

Chapter 11 - The Truth

Remus laid Michelle down on her back on the floor in the corridor. Lily began sobbing hysterically. Michelle's eyes were closed and she wasn't breathing. Sirius leaned against the wall and his left leg bounced nervously. James was ghost white and he kept his arm around Lily. Remus straddled Michelle, who had smoke residue on her white dress and smudged on her cheeks. He pulled off the jacket of his tuxedo and just tossed it aside. Lily's dress was also smudged with the smoke residue, and she was still crying, smearing mascara down her cheeks in thin streaks. Remus put his ear over Michelle's nose and mouth, feeling for any sign of breathing. There was none. Caitlin watched and sobbed as well. She was shaking badly. She suddenly felt cold all over.

Remus began performing Muggle CPR on Michelle and Mouth-to-Mouth resuscitation.

"Come on," Remus pleaded, trying to keep his voice from shaking badly, but it was a losing battle. "Don't give up on me, Michelle."

Lily and Caitlin just sobbed. James held Lily close to him, while Professors McGonagall, Dumbledore, and Carter rushed forward to help.

The fire proceeded to burn inside the Hall until Professor Dumbledore waved his wand at the blazing inferno, extinguishing it instantly.

"What on earth happened?" Professor McGonagall cried, clearly shaken and horrified.

"We don't know!" Sirius said, his voice wobbly. "The candles just fell from the ceiling and ignited everything."

Remus continued doing CPR on Michelle, but after fifteen minutes, Michelle was showing no signs of life.

"Come on, dammit!" Remus cried as he did another five chest compresses on Michelle. He did Mouth-to mouth on her again, but still nothing. Professor Dumbledore gently put his hand on Remus' shoulder.

"I'm afraid she's gone," he said quietly.

"No," Remus said angrily, keeping up his rescue attempt.

"She's gone, pal," James said, his voice cracking.

Sirius was looking away, but he was also crying. James broke down also. Lily and James held onto each other as they cried. Caitlin sobbed even harder now.

"NO!" Remus howled as James pulled Remus off Michelle, but Remus fought against James' grip.

But eventually, Remus gave in. James hugged Remus as he cried. Remus felt as though a part of him went up in flames along with the Hall. Michelle, his world, the person he loved more than life, the person he wanted to spend the rest of his life with and who was just about to marry him, was dead.

Professor Dumbledore magicked Michelle's body onto an invisible stretcher and they headed up to the hospital wing.

Fifty students had perished in the fire, including Peter. Their bodies were also sent to the hospital wing and every single parent was contacted about what happened. Remus was absolutely devastated. Professor Dumbledore urged him to stay in the hospital wing over night for observation because of his emotional state. Madam Pomfrey gave him a Dreamless Sleep potion and he dozed off right away.

When Remus awoke the next morning, the deceased students that had been burned so badly that they were unrecognizable had been removed from the hospital wing. The only ones that were in the wing now were Remus and Michelle, whose body was lying on a cot across from him.

James, Lily, Sirius, and Caitlin came to see him.

"Hey pal," James said gently. "How are you feeling?"

Lily's eyes were red and blood shot. She'd been up all night crying as most of the girls in the dorm. About five of the students from their house had been killed in the blaze. Severus Snape had managed to evade serious burns by putting a charm on himself. He only escaped with third degree burns on his legs and chest area.

Remus slowly sat up in bed. His tuxedo was tousled and wrinkled. His green eyes were puffy and blood shot as well. He'd been crying so much, his body felt exhausted and his head ached. Caitlin looked pretty bad also.

The group gathered around Remus on the edge of his cot. Caitlin sat on the empty cot next to him and crossed her legs. She hugged herself and bit her bottom lip.

"How do you think I feel? I lost Michelle! Someone I loved very much...more than life!" Remus snapped sharply.

James didn't reply but hung his head low. Sirius had cried and cried until he couldn't cry anymore. He began really feeling overwhelming guilt that he and James tormented Michelle all those years when they could've known her for much longer. Instead, they were so self absorbed that they picked on her for no reason. They really had no reason to torment her. They thought at the time that it was hilarious...now, they saw just how mean and cruel they really were. Now, Michelle was dead.

Remus was in denial right now. James and Sirius knew that first there was denial, then anger, then the overwhelming grief. They were concerned that Remus would go overboard or do something rash...like harm himself.

“What happened?” Caitlin croaked out. “What caused the candles to fall?”

Everyone just shook their head. Madam Pomfrey came over to them.

“Hello, dears,” she said kindly. “I checked over Michelle. I have some disturbing news. Can I talk to Mr. Lupin alone please?”

“Whatever you have to say you can say it in front of them,” Remus muttered.

Madam Pomfrey’s expression darkened as she drawled slowly, “I’m sorry to have to be the one to tell you this, dear, but Michelle was ... pregnant.”

Everyone’s jaws dropped in surprise and shock. Remus couldn’t move.

“P-pregnant?” he stammered. “H-how...?”

“Well, I’m sure your parents told you about that area,” Madam Pomfrey said lightly and gently. “But, yes, she was pregnant.”

Caitlin began sobbing again. It was so sad. Michelle had been carrying a life and it was taken both from her and the baby. She decided to tell them the truth now about Michelle and herself.

“Why are you so upset?” Sirius demanded, looking at Caitlin. There were tears in his blue eyes. “You hardly knew her.”

“That doesn’t mean I wanted her to die!” Caitlin sobbed angrily. “I know what really happened with the windows blowing in last semester, and I know what happened here tonight!”

They all watched her intently.

Caitlin sobbed again. “I know what Michelle was ... I know how she caused the fire tonight and those windows to blow in.”

“She couldn’t have started the fire,” Remus said coldly. “There was no way she could’ve made those windows blow in.”

Caitlin nodded as tears streamed down her cheeks.

“But she did,” Caitlin said, her voice shaking violently. “Because she had Telekinesis.”

Madam Pomfrey had left the hospital wing for a moment, leaving them alone.

“Telekinesis?” Lily sobbed, raising her eyes to Caitlin’s. “Isn’t that the ability to manipulate solid objects?”

Caitlin nodded as the tears continued to stream down. “Yes. Haven’t you ever noticed strange things exploding without any explanation? Or any solid object moving by itself whenever Michelle was angry, or scared?”

Remus froze. He remembered the glass vase on the mantle piece exploding the afternoon that James and Sirius had tormented her in the common room, then the candlestick snapping in two in the corridor, and then the strange happenings the afternoon Michelle stood up to Mary in the classroom. She had been angry and sure enough, that’s when the windows had blow in.

Remus looked at Caitlin.

“And how do you know this? Michelle never told us anything about being telekinetic,” he asked.

Caitlin’s lower lip trembled. “Because, I’m psychic.”

Sirius snorted. James just shook his head. Lily was silent, however.

“Don’t you remember on the train? That look I got as I shook Michelle’s hand? That was me having a vision! Didn’t I tell you lot to sit by an exit? It’s Michelle’s fault she didn’t tell you lot about her ‘power,’” Caitlin sobbed.

“That could’ve been a coincidence!” James said angrily.

Remus got up and grabbed Caitlin by the throat. Her eyes glistened with tears.

“Don’t you dare blame this on Michelle,” he growled as his green eyes flashed.

Caitlin gasped, trying to get her breath.

“Remus, let go, pal!” Sirius said alarmed as he got up and stood behind Remus. Remus’ grip was tightening around Caitlin’s throat, and he was choking her air supply off. Caitlin’s eyes continued to swell with tears between being upset about what happened and the fact that she was having trouble breathing.

“Let go,” James said also getting up.

Caitlin let out a strangled gasp and Remus finally let go. James and Sirius forced Remus to sit back down. Caitlin bent over, wheezing and sucking in air. Her blond hair fell forward as she was bent over.

“I know this is hard for you to accept,” she croaked out, her voice rough and dry. “But it’s the truth. Sirius, I know you were in love with Michelle. James, I know you love Lily and plan on marrying her at the end of the year.”

They looked at Caitlin, startled. There was no way she could've known James' plan. He didn't even tell Sirius or Remus yet.

Caitlin then turned her eyes onto Remus.

"I know what really happened in the Shrieking Shack as well," she said. "Even before they played that horrible and mean prank."

"Did you know Peter would betray us?" Remus asked as his voice shook again.

Caitlin nodded. "I knew it last month when I had a vision."

"So, why didn't you tell us? We could've prevented this!" Remus demanded angrily.

Caitlin had tears streaming down her cheeks even more. "Would you have believed me if I did? You don't even believe me now! How was I going to tell you one of your best friends was about to pull the meanest and cruelest prank ever? You didn't even believe me when I warned you something bad was going to happen at the dance!"

They were silent. She was right, of course, and that only caused Remus to be even angrier with himself.

"But why'd she set the Hall on fire?" Lily sobbed.

"Because, I think she had enough of the tormenting and wanted to have the final word," Caitlin said quietly.

Remus looked over at Michelle's body. He felt tears forming in his eyes and he slumped against Lily. Lily wrapped her arms around him and held him as he pressed his face into her shoulder and cried.

A short while later, Madam Pomfrey ushered them all out of the hospital wing. That night, she gave Remus another Dreamless Sleep potion. Around midnight, Remus woke up to heaviness on the end of his cot. He opened his eyes and Michelle was sitting there, dressed in the dress she wore to the dance. But her skin and dress were clean.

"Michelle!" Remus cried as he reached out to grab her, but his hands went right through her even though she looked solid.

"Hi, Remus," Michelle said softly.

Remus looked puzzled as he tried to touch her again, but his hands went right through her. He also glanced behind her. Her body was still lying on the cot with a white sheet drawn up covering her face but he knew it was her.

"What's going on?" he asked.

“I came back to tell you good-bye,” Michelle said softly. “And I’m sorry for not telling you I was telekinetic.”

“Why didn’t you?” Remus asked, hurt. “I loved you and told you my secret.” Michelle sighed.

“Because I secretly hoped it would just go away,” she explained. “But after the windows blew in, I realized I couldn’t control it anymore. What if my anger really went out of control? I could’ve hurt you or Lily, or James, or Sirius. I didn’t want to take that chance. Please don’t be mad at me. And Caitlin is telling you the truth...she is psychic. I’m sorry I didn’t trust her. I realize now that she was only trying to help and protect everyone.”

Remus’ eyes filled with tears. “I miss you so much,”

Michelle reached out and gently touched Remus on the cheek. He felt a warm sensation there.

“I’m not mad,” he said, his voice cracking all over again.

Michelle smiled. “You would’ve made a great Dad.”

Hearing that only tore his heart to pieces even more. Michelle leaned forward and gave him a kiss. He kissed her back. When he opened his eyes, she was gone.

Remus woke up abruptly and looked around the hospital wing. It was silent and dark. Only the crescent moonlight came through the window and created bars on the floor. He looked at the cot across from him. Michelle’s body was gone.

The following week, there was a funeral that was held for the students that perished in the fire. Dumbledore magically fixed up the Great Hall, but there were still sections that were charred and it still smelled of smoke and worst of all, death.

The Slytherins lost the majority of students, and then it was Hufflepuffs, the Ravenclaws and Gryffindors. Some of the students refused to eat in there anymore and had taken to having their meals delivered to their common rooms. Remus had to admit, it was a good idea.

Outside, right against the Hall in the grass, was a small memorial that was set up. It was a statue of each of the houses all intertwined. Everyone stood outside holding white roses. Remus glanced toward the Hufflepuffs. Caitlin was crying softly too. Caitlin had pulled some of her hair back and fastened it with a barrette but some of the shorter strands had come loose and billowed in the cold air. Their breaths came out in puffs of steam as they exhaled. Caitlin looked up and caught Remus watching her. Her eyes glistened with tears in the sunlight. Remus began feeling guilty for grabbing her throat like that and he went over to her, ignoring the hisses of James and Sirius. He stood next to her. He was so tall that he towered over her slightly.

“I’m sorry I grabbed your throat like that,” Remus said quietly as Dumbledore said a prayer.

“It’s okay,” Caitlin said. Her voice had managed to return to normal now. “I understand that you were angry, hurt, and devastated.”

She glanced at James and Sirius, who were giving her death glares. Lily was sobbing into James’ chest.

“I gather your friends don’t like me much right now,” she said sadly.

“They’re just upset,” Remus said quietly. “They don’t mean it.”

They all began stepping forward and putting the rose on the memorial. When that was over, they headed back into the castle.

The end of the year approached, even though all of the students weren’t really looking forward to coming back next year as many of their friends were not going to be with them. Remus mostly dreaded facing another whole long year without Michelle by his side. She had been the one he wanted to marry...now, it wasn’t going to happen.

Madam Pomfrey had sent the bodies back to their families for proper burials. Remus packed his bags that morning like a robot. It was as if his whole life was now just there...that there was no meaning in it without Michelle.

The Hogwarts Express arrived and everyone climbed aboard. James, Lily, Sirius, and Remus entered a compartment and sat down.

Everyone boarded and the train began pulling away from the station. Remus looked out the window at the castle as it grew smaller and smaller as the train pulled further and further away from it.