

## Chapter 4 - Remus' Confession

Michelle watched as Remus flew down the corridor, his bag left lying at her feet. She bent down to pick it up.

“Guys, knock it off!” Michelle snapped. “Can’t you see you just really embarrassed Moony?”

Severus raised an eyebrow at that, wondering about the interesting nickname that she had called Lupin.

Turning away, Michelle hurried after Remus, knowing exactly where to find him: in the library. She saw him sitting at a table with his eyes locked on a book that he was propping up with his hands. His green eyes were skimming over the paragraphs quickly and she knew he wasn’t really reading it. She headed over to him and gently placed his bag on top of the table in front of him.

“You dropped this,” she said softly and sat down across from him.

“Thanks,” Remus said, not taking his eyes off the book, or even raising them to look at her.

Michelle gently reached over and slowly pushed the book down until it was flat so she could see his face and force him to look at her.

“James was just being rude,” Michelle reassured him. “Don’t listen to him. You see what he’s done to me.” She added the last part with part good naturedness and a hint of annoyance.

“I know,” Remus said, clearing his throat.

“We’ve got that Prefects meeting, right?” Michelle said, changing the subject cheerfully. “We’d better get going or we’ll be late.” She stood up and stood next to the table, waiting for Remus to stand up, but he didn’t. She leaned against the table and leaned down until their faces were inches apart.

Remus could feel Michelle’s breath on his face.

“Listen,” she said quietly. “Are you going to the Spring Dance next month?”

Remus stared into her eyes. He’d never been this close to her before and he was really nervous.

“Probably not,” he said. “I’m not going to have anyone to go with and I’ve got a lot of work to do, probably.”

“Probably, hmm,” Michelle mused. “That poses a BIG problem.”

“How’s that?”

“I was hoping maybe you’d like to go with me as friends,” she replied, sighing. “But if you’re too busy, maybe I’ll ask Snape to go with me instead.”

Remus froze. On one hand, he really wanted to go with her, but on the other, he was scared and nervous.

Michelle was watching him with a cocked eyebrow.

“Um, I--,” Remus stammered finally. “I-I’m busy. I’m so sorry.”

Michelle looked disappointed.

“Oh, alright,” she said quietly. “Come on. Let’s get to the meeting.”

Remus felt bad that he’d hurt her. He angrily grabbed his bag and swung it over his shoulder. He was furious with himself for not speaking up.

As they walked to the meeting, Michelle was really quiet and subdued. Little did Remus know, Michelle was secretly hoping he would go with her to the dance, because, deep down, she was starting to have feelings toward him as more than a best friend. Now she would have to resort to asking Severus. She liked Severus, but Remus was the one she truly wanted to go with.

They entered the meeting and took their seats. Michelle was sitting next to him with her arms crossed on top of the desk. She rested her chin on top of her arm. A bit of her hair fell forward into her eye but she made no attempt to move it. Remus sat next to her, matching her position at the desk. He rested his chin on his crossed arms.

Remus, having the heightened senses of a wolf, heard Michelle’s heart beating and the blood rushing through her veins. When she glanced at him, he heard her heart beat quicken as their eyes locked. Quickly, she looked away and returned her focus to Professor Rikers, the Professor leading the Prefect’s meeting. Remus wondered why Michelle’s heart sped up when they looked at each other.

The meeting droned on for what seemed like forever. Michelle had begun dozing off slightly. She slumped sideways against him with her head resting against his shoulder. Remus felt his stomach jolt slightly and his heart pounding.

Professor Rikers frowned at Michelle sleeping during the meeting. Remus gently nudged her awake. She snapped bolt upright and cleared her throat.

“Sorry, Professor,” she apologized instantly. “I didn’t sleep to well last night.”

Professor Rikers didn’t say anything, but continued with the meeting.

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Once the meeting was over, it was time for the last class of the day. Potions. Michelle and Remus were paired up this time, and Severus was wondering why she wasn't sitting with him.

"I'll sit with you tomorrow," Michelle promised. "I want to sit with Remus for this lesson."

Severus nodded and took his seat, but not before James and Sirius came into the classroom, having overheard everything.

"So, Snivellus wants Michelle to sit with him, huh?" James crooned. "She's way too good for you, Snivellus."

"She'd rather hang out with her own kind," Sirius added, taking a seat behind Remus and Michelle.

Michelle narrowed her eyes at them.

"Leave him alone, alright?" she demanded.

Sirius and James held their hands up defensively and got themselves ready for the lesson. Michelle sighed and also took out her supplies. Remus was silent. He'd begun wondering if he should tell Michelle the truth about himself, about him being a werewolf. His greatest fear was that she'd abandon him and...hate him. He couldn't take it if she ever hated him. But she did deserve to know the truth. He finally came to a decision.

"Michelle? Can I talk to you after class?" he asked quietly as he copied down the instructions for the lesson.

"Sure," Michelle said, nodding.

Remus felt his stomach doing knots and twists.

They were learning the Adran Potion, which was used to help cure third degree burns. If the Hullit roots weren't added to the potion correctly, the liquid could seriously burn the hand. Michelle frowned. She was having a bit of trouble with it. Remus leaned in to help her. She flashed him a big grin.

Suddenly, one of the Slytherins, by the name of David Owens, walked past their table and dropped something into the cauldron, causing some of the liquid to splash onto Michelle's hand. She cried out in pain and clutched her left hand with her right, pulling it against her chest. Her hair fell forward as she rocked slightly back and forth. Remus took her hand. It was a bright pink already and some blisters already started forming on it. He quickly tore a piece of his robe and wrapped it gingerly around Michelle's hand.

"Mr. Owens!" Professor Karen snapped angrily. "I saw that! Ten points from Slytherin!"

David flashed Michelle a sly grin and took his seat.

“Mr. Lupin, kindly take her to the hospital wing,” Professor Karen said softly.

As Michelle and Remus got up, they saw James and Sirius flash David a murderous glare.

Lily was also scowling at David from the back of the classroom. She gave Michelle a comforting smile as they left.

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Madam Pomfrey had put a Marthon salve on Michelle’s hand and wrapped it in a clean, white bandage.

“I swear I’m gonna end up living in that wing,” Michelle grumbled irritably. Just then she recalled how Remus had wanted to talk to her after class. “What did you want to talk to me about?” she asked curiously as they walked down the corridor and through one of the opened bridges that connected one part of the castle to the other.

Remus went over to the side of the bridge and rested his hands on the sill of the opened archways. He stared out at the lake, watching the gentle ripples the Giant squid was making on the waters surface.

Michelle stood next to him.

“I have to tell you something,” he said quietly. “I’ll completely understand if you hate me, or want nothing to do with me.”

Michelle looked at him like he was mad.

“Remus, nothing you could say could make me hate you,” she said softly. She had begun to forgive him entirely for what happened before, too. “Besides, I’m starting to forgive you for what you did earlier. I should’ve known you would never hurt me intentionally.”

Remus kept his eyes on the lake. He took a deep breath.

“Do you ever notice how once a month I’m always ill?” he asked quietly, digging his fingers into the sill.

Michelle nodded.

“Oh God,” she said raising a hand to her mouth. “Please don’t tell me you’re really a woman.” She joked, trying to lighten the mood a bit.

Remus’ lip twitched and he smiled.

“No,” he said shaking his head. “Much worse than that. The reason I’m ill every month is because...I’m-I’m a werewolf.” There. He’d said it. He slowly turned to look at her, looking for signs of repulsion or disgust.

Michelle froze.

*He's a werewolf? He changes into a monster once a month! But he's not a monster...he's sweet, kind, and caring...*

“Do James, Sirius and Peter know?” she asked, finding her voice.

Remus nodded.

“They help me change. They're unregistered Animagi,” he went on.

Michelle was still speechless.

“Please don't tell anyone,” Remus pleaded. “Not even Lily. She doesn't know yet. I haven't told her yet. I wanted to tell you first.”

Michelle fought between the urge to take a step backward from him, and just hug him. Remus was still waiting for her reaction. But Michelle's battle between fear and remorse for his condition was lost. She took a step backward.

“You change into a monster once a month,” she said. “How do I know you won't attack me?”

Remus' heart wrenched.

“I won't,” he said earnestly. “That's why James, Sirius, Peter, and I go to the Whomping Willow. There's an entrance there that leads to the Shrieking Shack. We go there to transform.”

Michelle was nervous now. Her fear got the better of her and a small candle that was lit above Remus' head suddenly snapped in half and fell to the floor. At that, Michelle took off running down the bridge. Remus angrily punched the wall. He expected her to be upset with hearing the truth. And now, she had abandoned him...just as he'd feared. Feeling completely miserable, he skipped the rest of the class and headed back to the common room.

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Michelle was in the girls' dorm. Shortly, Lily came in. She saw Michelle was clearly upset.

“Michelle? What's wrong?” Lily asked worriedly.

“Nothing,” Michelle grumbled.

“Is it what happened in Potions?” Lily asked curiously.

“Yeah,” Michelle lied.

“David's a jerk,” Lily said. “Don't pay attention to him.”

Michelle lay on her stomach and buried her face into the pillow, bursting into tears. The person she cared about a lot, well, loved really, was really a monster.

*Once a month he's a werewolf, he's Remus the rest of the time. You know him...he would never intentionally hurt you. Regardless...*

Michelle was torn now.

Remus sat in the common room, just staring at the fire. James and Sirius came in and saw him.

“Moony? What’s up pal?” James asked with concern, taking a seat across from him.

“I told Michelle that I’m a werewolf,” Remus said quietly. “She was terrified...I could smell it and sensed it. She took off down the bridge. She’s terrified of me now.”

“Remy, it was a shock,” Sirius said calmly and soothingly. “Beyond the tormenting that we used to do, we’ve grown to know Michelle too. I think she’s just confused and scared right now. She won’t abandon you...trust me.”

James continued to study Remus closely.

“You like her, don’t you?” James said with realization.

Sirius glanced from James to Remus.

Remus didn’t answer.

“Yeah you do,” James said. “As more than a best friend?”

Again, Remus didn’t answer.

“Oh, sorry pal,” Sirius said, looking genuinely upset. “That’s why you ran off. We didn’t mean to embarrass you.”

Remus just muttered something incoherent.

“Look,” James said matter-of-factly. “Give Michelle some time. She’ll come around, all right? If she cares about you, which we know she does, she’ll come back.”

With that, they wandered off into the boys’ dorm to get ready for dinner.

A short while later, they headed down to the Great Hall for dinner. Michelle sat with James, Sirius, and Lily, who was oddly able to talk civilly to James. Michelle avoided Remus’ glances, and Remus pushed his plate away, his appetite lost. He had just gotten back into Michelle’s good graces and now it seemed as though he’d lost her again. Much to his surprise, however, Michelle suddenly got up and sat down across from him.

“Remus,” she began slowly. “I’m sorry that I ran off like that. That was rude of me. Can you forgive me?”

Remus smiled.

“Of course!” he said sincerely. “I didn’t expect you to be alright with it straight away.”

“I’m not okay with it, but I accept it with you, because that’s who YOU are,” she replied quietly.

Remus smiled, and much to his delight, Michelle stood up, leaned over the table slightly, and kissed him on his cheek. He felt his cheeks instantly flush with color. Michelle went back to her seat, now a bit more relaxed as she took to talking with James and Sirius. Lily caught Remus’ expression and gave him a wink. His heart felt light and he felt really happy.

*Michelle kissed me!* He thought happily.

Later that night, they headed back to the common room and into their dorms for the night. Remus was grinning into his pillow as he dozed off to sleep.