In The Closet

by FangQueen

Summary

Severus Snape was staring at him from the other side of the circle. Remus looked into his wide eyes and thought that he might be sick. His breathing was harsh and loud to his ears, his heart thumping against his rib cage. The wand was pointing straight at him, shining like a beacon, sure in its selection in a way that Remus could never be. And yet Snape didn't look outraged or offended. He looked scared, scared beyond belief. Remus thought with a bubbly flip of his stomach that it must be like looking in a mirror.

Notes

This was my January 2018 submission to Daily Deviant.

Monthly Theme(s) Used: Everything old is new again!: Cleaning up, Quickies, Oil

In the theme of "everything old is new again," I thought it'd be fun to take us way, way back to my very first ship! The truth is, I haven't been crazy about this pairing since I was probably about fourteen or so, and I've never written fic about it (at least not exclusively) — so this was actually a challenging and yet refreshing thing for me to explore.
"Who all's gonna be there tonight?"

The question was punctuated by a muttered spell and the spark of a small flame.

"Us three, Lils and Mary, I think a couple of the sixth-years. Marlene said she opened up the invitation to Hufflepuff and Slytherin as well, so who knows."

Paper curled back as it burned, the ash it created bursting with sparks that twinkled like the night sky. A deep breath followed by a slow exhale. The Gryffindor boys' bathroom filled with the scent of lavender and sandalwood as smoke rose to dance across the ceiling.

Remus sat with James against the wall separating them from the showers, their backs pressed against the cold tile. He leaned forward to take the joint when Sirius offered it, slipped the thinner end between his lips, and breathed in, feeling his lungs expand with smoke. He held it for as long as he could before releasing a stream of royal blue vapor to swirl around him and up into the air above them.

"Wormy said he might come."

James cocked his head as he plucked the joint from Remus' outstretched hand. "Finally convinced him, eh?"

"Only so long as we promise not to spike his pumpkin juice."

"Well, where's the fun in that?" Sirius joked. James coughed as he laughed around a puff of smoke.

Remus rolled his eyes, but chuckled all the same, leaning his head further back against the wall behind him. Already, he could feel a sense of calm washing over him, massaging his muscles, quieting his mind. He needed it tonight, more than most.

"Lily says Snivellus might be there."

"Bollocks."

"S'what she says."

"When have you ever seen him at a party?"

"First time for everything," Remus muttered, wondering himself when he'd ever seen Snape around these events. Probably not since third year, when Sirius levitated the punch bowl over his head.

"She's been trying to get him out of his shell lately," James added with an undertone of pride that made the other two men look at him with raised eyebrows.

"And I suppose she's recruited you in that effort, has she?" Sirius asked, to which James spluttered:

"No! Well, I mean, I. Now that we're dating. They've been friends for a long time, since they were kids, and I want to be supportive of that now."

Sirius turned to give him a sidelong glance, and Remus was forced to stifle a laugh. Ever since he and Lily had gotten together, James had become rather insufferable. Everything was 'my
girlfriend' this, and 'when you boys find someone' that. The other Marauders had all placed bets on how long it would last. Remus had been the less optimistic of the three, and so far it was appearing as if he might just win.

"Yeah, friends enough that he called her a…" Sirius caught himself when James frowned. "Nevermind. You should be careful, though," he added after a moment's hesitation, his voice tight around an inhale of smoke. "You know he still fancies her."

Remus accepted the joint as it was passed, feeling James stiffen beside him as a quiet settled over them.

He would be the first to say that being less hostile towards Severus Snape was the best for all involved — and yet he didn't know if he'd ever get used to hearing the same sentiments come from James as well. None of them had ever stopped to consider what might come of him dating Lily. As far as Remus knew, none of them had ever thought that such a thing would be all that likely in the first place. Nonetheless, he'd been pleasantly surprised to find that that was all it took for them to stop the senseless bullying they'd been subjecting him to for so long. Unfortunately, other habits were not so easily laid to rest.

Lily and Snape had always been a sore subject for James. And Remus had understood why, for a time. Until their relationship had begun to take shape, and they'd all started seeing more and more of him. They didn't hang out with him. They weren't friends. But Lily was, and it was common for him to pop up from time to time when she was with James and the boys, to check on her and ask how she was doing. He never stayed long. Whether that was because of the Marauders, or because of the lingering awkwardness between the two of them, Remus wasn't certain — but he had reason to believe it was probably a bit of both. Lily had forgiven Snape for the incident after their O.W.L.s only a short time ago, so there was a strain in their friendship that hadn't existed in years past, but there was still something deep there. He was protective of her. He cared for her. Yet...Remus didn't know that he could say he fancied her, at least not anymore. Maybe he was mad — he often wondered as much. He thought he'd seen something in him, the last few times, that led him to believe something else about Snape entirely.

But he was coming to the party tonight? Remus had to admit, he was more than a little curious to see how that would pan out. It was being hosted in the Ravenclaw common room — a safer place than some for Slytherins, especially those on anyone's shit list, but still not something he'd ever thought Snape of all people would be up for.

Remus had spent much of the day trying to come up with an excuse — he'd given up about an hour ago after he'd realized it wouldn't do any good. He'd done his part with the others, providing refreshments they'd managed to nick from the kitchens, as usual. It was one of many reasons why their little group always received an invitation, even if only three out of the four typically took anyone up on it. How notorious he and Sirius and James were at these things, no one would ever buy that he wasn't in the mood for it. He could say that he felt ill. It wasn't like he didn't "take ill" pretty often as it was. Except that wouldn't work, either, because the other Marauders knew the lunar cycle as well as he by this point, and thus knew that a full moon wasn't due for another week and a half.

It wasn't that he didn't want to go. It was just something that was...difficult to explain. A feeling that had been growing more and more over the years, that he was playing with fire whenever he let himself get wrapped up in things like this. The last party they'd gone to, he'd ended up getting a bit more pissed than he'd intended, and had tried something stupid. He didn't think Adrian would ever look at him the same, and he wasn't hoping for a repeat performance.

"Lily says Marlene asked after you."
Remus knew who James was talking to before he even looked up, and his chest filled with dread as he did. His friends were grinning at him, a familiar mischief shining in their eyes. He looked away pointedly, focussing instead on the small roll of paper twirling between his fingers. He took another hit and exhaled it slowly.

"Did she?"

James nodded, smirk widening. "Might be your lucky night, Moony."

Remus passed the joint once again, trying his best to appear pleased at the prospect. His heart pumped slow and steady, but loud, blood pulsing in his ears. Marlene McKinnon was an intelligent girl. Playful as she was beautiful, easy to be around. She was someone plenty of people would count themselves blessed to spend their time with. The fact that she had seemed to set her sights on him in the past few weeks should've made him feel superhuman. Somehow, Remus didn't think there was any way his friends would ever understand why it didn't.

They all jumped as a knock suddenly came at the door. There was a moment of blind panic, the three of them staring at each other with wide eyes — then they were all on their feet and scrambling.

They didn't get very far. Remus and James were still trying to simultaneously siphon the smoke still lingering in the air and spell it out the window when the door swung open. Sirius had barely had the chance to toss the roach down the drain in the sink before they were all standing stock straight, attempting to look as innocent as humanly possible, and being stared down by none other than Lily Evans and Mary McDonald.

The two girls leaned against either side of the doorframe, grinning like a pair of cats who'd just caught an entire family of mice. Behind them, Peter hovered anxiously, looking guilty — probably because he hadn't been able to stop them from barging in, Remus assumed. He felt a collective sigh of relief run through the three of them the moment they realized it wasn't McGonagall or Filch or, Merlin forbid, the Headmaster himself, and they were not, in fact, seconds away from a most excruciating demise. James seemed to come to this realization faster than the rest, because he was suddenly exclaiming:

"Oi! You do know this is the gents'?"

Ignoring James' outburst, Mary gave the trio a once-over and asked with an eyebrow raised in suspicion, "Are you smoking in here?"

"No," they replied instinctively in unison — although it may have sounded more convincing had Sirius not turned his head to exhale a cloud behind him immediately afterward, hacking over just how long he'd held it in.

Laughing, the girls simply shouldered their way inside, Lily trotting up to James to lay a kiss on his cheek, even as he continued to balk at the intrusion.

"You boys ready to go yet?"

"I think the real question is," Mary interjected in a sly tone, "were you smoking in here, and are you really now not offering to share?"

Sirius let one of his short barks of a laugh, smothering the last of his cough and wiping stray tears from his eyes as he slung an arm around her shoulders and made his way towards the door. "A girl after my own heart. I'll roll you one when we get there — I promised Marlene, anyway."

"Hold on, I think we're still missing the point here —"
"Come off it, James, it's not that big a deal," Mary insisted while Lily chuckled behind her hand at her boyfriend's incredulous expression.

"'Not a big deal'? Oh yeah, sure, I try to head up to your dormitory, just to make a totally innocent visit to my girlfriend, and the staircase sends me sliding across the common room. But you all can just waltz right into our lavatory, casual as you please."

"Oh yeah, totally innocent, Prongs, absolutely."

"Oh, piss off, will you?"

Remus followed the others out, nodding to Peter as he shut the door behind them.

"So, you coming?"

"Yeah, I think I will" he replied, although his body didn't seem as convinced of that as his mouth.

Even Peter was going. There was no getting around it tonight. Remus took a deep, reassuring breath as he followed them down to the common room and out, bound for Ravenclaw Tower.

* * *

It was well past midnight when someone brought up the idea of playing a game.

Remus felt a nudge to his shoulder and tore his gaze away from the starry ceiling. He didn't know for how many minutes he'd been staring at it, but the soreness in his eyes told him it had been awhile. Digging in with the heels of his palms, he blinked them back open to find Sirius grinning lopsidedly from his space beside him.

"Wanna play?"

He recalled the lager perched on the sofa arm on his other side and quickly drained the last of the bottle to wash the feeling of sandpaper from his mouth. "Play what?"

"'Spin the wand'," was the reply, and Remus' heart skipped a beat.

Furniture was cleared away. The group meandered towards the center of the room, gathering themselves in a circle on the plush carpet. As he and Sirius moved to take their seats, Remus caught James out of the corner of his eye, trying to convince Peter to go play. He hadn't had as much to drink or smoke as the rest — had had none, in all likelihood — and didn't seem as keen on the idea. No one questioned it, and even James eventually seemed content to let him be. That was just Peter. Remus wished the same could've been argued for him.

Even as his feet carried him forward, he wondered if this was a good idea. There was really no way for a bloke like him to win anything in this game. If he landed on a girl, he was going to have to pretend he liked it. If he landed on a boy, depending on who they were, what he knew of their interests, and whether or not they would be discreet, he might have a shot, but he wasn't counting on it. He'd never been sure, but he doubted there were many others like him in this school. He could sit it out, like James and Lily and some of the other couples were — but then he'd have to explain why. And he wasn't sure he knew how.

He scanned the circle, thinking he might feel better about it if he knew who he stood to be sharing that closet with. There was Marlene, of course, who appeared to be the facilitator. Remus guessed that the empty space on his left hand side had been reserved for her. Sirius occupied his right, Mary beyond him. There were a couple other Gryffindors that Lily and Mary had brought along,
as well as nearly all of Ravenclaw's upper years and a smattering of Hufflepuffs and Slytherins. Adrian was there, and it took every bit of Remus' Gryffindor courage not to get up and leave once he'd realized it.

That was when he spotted Snape.

The Slytherins had seated themselves at the opposite side of the circle, Snape squished between Rosier and Avery. Remus hadn't even noticed when they'd come in, but now he was definitely noticing. Snape looked... good. He had on a dark button-up and Muggle jeans, the sleeves of his shirt rolled up past his elbows. His hair was smoothed back into a low ponytail, and it appeared as if it had actually been washed recently. His face looked cleaner as well — less spotty, like he'd been taking better care of it. Remus wondered if that was Lily's doing, and decided it probably was. Snape also looked less on edge than when Remus normally saw him. The shine to his eyes told him that a drink or two might've had something to do with it.

Marlene suddenly stole his attention as she stepped into the middle of the circle, bending down to place a wand at its center. Remus could see even from where he sat that it was a toy. He wondered briefly where they could've possibly gotten such a thing. It didn't look like the kind one would normally buy for a child, and it became clear rather quickly that it was made for a very particular purpose.

After checking that everyone was ready, Marlene settled into the last spot in the circle — of course, directly next to Remus. She waved her wand — the real one — through the air, and the handle of the toy flashed bright green, blinking twice, then swung itself sharply to the right. It spun at a rapid rate, sweeping across the group several times before coming to a stop, its tip pointing straight at a boy seated three spaces to their left.

"Looks like you're up first, Adrian," Marlene announced, and several of the girls turned to whisper conspiratorially to each other.

Adrian looked quite nervous over the prospect — that was to say nothing of Remus' own feelings on the matter. He went ahead and leaned forward anyway, tapping the wand and sending it spinning in the opposite direction. Around and around it went, the circle growing more and more excited with each rotation. For a minute there, Remus seriously believed that it was going to stop on him. He didn't know what he would do if that were the case.

This time, when it stopped, its handle glowed a deep magenta, pulsating like the beating of a heart. The Ravenclaw girl it was pointing to blushed as she looked up at Adrian across the circle. A chorus of oohs and aahs rose from their onlookers as the pair was quickly ushered into a nearby broom closet by Marlene. The door snapped shut behind their backs, and one of the other Ravenclaw girls was tasked to stand just outside of it, keeping a watchful eye on the clock at her wrist. Remus let out a breath he hadn't even realized he'd been holding.

Seven minutes came and went, and when the two emerged, they didn't look all that worse for wear, but they were smiling in a secretive way as they parted and returned to their respective seats. The game played on. One after one, couples were selected and sent to meet their fate. Some didn't appear as if they'd enjoyed themselves much when they came back out, but they were in the minority. Many had to be broken up in the end, as they weren't content with only their seven minutes, and all the while the crowd hooted and hollered. At one point, Sirius entered the closet with a Hufflepuff girl, and they both turned out looking quite pleased with themselves.

Every time the wand chose to pass him over, Remus breathed a sigh of relief. He knew if they kept playing it would only be a matter of time, but somehow he thought that the longer things went on, someone was bound to get bored and call it off — and as the minutes ticked by, he found himself believing more and more that he was never going to have to take a turn at all, that the
game would surely end before his time came.

"Alright, Remus, your turn!"

Remus felt his heart stop. He wanted to curse. He wanted to scream. Godric and Salazar, he wasn't prepared. He'd been sitting here for nearly an hour, and still he wasn't prepared. He could feel Marlene's eyes boring into the side of his head, and Sirius was giving him a congratulatory pat on the back. James — who had been pretty well preoccupied by Lily during much of that time — had looked up from his spot on the sofa beyond the opposite side of the circle and let out a whoop of "Yeah, Moony!" that made Remus feel ill. The wand was pointing at him accusingly, its emerald light blurring in his wavering vision.

He didn't know how long he sat there before he felt Sirius touch his shoulder again and say, "Go on, it's your turn."

He hesitated. For the briefest of moments, he contemplated refusing. He knew he couldn't. His hand shook as it reached out to give the wand a tap. It swung to the left to circuit the crowd.

There was a murmur of excitement amongst the girls. The wand spun and spun, and Remus could feel Marlene glancing at him, but his eyes remained glued to the blur of brown and green, his heart beating faster and faster with each turn it took. Part of him prayed he would get her, or maybe Mary. They were his friends, and he knew he would feel more comfortable with them than he would anyone else. If anything of significance happened in that closet, he didn't want to end up leading Marlene on — yet somewhere in him, he genuinely believed that if something were to happen, it would wake him up. It would pull him out of this torturous existence, show him the way, make him...normal. She really was a great girl. He could be very happy with her.

Then everything stopped. Remus blinked. The wand was lying still, its handle beating hot pink like a young girl's Valentine's card, and he couldn't breathe, he couldn't fucking breathe. The air was stifling. He was so dizzy he thought for a moment that he might faint. He heard the softest of gasps from his left hand side, and he thought it must be pointing to Marlene. She must be so glad to see that, and he would learn to be glad in it as well. But then he focused and realized with startlingly clarity that the wand's tip was not aiming at the space beside him, but to one directly across...

Severus Snape was staring at him from the other side of the circle. Remus looked into his wide eyes and thought that he might be sick. His breathing was harsh and loud to his ears, his heart thumping against his rib cage. The wand was pointing straight at him, shining like a beacon, sure in its selection in a way that Remus could never be. And yet Snape didn't look outraged or offended. He looked scared, scared beyond belief. Remus thought with a bubbly flip of his stomach that it must be like looking in a mirror.

The group had fallen deathly quiet. There was none of the usual uproar that had come to be expected at the reveal. Remus never felt more on the spot, never felt more distanced from the rest than he did in that exact moment. He could feel the room wobbling, his connections to those around him severing with each pulse of the wand's handle. He kept waiting for someone to say something, do something, because he couldn't — couldn't get his mouth to work, his muscles to move, could barely keep himself sitting upright.

"You...you can't do that! They're both blokes!"

Snape broke eye contact as he scowled and turned away. Remus shot James a glare so menacing that he visibly withered under its heat. It was only after his friend had shrunk slowly back to his seat that Remus had realized it. He didn't even know why he'd done it. He'd just suddenly felt such a strong wave of outrage, of hurt at those words, that he couldn't control himself. They're
both blokes. That resonated with him in a way he couldn't explain. They were both blokes, and that made this wrong, didn't it? And yet he couldn't reason why.

"The wand chooses the wizard, then," Marlene said after a beat, sounding a little unsure of herself even as she did. "Off to the closet with you."

An uncomfortable moment passed before the two boys rose awkwardly to their feet. Remus stopped when he felt a hand at his elbow and turned to find Sirius gazing concernedly up at him as if to ask if he was really okay with this. He didn't have the opportunity to respond, as Marlene was tugging on his opposite hand, and then he was being marched alongside Snape and shoved through the closet door.

A woman's sultry voice chimed just as it shut behind them, making them both jump. "Seven minutes," she said in a silken drawl, so clear and pronounced that it was as if she was whispering in their ears. Remus spun around, trying to locate the source of the sound, and came to find a set of glowing red numbers burning like embers into the inside of the door. They read 06:57 and counting.

It wasn't until he felt their hands accidentally brush that it really set in for Remus just where they were. The numbers didn't provide any light whatsoever, and it was so dark he couldn't even see a foot in front of him, but he could feel Snape. Could hear him breathing, could feel the way he clenched his fists at his sides. It set in that he had managed to get here with a boy. A boy who seemed discreet, who he'd been hoping he hadn't been completely wrong about in the past few months. As if coming to this realization himself, Snape suddenly stepped back, and back again, until Remus heard him stumble into the wall and slide down it, and he followed suit.

They sat there in silence for some time. They each kept their legs bent up to their chests, trying not to allow any part of them to touch. It was quite a feat in such a small space. Even with their best efforts, Remus was constantly reminded every time his mind swam back into focus that Snape was there. Right there, all of two feet away from him, and they were supposed to be...

It wasn't until the voice had announced that they were at the four minute mark that one of them finally spoke up.

"I can tell you're less than pleased to be thrown in here with me," Snape said sourly, his voice a soft croak compared to the one that had preceded it.

"I wouldn't say so."

Remus didn't know what made him admit it, but he couldn't deny that it was true. He expected a snort in return that never came. He wasn't less than pleased. He was picturing what Snape was wearing, and recalling the pink tint to his cheeks when the wand had stopped spinning, and was wondering what the hell was wrong with him. But no, he wasn't less than pleased.

"Wonder what your precious Potter and Black will have to say about this when we're through."

Remus said nothing to that, because now he was wondering about it himself, and it was only making him dizzier. What would everyone have to say when they were through? He was scared to think of it. But he was here — and he'd gotten just what he'd wished for, in a way. He felt at war with how he thought he should act and what he wanted — what he desperately wanted.

"Can't believe this shite," Snape was muttering, "can't believe they tossed me in here, in the dark with a werewolf."

"Look, I'm not the one who made the bloody rules to the game, alright? We got paired together,
and that's that. I didn't come in here to argue with you."

Snape scoffed. "Why did you come in here, then?"

"Well, we're supposed to be snogging, in case you weren't aware."

The silence that stretched between them was palpable. Even in the relative dark, Remus could sense Snape's apprehension. He wanted to take it back as soon as the words had left his lips. That was the object of the game, yes, but he knew there was no way. There was no way Snape was interested, and even if he was —

"Well." Remus' ears perked up. Snape seemed afraid of something. He heard him take a deep breath, and then he said, "I suppose we could...try it. If you've no objections, that is."

And there it was. The added comment was so undeniably Snape that Remus couldn't help but laugh, despite the butterflies now zooming through his gullet. The other boy appeared to stiffen at the sound. It occurred to him what that response must've sounded like, and he struggled to convince himself to speak again.

"I — I don't if you don't."

He didn't know why the hell he was doing this. He was a bloody virgin, and he was soaring higher with each passing minute. He was probably going to be shite at this. Snape was probably going to be shite at this. They were both about to thoroughly embarrass themselves. And what were they going to tell everyone when the door finally opened?

Yet he reached for him, and although Snape hesitated, he eventually reached back. Somewhere in the middle, their lips met in a cautious kiss.

They both jumped back as soon as they touched, terrified, shaking — and yet giddy and breathless, and Remus couldn't help but laugh once more as he leaned forward to do it again.

"Three minutes."

Snape huffed an anxious gasp between their lips as they kissed again, and again, the nervous tightness in their mouths loosening with each brush. There was little skill in what they were doing. They had to learn to tilt their heads to avoid Snape's nose, and Remus nearly bit the boy's lip in half in his earnest. But to him, it was everything. He'd never been able to convince many boys to do this with him. Even the couple that did hadn't seemed to enjoy it. He wondered if Snape was having the same train of thought as he deepened the kiss, reaching out to thread his fingers through Remus' hair. Remus couldn't help but moan at the light tug to his scalp, and he rejoiced when Snape repeated the movement, harder.

He wanted more. He didn't know what, exactly, that might entail — in a broad sense, of course, but he wasn't in the right mind to form details — and yet he knew that whatever it was, he wanted it all. And he wanted it from Severus Snape, which was something he could barely even begin to understand, but was an undeniable truth. What Snape might've wanted from him in return, he could only imagine, but he thought he knew in the way he touched him now, in the way his tongue passed over Remus' own.

Snape turned his head to the side to catch his breath, and Remus dragged him back, pulling his bottom lip between his teeth. The other moaned, choking first on another noise that sounded much like a shy chuckle. His hand slid down from Remus' hair to scrape his thumb across his jaw, to cup his cheek. Remus tugged on Snape's arms, trying to pull him closer.

Through some awkward fumbling, they managed to reposition themselves. Remus sighed happily
as he slid into Snape's lap, kissing him with added fervor as he pressed him into the wall. He could feel that Snape was already fully erect, and now he was wondering if he had, in fact, been sitting there turned on from the very beginning — a thought which did absolutely nothing to dampen his own arousal. Remus was already achingly hard himself, and he found himself rolling his hips, hearing Snape groan and thrust up in return. They raked their hands over each other's bodies — through their hair, over their necks, their shoulders, Snape's sliding down to grip Remus' hips, hooking his thumbs into the waistband of his trousers.

"Two minutes."

Remus thought dimly that she could stuff her two minutes. He slapped his hands against the wall, bracing himself as he ground down hard, feeling their cocks rub harshly together through the confines of their trousers. His balls tightened, and he didn't know if it was he who'd moaned then, or if it was Snape, or both. He rocked, and Snape rocked back, and there was still no talent to be discerned in anything they were doing, and yet Remus couldn't help but feel elated at each kiss, at each groan, at each of Snape's incoherent swears of praise, at each press of his cock into Remus' hip, again and again until he thought he might never want to leave this closet, that he might not give a damn what any of them thought when they opened that door, that they could all take their idiotic prejudices and shove them up their —

Then he suddenly felt Snape stiffen beneath him. Their lips broke apart as the young man let out a strangled gasp. His hands shook where they gripped Remus' waist, and his hips convulsed. He didn't have a clear enough head to realize what was happening at first — until he suddenly did.

They stilled, and an uncomfortable silence stretched between them. It was the moment that the Wolf inside him smelled the shame that Remus came to his senses. The scent rolled off of Snape in waves, thick and heady. Remus' abdomen clenched in a tense excitement he felt guilty for, but couldn't help. Just to know that he'd had that kind of effect on another man…

His next thought was of Snape's state of mind. He seemed afraid to even move, now, and Remus didn't want that, didn't want him to think there was anything for him to be ashamed or fearful of. With barely a second thought, he reached for the wand in his pocket, until he felt a push to his chest as Snape attempted to remove him from his lap.

"Get off me," Snape said, voice firm and disturbingly loud in the private dark of the room.

"I can help —"

"Get the fuck off of me, Lupin —"

"Just let me —"

"I said get off!"

The door flung open.

Clearly everyone outside must have heard the commotion, because the numbers in the door only read 00:43. Smoldering in the wood there like a scarlet letter.

They'd made out for all of two sodding minutes.

"Everything alright in here?"

Remus looked up at Marlene's silhouette from his position on the floor, knocked back onto his hands where Snape had shoved him. He could hardly bear to see the pain etched all over her face. He bet no one had expected to find them in such a position. Who would've? He hadn't even
expected it himself.

Then suddenly Snape was on his feet. In the yellowish light spilling in from the room outside, Remus could now see the wet spot spreading across the crotch of his jeans. His hair had been pulled loose from its ponytail, his shirt rumpled. His face was burning red, shame painted along his collar and all the way up to his hairline. He took one last scornful look at Remus before bolting for the door, practically tossing Marlene out of his way as he stormed past the crowd and out through the archway beyond.

Remus stood, swaying, mind hazy, and crossed to the open doorway. Up close, Marlene looked more concerned for him than upset for herself, and he wanted to apologize, but he couldn't make the words come out. As if from far off in the distance, he heard Lily calling Snape's name, followed by the common room door opening and closing for the second time. Behind her, he could see his best friends' faces. Sirius, looking like he wanted very much to go after Snape himself, but for a much different reason. Peter, looking nervous and confused as usual. And James...Merlin, he couldn't even look at him. Couldn't determine just what that expression meant, but he didn't like it, didn't ever want to see his friend look at him that way again.

There was a commotion, and then he suddenly find himself out in the corridor, in an alcove down the way, Sirius holding him by the shoulders and demanding to know what had happened.

"What did that bastard do to you?! I'll fucking kill him, just let me get my hands on him, I swear I'll —"

"Sirius! He didn't, he — it's me, Sirius, I — I'm —"

He didn't know he was crying until he could already feel hot tears sliding over his chin and down onto his shirt. Something had broken in him in those past few minutes, and his mind was too far gone to help him put the pieces back together. He wavered, and Sirius caught him, wrapping him in his arms and holding him tight to his chest, and somewhere in the midst of it all, Remus finally told him the truth.

* * *

"You're sure you don't need us to stick around?"

The seventh-year boys' dormitory was relatively deserted. The Hogwarts Express was leaving within the hour, and many of the students bound for home had finished packing and were waiting at the platform for it to depart. The castle had taken on a quiet, tranquil nature that often accompanied the winter holiday.

Sirius was standing at the opposite bed, about to toss the last of his belongings into his trunk. Remus looked up from where he lay propped against his pillows.

"Yes, Mum, I'm sure," Remus replied with mock indignance, before grinning at the way Sirius balked at his tone. The irony wasn't lost on either of them; this conversation usually went the other way around. "I told you, I'll be fine," he added, softer.

Sirius snorted, his tone teasing. "Forgive my concern. You only just got through the full moon on Wednesday."

It was true; his most recent cycle had only just ended earlier in the week, and it had left him feeling battered and bruised as usual. It was one of the reasons why he wasn't headed home for the holidays himself. He didn't think he could put his body — nor his mind — through the stress of the constant presence of his extended family so soon afterwards. His mother and father were sorry
not to see him this year, but they understood. They'd grown accustomed to being the parents of a werewolf.

Sirius was lingering, Remus knew. He was waiting for him to say no, to say that he'd changed his mind and that he needed his best friend to stay behind and keep him company. James hadn't stuck around on that chance. He'd already left with Peter and Lily in tow — the latter two smiling, hugging him, wishing him a happy Christmas. Lily had promised she'd be bringing him back his own personal stash of her mother's best fudge. James had hovered by the door. He'd smiled as well when they'd finally said goodbye, but somehow it wasn't the same. It hadn't been for some time — not since the party a couple weeks back...

"Pads?"

"Yeah?"

"Do you think James." He swallowed. "Do you think that he…?"

He couldn't finish the thought. It was one he'd had many times before, even prior to that part of him coming to light. And many times after, before he'd finally plucked up the courage to actually talk to them all about what had happened — of course omitting Snape's mishap out of courtesy. It didn't matter; they could all guess as much on their own, anyway.

That so many of his friends had been as open and accepting as he'd experience thus far had come as quite a shock. He hadn't known what to do with that knowledge, at first. For so many years, he'd been ready to fight over it, to defend himself. Turns out he'd never needed to. And yet with James —

"He'll come around," Sirius replied reassuringly — and in that way Sirius always had, he made Remus want to believe it was true, more than anything. "He doesn't have a problem with it, you know. None of us do. I think he just...feels guilty."

Sirius didn't need to elaborate. Remus smiled weakly in return, fighting the swell of emotion in his chest. They hugged, Sirius squeezing him and patting him on the back like to knock the wind out of him. Remus then watched him leave with a pang of his own shame, knowing full well that when he'd told his friends of his reason for staying behind this year, he hadn't been entirely truthful.

The Map had told him where Snape was that night. Remus had known he would've stayed as well — had planned on it, in fact. He'd been notorious for it, since they were first-years. He'd heard Lily remark, once, that Snape would've remained over the summer holiday as well, if they'd have let him. So it was of no great shock at all that Remus had spotted him at the Slytherin table during dinner. He had returned to Gryffindor Tower afterwards and sat reading on his bed, the Map folded open in front of him, observing the other's movements. He waited ten minutes after watching his name creep along the corridors outside the dungeons before jumping to his feet and heading towards the library.

Snape sat alone at a reading table towards the back. He was the only one there, aside from the ever-vigilant Madam Pince. A jumble of potions textbooks lay open in front of him, a foot or so of parchment at their center. He leaned over his essay, his brow furrowed in concentration. His cheek rested on one hand, while the other absentmindedly tapped the feather of his quill against the tabletop.

Remus approached him as confidently as his bundle of nerves would allow — which wasn't much. He stepped up to the opposite side of the table, clenching a shaking fist against this mouth as he cleared his throat. Snape's head whipped up, eyes narrowing the second they saw him
standing there.

"The fuck do you want?"

He'd expected a more eloquent response. Snape looked ruffled, more so than usual by the presence of a Marauder. Remus didn't think he could blame him for that.

"You can't avoid me forever, you know."

"Watch me."

Snape moved to begin packing up his things. Remus slid into the seat in front of him before he could get very far, and he stopped and stared at him in way that couldn't be described as anything other than contempt.

"Why won't you just leave me alone?"

It had all been Lily's doing, really. She wouldn't provide the details of what her and Snape had talked about that night, but she'd made it clear to Remus that his advances were not unwanted. In the weeks since, Remus had tried to stop him in the hall more times than he could count. He'd passed him notes in class that he caught Snape chucking into the bin when they left. He'd tried to be poetic, to be enlightened and understanding about the whole thing, having felt so open now that he'd come out himself. But tonight, as he looked at him across the table, he saw no reason to say anything other than exactly how he felt.

"Because I want to make it up to you."

Snape started, recoiled a little in his seat. There was a mixture of emotions on his face that Remus was having difficulty deciphering — but somewhere in there, he thought as saw a sliver of the same hope he'd been carrying with him the past few days.

"Why on earth would you want to do that?"

"Maybe because I enjoyed it? Did that ever occur to you?"

Snape goggled at him like he was speaking a foreign language. In that moment, Remus finally realized that that was exactly it: it hadn't occurred to him. It probably never would have, had they not spoken about it now. Snape was...Snape. And of course there was nothing wrong with that, per se. He just wasn't that type of person. Not one of the Sirius Blacks or James Potters of the world. Remus could relate to that feeling well. He did alright — he wasn't a complete trainwreck or anything — but it came with the territory. His monthly visits made it so he looked like he had a bad drug habit on the best of days, and like he'd been mauled by a pack of Nundu on the worst. And standing next to Sirius and James — one who seemingly cycled through a new prospect every week, and the other a well-known Quidditch star — he definitely paled in comparison. To be on the receiving end of almost constant ridicule from two men like that...He couldn't imagine it had been a very conducive environment for bolstering Snape's self-esteem.

"I don't want to do anything you're not comfortable with. I should've said as much that night, I just wasn't..."

Sober. He hadn't been sober, neither of them had, and he'd had to live with the guilt he'd woken up with the following morning. Snape looked like he'd felt similarly, the way his eyes shifted nervously at the mention of it. Then he opened his mouth slowly, as if fighting what he was about to say, before whispering something that Remus had to strain to hear even in the quiet of the room around them.
"Why me?"

"Honestly? Because you're the only bloke so far that willingly showed me that I...wasn't alone."

Snape's eyes clouded for a moment, and then he shuffled uncomfortably and glanced away. This soon after the passing of the full moon, Remus' animalistic senses were muddled, not as sharp and clear as usual — but he wanted to believe as he looked at Snape now that he knew what Remus was saying. And that he felt the same.

"It's something I've been wanting to experience with someone for a long time. I've decided I'd like to do it with you."

Snape didn't say anything, simply continued looking anywhere but at him. When the silence stretched on for longer then he'd expected, Remus felt his heart rate speed up a tick as he added in a voice he barely recognized:

"Do you want to?"

Snape huffed, leaned forward against the table, and ran his hands across his face. He sat there for a moment, holding himself up by his forehead, staring down at the forgotten essay crunching beneath his elbows. When he spoke again, it was still in a wavering tone of uncertainty, but louder, as if daring himself to really mean it.

"Merlin, yes. I really, really do."

They only made it as far as the door to Remus' dormitory. Snape pressed him against it, effectively snapping it shut behind them, capturing his lips in a kiss that sent sparks from the top of his head down to his toes. His bookbag fell with a thump at their feet as Remus wrapped his arms around the shorter man's waist and pulled him taut against him.

Just like in the closet, he was already hard, and now he could feel that Snape was, too. He licked his way into Snape's mouth, trailing his tongue along his lips, his teeth, past his own until he could feel him moaning. Remus rolled his hips and felt him respond before he pulled back, breathing heavily in the space between them.

"You're the first to ever make me feel like this is really okay."

Remus choked and kissed him again, feeling a mix of pain and pleasure clench in his chest. Never had someone voiced his own thoughts so well.

They kissed until their lips were chapped, red and raw, and then Snape was dragging them over Remus' chin, across his jaw, down his throat. His long fingers fumbled for his belt, and Remus felt his stomach do a backflip as he reached for the fastenings of Snape's own trousers in response. The sound of zippers coming undone sent shivers down his spine. Cool air hit the heated skin of his thighs, his cock, as his pants were pushed past his arse, and then they were both standing there, a quarter undressed as their lips fought for dominance and their hard cocks slid together, bare, for the first time.

Where he'd ever mustered enough brain power to think of it, Remus would never be able to say — but somehow he managed to retrieve his wand from his pocket and Summon the large bottle he'd tucked away in the bottom drawer of his nightstand. It was massage oil Sirius had gotten him last Christmas, as a laugh. He'd said with that and his big hands, Remus would drive the ladies wild. If only his good friend could see how he was putting both to use now. At least he had a feeling it was going to be much better than the wanking he'd been doing with it since.

The moment Snape's slick hand wrapped around his length, he nearly lost it. He scrambled for the
other boy's cock, curling his fingers around the head and stroking down, coating him in what was probably far too much oil, but he didn't care. Snape's responding moan into the crook of his neck was enough to make him stop caring about just about anything.

There may have been little skill involved when they kissed, but the way Snape stroked him was beyond what he ever could've imagined. The Slytherin's palm slid over the ridge under his head. Remus' knees nearly buckled when he felt a thumb press into the vein along the bottom. He swore under his breath, flicking his wrist as he stroked the other boy in return, repeating the movement when he heard Snape groan. It hit him, then, that this should've felt strange, jerking another man's cock — and yet he couldn't explain why, but it just didn't. Nothing had ever felt more right.

"Fuck," he breathed again as Snape wanked him, eagerly returning the favor. Merlin, he wanted to feel it, to taste it, to see it, what he was doing, and to know why Snape kept making that noise that was turning his brain to mush, but he couldn't think straight enough right now to even try. He leaned against the man in front of him, leaned his forehead on his shoulder as he moaned and bucked into his hand, and tried to coax himself down, but he couldn't — it was like a fire was spreading from Snape's palm into his skin, through his nerves, into his gut, where he felt his orgasm building at a blinding speed before he even realized.

"Ah, I — I'm gonna —"

"Fuck, me too — Severus —"

"Fuck —"

They came almost simultaneously, Snape bursting mere seconds before Remus followed him over the edge. Their hands trembled over each other's skin, pumping through each wave as they sucked in each other's breath, their lips brushing but never quite connecting. Remus let out another broken moan when he felt Snape's come spilling over his knuckles, splashing onto his wrist. He was sure his own was smeared all over his shirt, but that didn't matter right now — not when Snape was kissing him again with a heat that made him woozy.

They stood for awhile, kissing languidly, caring little for the come cooling and drying between them. Remus found himself waiting for the brush off, and not fully understanding why. He should've felt secure, and yet he was still teetering on a very fine edge of being somewhere between completely fine and downright terrified. Then Snape pulled back, his breath still coming in warm pants across Remus' face, and he was sure that this was it, until the boy finally opened his mouth and said:

"I think I did marginally better that time."

Remus opened his mouth to retort, until he saw the crinkles at the corners of Snape's eyes and realized that was a joke. Snape was joking. With him. He laughed, and the final weight seemed to lift from them as Snape's throaty chuckle joined in.

Snape stayed with him that night. He stayed with him for many of the nights in the weeks remaining until the rest of their classmates returned for the start of their last term. Remus never even asked him to, but he always did, and it just felt...right.

Maybe they wouldn't last beyond graduation. They would probably never be like the James and Lilys of the world. But it was as if something previously crushed and abandoned had opened up in Remus that first night in the closet — and he wouldn't have given up the opportunity for anything.

And somehow, he knew in the way Snape looked at him that he felt the same.
End Notes

Kudos/comments = <3!

Come find me on Tumblr and LJ as well!

Works inspired by this one:

It Just Feels Right by MyWitch

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