was nothing remarkable about Wilson’s penis. It wasn’t huge, or bent in some weird direction, or an unusual color. It belonged to Wilson, and that was it.

House thought it was beautiful.

He looked up at Wilson’s face for permission; his friend was blushing furiously, trying to hide behind his bangs, and still so tense. House touched his tip with just one finger, and heard the tiniest of gasps from above. He settled back into his original position along the length of the couch, slinging his arm around Wilson’s shoulders and shaking him a little. “Relax,” he said.

And Wilson did — snuggled into his side with his face buried in the crook of House’s neck. House
held his breath. Very carefully, he patted that untamed hair; Wilson wrapped an arm around his waist in response, his other hand sliding down House’s arm to guide him where he wanted with a gentle grip on his wrist.

Their position was ideal for Wilson’s wry neck, but left House with only his non-dominant hand available. He skimmed his fingers up and down the other man’s erection, drawing little swirls along the way, tracing the circumcision scar, trying his best to compensate for his lessened dexterity. He felt Wilson’s lips move against his neck. It was probably just a twitch, yet made House feel bold enough to start rubbing a little harder, eventually moving his ministrations to the glans.


“Feel good?”

“Yeah.”

House pulled him further onto his lap, ghosting a kiss over his hair. Wilson’s free hand wandered up his bicep to his face, and, although the fingers stroking his beard kind of tickled, House wished he’d shaved so he could feel them skin-to-skin.

Holding Wilson in a little ball like this, with his friend’s legs slung over his left one and off the couch and their arms curled around each other, made the oncologist, the steady, supportive one, seem unrealistically small. Perhaps it was just the tumult of weirdness churning in his chest, but he moved his hand under Wilson’s open shirt and squeezed his side anyway, and thought of how Wilson’s face would tilt up to his if they kissed standing.

Wilson’s palm was pressed to his heart now; House delighted in the way those long, delicate fingers tightened in his shirt when he found that special spot under the head of his friend’s penis, when he tickled the slit or gently, so gently squeezed just right. The little half-formed sounds Wilson breathed against his neck grew into hums and sighs. “Close,” he whispered.

House eased him upright against the back of the couch. At Wilson’s muddled blinking, he shushed, “I want to watch.” Wilson purred and nestled into the cushions while House got a bit more oil. His right leg was crooked around Wilson’s body kind of funny, but he’d survive long enough. Wilson was watching him with a quiet intensity that sent his blood spiraling from head to heart. He reached for him again, flicking his thumb back and forth across the glans, and farther back to cradle his balls for the first time. Wilson keened deep in his throat. “You like that?”

“Hahh,” Wilson said.

House smirked and tried it again. After a similarly eloquent statement, Wilson grabbed the hand that held his erection and thrust into it a few times to give House the idea. “Bossy.” House chuckled, but he started stroking properly then, earning another happy sound. He experimented with different speeds and pressures, now overhand, now underhand, now with a twist…

Wilson clutched at whatever he could reach. Somehow, he ended up holding House’s hand, twining their fingers in a white-knuckled grip. When House suddenly twisted his fingers around the head, Wilson yelped. “Please.”

“Almost.” It was incredible, an experience like none other he’d had; House was free to focus on the expressions flitting across Wilson’s face with no thought for himself, to watch the orgasm building as his fingers flew along Wilson’s oil-slicked shaft. His friend was panting, and whimpering on every exhale. House whispered encouragements just as quickly, “that’s it” and “so sexy” and “love you” and “show me,” and then Wilson was coming and crying and he had no more words.
House was left reeling in his own emotions. Torn between licking his fingers and licking Wilson, he wiped his hand on his jeans instead.

It was like taking flight, and then realizing that what he’d actually done was jump out of an airplane with no parachute.

Then Wilson was crawling back into his lap, and he had the world in his arms again, and he found he had wings.

He could feel Wilson trembling beneath his hands; he hugged him close, and didn’t think twice about putting his face in thick, silky hair. His friend breathed something against his neck that he almost didn’t hear. House couldn’t find his voice to answer.

As Wilson calmed down, he uncurled his arm from between them and started stroking House’s stomach. House, absorbed in his own emotional afterglow, didn’t notice the direction the caress was moving until it was too late. “Wilson, don’t—”

Wilson’s hand closed over nothing but softness. He looked up at House with furrowed brow; then, his eyes widened. “Oh. Oh, gosh, I didn’t mean to— I thought you were enjoying—” He jumped up and fumbled for his pants. “I am so sorry…”

House had hoped he wouldn’t have to admit this, but trust Wilson to try to return the favor. “Wilson, wait.” He grabbed the closest flailing hand. His friend’s sidelong look mixed confusion and hope in a way that made House feel even more self-conscious. Wilson had given him trust; he had to do the same. He sighed as he searched for a way to phrase his lack of participation that wouldn’t humiliate him for longer than a few weeks. “Some dude kicked me in the leg,” he explained. “I can’t— Give me some time to rest, and…” He mentally begged Wilson to be understanding.

Wilson sank down onto the couch again, their hands still clasped. His voice was barely above a whisper when he spoke. “So, this is something you’d want to do again?”

“Well,” House replied, cautious, “you’ll need another massage before we go to work, won’t you?”

He had just enough time to look up before Wilson leaned in and kissed him.

House sat there like an idiot.

When Wilson pulled back, he had a nervous smile. “W-was that…?”

“There…” House shook his brain back into action. “…are at least three places I’d like to kick that guy right now.”

Wilson’s smile grew into something incandescent.

Words caught in House’s throat; kissing was better than talking. This time, he gave Wilson everything he couldn’t say, pressed against sweet, soft lips. It was gentle, chaste even, filled with orange-scented caresses and quiet breathing.

Their lips parted, their foreheads touched — and House found himself lost in night-dark eyes. He had to be sure. “Doesn’t make us boyfriends or anything,” he muttered.

“Oh-ho, yes, it does.” House pulled him in by the shirt slung around his elbows for an entirely different kind of kiss.

Wilson’s mouth opened for him without hesitation, and he dove in, bumping teeth and noses,
moaning in the tangle of tongues and arms and souls, pressing in—


“Sorry,” House murmured as his hands pushed Wilson’s aside. “Let me.” They stretched back out into their original configuration, facing the same direction along the couch.

Wilson took his first look at himself since they began. “Ugh. My clothes need to be washed.”

House snickered. “You need to be washed. In the morning.” When he awoke, for the first time, beside his best friend… He hugged him quickly, just because he could. “After your massage.”

House’s unconventional massage techniques certainly did the trick; the other man melted at his touch this time around. He let his hands stray, up into Wilson’s hair, down his arms. He couldn’t resist stealing a kiss every so often, since his new lover’s face was so conveniently turned to the side. Within a few minutes, Wilson had given up trying to keep his eyes open, and had gone from leaning into House’s touches to leaning into House.

His hand was rubbing House’s thigh. House couldn’t really feel it through his jeans, but knowing it was there made all the difference.

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Wilson came to work with his head turned to the left, wearing House’s clothes and a smile.

End Notes

Freshly edited — now with less daisy-field!

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