

## Chapter 13 - Emma's Warning

The next day, they headed to their classes. Remus was sitting next to Emma. Behind him were Lily, James, Sirius, and another Gryffindor girl named Roselyn Enders. Remus found himself drawn to Emma. He wasn't sure why exactly. Perhaps it was because she reminded him so much of Michelle. Either way, Remus felt a connection to Emma.

Emma's hair had been pulled into a topsy-tail. Some of the shorter strands had come loose and hung down against her shoulders, framing her chocolate brown eyes. She had small amethyst colored drop earrings in her ears and she was wearing light purple eye shadow and pink lip gloss. Her cheeks were naturally rosy, but there was a touch of pale, pale pink blush. Behind him, Remus could hear Sirius whispering to James about Emma. Emma was certainly pretty. Even a few of the Slytherin boys tossed her glances.

Remus studied her as she copied down the notes that Professor Dawes had put on the board.

Emma felt Remus watching her and immediately felt her cheeks growing warm. She thought Remus was extremely handsome as well. She liked him. He wasn't like the guys she'd known back in Ireland. Don't get her wrong, the guys were wonderful, but some of them had been flirts really. They flirted with her, and just when she thought they liked her, they dropped the bomb on her that they had girlfriends. Twice this had happened to her. She was tired of it and knew enough not to get over excited until the guy actually came out and said "I like you. Do you want to go out?"

Emma sighed out loud.

"Something wrong?" Remus asked with concern.

Emma raised her eyes to his. "No," she said softly. "I'm just thinking about the guys back home that turned out to be jerks."

"What happened?" Remus asked as he dipped his quill into the ink bottle and began copying down the second instruction. All that could be heard was the scratching of quill on parchment and the occasional talk. Professor Dawes was pretty good about that. She let the students talk as they copied down notes, but she was strict otherwise.

"Well, a few of them flirted with me," Emma said as she watched him copy down the notes. "And just when I thought they liked me, BOOM. They drop the bomb that they have girlfriends."

Remus shook his head. "That's not right."

"No," Emma agreed. "But I've learned not to get my hopes too high until the guy physically shows me that he likes me."

Remus looked at her.

“Sirius seems to like you,” he said, as a grin formed on his face. “He talks about you non-stop.”

Emma blushed. “Really? He seems really sweet.”

Remus fell silent now. He knew Sirius was a good guy. So he decided to help Sirius along.

“Oh, yeah, he is,” Remus replied, nodding. “He’s very kind, caring, and thoughtful. He talked about you last night really...all night in fact. He wants to ask you out, but he’s not sure about how to go about it.”

Emma beamed again and blushed more.

“Well, you can tell him that I’d be delighted to go out with him, if he asks me,” she said.

Remus nodded. “Duly noted.”

When the bell rang, ending class, they left the room and headed back to the common room for a forty-five minute break.

Remus pulled Sirius aside.

“Listen, why don’t you ask Emma out?” Remus asked quietly, as Emma and Lily began talking about Quidditch teams.

Sirius looked at him like he was mad. “Are you mental? I think she likes *you* mate,” he said with a grin.

Remus looked at him shocked. “Huh? What are you talking about?”

Sirius pulled Remus aside further, so they were more out of ear shot of the girls. “Lily told me last night that Emma talked about you the whole time. She said that Emma figured that a guy like you would never go out with her because she saw the way you looked at Caitlin. So she said that Emma would go out with me because she would have to settle for me, figuring you’d be out of her league.”

Remus stared at Sirius in shock and amazement.

“Padfoot, I lost Michelle last year,” he said quietly. “I’m really not ready to get involved again.”

“Yeah I know pal,” Sirius said gently.

Remus glanced back at Emma. She looked up and caught Remus’ gaze and smiled and waved. Remus smiled back and turned his attention back to Sirius, who winked at Remus and gave him an affectionate pat on the back before joining the girls in conversation.

“I’m going for a walk, okay?” Remus called to them.

Lily nodded.

Remus left the common room and decided to take a walk on the grounds. The afternoon sky was bright blue with clouds that were puffy. The sunlight shone down brightly on the lake, causing it to shimmer like diamonds on the surface. Remus immediately thought back to the night Michelle told him how she felt about him as they stood near the lake. He felt a lump forming in his throat. He was about to take another step, when he heard someone coming up behind him. He turned around to find it was Caitlin.

“Hey,” she said softly. “Enjoying the warm sunshine out here?” She inhaled deeply and turned her face up toward the sun. “It’s beautiful out. I’m sure we’re going to be getting cold weather shortly. October is awfully cool around here.”

Remus nodded.

Caitlin turned her gaze back onto him.

“You look lost,” she said softly. “You miss Michelle huh?”

She added the last part quietly.

Remus nodded. “Yeah, I really do.”

Caitlin smiled. “I can understand it. You two seemed really close.”

Again, Remus nodded and they began walking now.

“I had to get out of the Hufflepuff common room,” Caitlin explained. “I was getting pranked, but the pranks hit the border line between funny and mean.”

Remus’ ears pricked at this. It sounded exactly like what had happened to Michelle last year...the teasing, tormenting, and the pranks.

“Listen,” Remus said firmly. “If anyone gives you any trouble, you tell them to come see me, okay?”

Caitlin cocked an eyebrow at him and grinned. “Whoo, my night in shinning armor.”

Remus smiled.

He began thinking of what Sirius had said earlier, but he really wasn’t ready to get involved just yet. Caitlin suddenly leaned close to him. He picked up her scent. It smelled of lilacs and strawberries.

“I know what you are,” Caitlin whispered meaningfully. “But don’t worry. I’m not going to tell anyone. After all, you were good enough not to spill the beans about me.”

Remus looked at her. He’d almost forgotten that she was psychic.

He nodded.

They walked around the perimeter of the lake now. Immediately, flashes of last year, the night he and Michelle walked this perimeter, kept going through his mind like a movie. He stopped walking.

Caitlin knew what was wrong, right off the bat. She felt remorseful toward him, thinking it must've been really hard losing someone you loved more than life. She smiled and put a hand on his arm, but the instant her hand touched his robe, a flash went off before her eyes, like a swirling cloud of blue and white. She blinked once and turned her head left, staring off into space as a vision clouded her sight. Remus knew what was going on so he patiently stood and watched her.

Once the vision passed, Caitlin blinked and felt her body slightly jump as though touched by electrical wires. She looked at Remus.

“Your friend...the one with the brown hair...she’s in danger,” Caitlin said urgently.

“Who? Emma?” Remus asked.

Caitlin nodded.

“What’s wrong?” Remus asked urgently.

“No time to talk!” Caitlin said as she put both palms flat against Remus’ back and pushed him back toward the castle. “She’s in the shower room. Hurry!”

Remus turned and fled back to the castle.

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Emma had decided to take a nice leisurely bath. She was sitting in one of the long, comfortable wide bathtubs in the shower room. The tub filled with hot water and a cherry scented perfume. Bubbles rose up from the foam lined surface of the water. Emma shut off the water and pulled off her robe and uniform and laid them across one of the towel racks. She slipped into the tub and sat down, sighing contently as the hot water rolled over her. She dipped her head underneath the surface, so the water drenched her hair. She then sat back upright and just enjoyed the peace and quiet. Suddenly, she sensed that she was being watched. She turned around, making sure that the foam covered the necessary parts.

“Hello?” she called out, her voice echoing throughout the room like a wave. “Who’s there?”

There was only silence to answer her.

The shower room was dim, lit by candles. The corners were hidden in shadows. Outside, the evening sky could be seen through the many windows. Emma scanned the shower room, but there was no one there. Shrugging and figuring it was just her imagination, she relaxed and leaned back against the back of the tub. She shut her eyes briefly, then when she opened

them, she was staring into the face of a girl with hazel eyes and chocolate brown hair. She gasped as the girl vanished.

She looked around again.

“Hello? Is anyone there?” she called again, this time a bit more frightened.

Suddenly, she felt someone grab her feet and drag her under the surface of the water. Her body slid under the water. As she blinked underneath, she couldn't see anyone holding her feet, yet she could not free herself. She began thrashing around, struggling to re-surface. The water churned violently as she thrashed. She came up sputtering briefly before she was pulled down again.

Remus burst into the shower room. He could see Emma thrashing wildly in one of the tubs as though someone was holding her down. He rushed over to the tub and grabbed Emma's thrashing arms. He began pulling her out of the tub. It was as if something was holding her down, but after a third pull, whatever was holding her released her and Remus pulled her from the tub.

He quickly grabbed Emma's robe and threw it around her. Emma was coughing and gasping for air.

He crouched down next to her. “Are you alright?” he demanded worriedly.

“Yeah,” Emma gasped, wiping water from her face. “What the hell was that?”

Remus just shook his head.

“It felt like something was holding you down,” he said, looking at the now calm water that glistened under the shower room lights.

Emma suddenly realized that Remus had briefly seen her nude and pulled the robe tighter around her and fought hard to keep her cheeks from blushing furiously. Remus caught her cheeks flushing with color and felt his own cheeks turning pink. He quickly shook his head.

“Stay here,” he instructed. “I'm going to get Lily.”

“Please don't go,” Emma pleaded as she reached out and grabbed his arm. “I don't want to be alone in here. Suppose whatever it was tries to do something again?”

*Good point,* Remus thought.

“Okay,” he said. “I'm going to turn around. Get dressed, alright?”

Emma nodded.

Remus did an about-face and turned his back to Emma, who quickly scrambled to pull on her robe and uniform.

Once she was dressed she stepped up behind Remus and tapped him on the shoulder. He turned around.

“Let’s go,” he said. He led her out of the shower room and back to the Gryffindor common room, neither of them seeing the girl peering out from the shadows in the corner.

“My God!” Lily gushed wide-eyed. “What do you think happened?”

Emma was sitting in front of the fire on the hearth rug. She had dried off, but there was still a chill that ran down her spine. She wrapped a blanket around her tightly. Remus had just finished telling them what had happened in the shower room.

“I don’t know,” Remus said slowly. “But whatever it was, it was really strong and almost didn’t want to let go of Emma.”

Sirius was concerned. “I think from now on we should have a buddy system when the girls go into shower.”

Lily smacked him up the back of the head. “You would like that...wouldn’t you?”

Sirius rubbed the back of his head and gave her an innocent look that caused James to snort.

“We don’t know if it will attack Lily, though,” James said. “Unfortunately, we’re just going to have to wait and see. If it does attack Lily, then I suggest we go to Professor Dumbledore with this.”

“I agree,” Remus said, nodding.

Sirius put a hand on Emma’s shoulder before heading off to bed. Lily gave Emma a hug and squeeze before also heading to the girls’ dorm. James soon followed Sirius, leaving Remus and Emma alone now in the common room. Remus took a seat beside Emma.

“You okay? You’re awfully quiet,” he asked, studying her with concern.

Emma smiled dryly. “I’m just perfect. I was attacked by an invisible figure and I think your friends think I’m nuts.”

Remus had to smile.

“No, they don’t think your nuts. Trust me. They’ve seen stranger things before...not that you’re strange...” he added quickly and mentally kicked himself.

Emma smiled.

“Relax, I know you didn’t mean me,” she said, keeping her eyes on the fire.

Remus felt his heart swelling as he studied her. It was uncanny how much she looked like Michelle. Emma’s dark brown hair was now fluffed around her shoulders. She reached up

and tucked a strand of her hair behind her ear. She glanced at him, saw him watching her and smiled, lowering her eyes back to the fire.

“Emma, can I ask you more about your parents?” Remus asked.

Emma hesitated a moment before sighing. “Yeah,” she said quietly. “They work for the Ministry of Magic now. Like I said, we lived in Ireland for a while before I transferred here. They were hoping that I’d make some new friends here and make a new start.”

Remus drew his legs up to his chest and his shoulder was touching Emma’s.

“Why? What had happened?” he inquired.

Emma pulled her hair over her right shoulder and just stared into the fire.

“Well,” she began slowly. “First of all, they’re not my real, biological parents.”

Remus’ ears pricked at this and he looked at her with curiosity and interest now.

“I was adopted,” Emma finished even quieter. “I was put up for adoption fifteen years ago.”

Remus’ heart wrenched at this. “Do you know why they put you up for adoption?”

Emma’s chocolate brown eyes filled with tears and she smiled in irony. “Because they couldn’t take care of me. They never had time for me or my sister. They kept her, but they gave me up. I was sent to the magical orphanage. I waited for three years before someone adopted me. I was only three when they put me up.”

Now, Remus’ interest was peaked. *My God...that’s when Michelle said her sister was put up for adoption. It would be right. We’re now 18 years old...can this be?*

“W-What was your sister’s name?” Remus asked as he swallowed.

“Michelle,” Emma replied. “My sur-name is Matthews.”