

# Loving the Enemy

*by Muggline*

Lily Evans wants to out-prank the Marauders in their seventh year at Hogwarts...

# When Things Change

*Chapter 1 of 6*

Lily Evans wants to out-prank the Marauders in their seventh year at Hogwarts...

## Loving the Enemy

This is another FanFiction from the German "Harrypotter-Xperts" site which I would like to bring to you because I think it is too good to be kept to the German speaking world alone. Heidi, the author of this great story, gave me permission to translate it and I would like to thank her very much for this honour. You can access all of her stories here: <http://www.harrypotter-xperts.de/fanfiction?author=11876&sid=5d0031c3f1d085d2ba5972cc0f5c3fef>

This is not a Songfic, but Heidi says that she got the idea for this Story from the Lyrics of the song "Bester Feind" by the German band "Rosenstolz". If you are interested, you can listen to the song here: [http://www.lastfm.de/music/Rosenstolz/\\_/Bester+Feind](http://www.lastfm.de/music/Rosenstolz/_/Bester+Feind) (click on the large black "play" sign on the right side of the page).

I have tried to translate the chorus as follows:

"Bester Feind"/"Best Enemy"

I guess it's written somewhere:

You shall love your enemies

Hug them, seduce them

Open your doors

Come here and bow to yourself,

You enjoy your own suffering way too much

Run from the ghosts of this world

Nobody is following you,

But you are your own worst enemy.

Summary: In this Fic, we are going back in time to the Marauders' seventh and last year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. James and Sirius outdo themselves to win the objects of their desire, but this turns out to be more difficult than they thought. Life holds many surprises they did not expect and which force them to overcome their childish behaviour and assume responsibility.

Disclaimer: All characters you recognise belong to Mrs. Rowling who created the wonderful Harry Potter universe, giving us room for our imagination.

A/N: before we begin, I would like to thank my wonderful beta, coley21, who returned this to me fast as lightning, as well as ladyinthecloak, who acted as admin and, consequently, as "gamma reader" :-)

## 1. When Things Change

Lily Agnes Evans opened her eyes and was all worked up because she could not sleep again. A light breeze made her closed curtains billow, as the windows were wide open to let the pleasantly cool night air inside. There wasn't a sound in the whole house because her parents and her older sister Petunia were fast asleep.

Slowly, she gazed at the hands of her alarm clock: three o'clock in the morning. With a resigned sigh, she started rummaging in her bedside table and extracted a letter that she had gotten by owl the day before. It did not resemble a letter any more, as it was merely a crumpled paper ball.

She ignited the lamp on the little table with a wave of her wand. "At least I am of age and may do magic as I please," she murmured to herself.

She pushed herself up in a sitting position and wiped her long red hair from her face. The almond-shaped, green eyes in her radiating, beautiful face scanned the room. Everything was neat and tidy, an image of her character. She was always diligent, tidy, and ambitious.

In a corner at the back of her room she saw her large Hogwarts trunk that she would need only one more time. The fact that she would now enter her last year at the magical school made her a little sad. Being a witch had changed her life, and the lives of her family, completely. Lily loved this life, and to her teachers, she was perfectionism impersonated, in spite of her being Muggle-born. Sure enough, she had been made a prefect in her fifth year because of that or because she was the only one who stood up to the troublemakers in her house.

Yes, there were four very special boys who always caused disturbances in Gryffindor. Actually, they were only three, because one of them was a prefect, too, and a very nice guy.

Lily closed her eyes and thought of him. Remus Lupin, a boy with brown hair and a slightly pale complexion, always very reserved, and keen on keeping his crazy friends from kicking over the traces too much. Talking about crazy friends... The other three were the epitome of chaos. Okay, one of them was quite the sycophant. Peter Pettigrew, a small, overweight boy with mousy, gray hair, who seemed a little stupid and did not really fit in. So there were only two lunatics left, and the thought of these two macho guys made Lily snort disdainfully.

Sirius Black, the Hogwarts heartthrob, who was known for getting laid any girl who did not run fast enough, almost drove her to distraction. She called him "Black Beauty" behind his back, although she had to admit to herself that it was no wonder the girls were at his feet. He looked quite temerarious with his mysterious grey eyes and his long black hair that always fell casually over his face. He was constantly in a good mood and acted gallantly and politely towards every girl.

Lily snorted contemptuously once more and tried to think of something else, but it was of no use, as she immediately saw the fourth and last one of their group before her mind's eye. He was the worst of them all. Mr. Cool-oh-look-how-great-I-am in person: James Hieronymus Potter. His middle name made her grin immediately: Hieronymus, what kind of name was that? Okay, her own middle name was not quite it, but it was her secret. She only knew Potter's middle name out of pure coincidence. Her Head of House, Minerva McGonagall, had called him by his full name once when he and Black Beauty had served detention for pulling yet another prank on somebody.

Hieronymus did not suit him at all, as he was the best looking guy at Hogwarts next to Black. Lily hit her palm against her forehead and grumbled, "God, Potter, out of my head with you!" Nevertheless, he would not disappear. Once more, she imagined his hazel eyes peeping out cheekily from behind his glasses. Those, and his black, unruly mop of hair that stood out at odd angles, created quite a seductive flair around him. Due to his Quidditch training, he had a beautifully toned body, too. Of course, Lily had only happened to see it by coincidence when Potter and his friends, who called their little group "the Marauders," had been swimming in the black lake. Oh dear, the girls had swooned by the dozen, and those who had still been standing had squealed with delight about the sight. Only Lily and her best friend, Jackie Andrews, had kept a straight face. Lily was sure, however, that Jackie had almost devoured Black Beauty with her eyes, although she had only looked through her lashes, with her head bent down.

Jackie was her best friend, and she had been straight from the beginning of their first year. Although Jackie was the epitome of the pureblood way, and did not know a thing about the Muggle world, they had had a special connection to each other right from the start. Their relationship had changed a little during sixth year because Jackie had her first boyfriend, but she broke it off after a while, and Lily knew exactly why. Jackie could not get Black Beauty out of her head, even though she would never admit it. But Lily knew, nevertheless.

Jackie was so very different from Lily. She was an avid Quidditch player and a member of the Gryffindor house team. Lily hated Quidditch, and ever since Potter was the team captain, she liked it even less.

When she thought about Potter and his advances, she could not help but groan. Advances? More than that: he had been making passes at her for two solid years, constantly nagging her for a date. He waylaid her at all times and kept begging like a dog. He even lay in wait in front of the girl's bathroom.

She shuddered when she thought of that day. James Hieronymus Potter had indeed managed to draw her out. Before, she had always turned him down in a calm and cool manner, but on that day, she had yelled at him so that the whole castle would hear. She could still remember the words: "You arrogant macho prat, why don't you leave me alone! I hate you, James Hieronymus Potter!"

The words had been out before she could even think, and she had been sorry for a moment, as James had stood before her, with slouchy shoulders and compressed lips. All the students who had heard the racket had been staring at him until Remus, who had been in control as usual, pulled James away from her. Shaking his head, Remus had said: "That was very unfair of you."

Remus' words had made her think, and she had been thinking ever since, especially since Potter had left her in peace after this incident. However, as she had realised today, it must have been nothing but a temporary break.

With a silent sigh, she smoothed the crumpled letter out on her blanket. She asked herself why she had not simply burned it after reading it. Looking at the neat handwriting, she sighed once more. Then she took another deep breath and started reading the lines for what must be the twentieth time:

*Lilyflower,*

*I am relieved that you even read this letter, and I have no clue how I should write this. I would like to let you know that I decided to be a better person this year. You know pull no more pranks, always be on time for classes, no more night time excursions (although I'd better not promise that). In any case, I intend to change my life. What is more, I will never ask you for a date again because I am sure that we will be together by the end of our last school year anyway.*

*Sincerely yours*

*James*

*P.S.: Sirius, who is peeking over my shoulder and laughing heartily, says hello, too.*

The first sentences of the letter had made Lily smile, as she honestly believed what he had written. However, upon reading his last words, "I will never ask you for a date again because I know that we will be together by the end of our last school year anyway," her face had fallen. Mr. Greatest-Macho-oh-isn't-he-great honestly believed that he could win her over. Ridiculous! Lily had never made eyes at anyone, and she always turned down the boys who invited her every now and then. Most guys at school were simply useless. It was impossible to hold a decent conversation with them and not have their hands in all kinds of places where they did not belong.

Lily glanced at the clock again. One hour later. One hour during which she had wasted her thoughts on these crazy fools... Okay, they weren't crazy all the time, but Lily truly disliked some of their pranks, although there were several things she secretly admired the Marauders for. For example, they always managed to get one over on those awful Slytherins, and they always did it in front of the whole school in ways that made people smile.

Sometimes Lily wished she could do such things, too, if only to get the triumphant feeling for once. But she was just sweet, darling Lily. Always nice to everyone and unable to do such things, right? She started thinking. What if she dared to do something crazy and maybe even slightly dangerous for once? If she dared coming out of her shell? On the other hand, wouldn't it be unfair to do so at others' expense?

Then she had an idea: what if she took revenge on the Marauders? After all, they had hexed the younger students often enough and deserved to be punished.

Lily got back under the covers and closed her eyes with a grin. She wasn't the best student in her year for nothing, and she would certainly come up with some ideas to have fun for once. Jackie would certainly want to be involved, too. However, Lily would certainly have some convincing to do when the prank was directed against Black Beauty. When she finally fell asleep, a broad smile graced her lips.

Lily was still sound asleep when there was a loud "pop" in her room and someone exclaimed: "Get up, sleepyhead!"

Groaning, Lily sat up and grumbled, "Please, Jackie, I have just fallen asleep."

Jackie laughed. She threw her long, brown curls over her shoulder and said mirthfully, "Don't tell me that you have been lying awake again for hours, thinking about the enemies you love."

Her brown eyes twinkled merrily when Lily gave a dismissive gesture and mumbled, "Enemies, true. But loooved?"

She drew out the last word with a grimace, which made Jackie laugh even more.

Jackie's gaze fell upon James Potter's letter that still lay on the floor next to the bed. "May I?" she asked curiously and pointed at the piece of paper.

Lily sighed, "Of course. But don't expect anything valuable. Potter has lost his mind again." With these words, Lily disappeared inside her small bathroom. She had already closed the door when she heard Jackie laugh. Lily looked outside again and said with a theatrical gesture, "Oh, yeah, I am going to be Mrs. Potter by the end of the school year."

As soon as her head had disappeared again, Jackie murmured, "You may not be Mrs. Potter yet, but I bet that you will be his girlfriend by then." Jackie had been observing the banter between her friend and James Potter for three years, and she had realised by now that there was something between them that she could not explain. Of course, Lily always turned down his advances, but to Jackie, the disapproval was just a bit too much to be true. She shrugged. Their last school year would certainly reveal it.

Shortly afterwards, Lily emerged from the bathroom and put on some jeans and a tank top. She sat down on the bed next to Jackie and asked her, "If I wanted get out of bounds this year and do something daring, would you be game?"

Jackie looked her friend up and down suspiciously and said, "If you tell me what you are thinking of, I'll give you an answer."

Lily had many hare-brained ideas, but she said, "I'd like to make the Marauders' life hell. I want to see them at a complete loss and make them realise how mean they have been towards the others these past years."

Jackie raised an eyebrow. "You want to lower yourself to their level? But Potter wrote you that he wants to change, and I'm sure he's doing it just for you."

Jackie observed her friend's face attentively, but Lily made a dismissive gesture and mumbled, "Tell me another! Potter and Black will be chasing skirts as usual and pulling pranks on other students." When she said Black's name, Jackie had averted her gaze, which confirmed Lily's suspicion.

Jackie sighed loudly and said, "Okay, but we will stop immediately as soon as someone gets hurt, is that clear?"

Lily clapped her hands happily and replied with a grin, "There will be no injuries but injured pride."

Jackie took a deep breath and murmured: "I hope you won't get hoist by your own petard when those four take aim at us in return."

Lily let herself fall back on the bed and she sported a devilish grin when she said, "Marauders, take care! There will be some competition this year!"

Jackie shook her head. She was thinking about how she was still not completely at ease with her best friend's plans, when she heard an owl tapping on the window. Lily stood up to let it in. It had a thick envelope with the Hogwarts crest attached to its leg, and Lily said, "This must be the book list." She handed a cookie to the owl, which turned around and left through the open window. Jackie looked over her friend's shoulder while Lily opened the letter. It was indeed the book list as well as another parchment that read,

*Dear Miss Evans,*

*I am pleased to grant you the title of Hogwarts Head Girl this year. Please join the Head Boy for a first meeting in your personal compartment at the Hogwarts Express. The Head Boy this year is a fellow Gryffindor, Mr. James Potter.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Minerva McGonagall*

*Deputy Headmistress*

Jackie burst out in roaring laughter. She looked at Lily's shocked expression with tears in her eyes and said, laughing, "This means that you will move into the Head Girl's rooms with Potter. Oh, dear, I already feel sorry for the poor guy."

Lily hissed, "I don't understand why they made him Head Boy at all. His delinquency file must be longer than the Chinese Wall! Dumbledore probably had too much of his mead when he made that decision."

Jackie wiped the tears from her eyes, gasped and said, "I guess this puts an end to your campaign against the Marauders?"

Lily stamped her foot angrily and snorted with rage. "No way! Now more than ever! As Head Girl I have access to all areas and nobody will suspect me behind things." Her green eyes shone with rage and determination.

Jackie, on the other hand, could hardly believe that her prim and proper friend, Lily, of all people, wanted to go all out in her last year at Hogwarts. She had an uneasy feeling in the pit of her stomach when she said, "Lily, I don't know if this is a good idea. When these four catch us, we will be dangling head down in the entrance hall for weeks, or they might even throw us to the giant squid!"

Lily giggled. "Which would be a good idea for our first prank."

Jackie sighed. "Maybe we should start by working out a plan of action. But first, you'd better pack your things and we'll go. I really don't want to meet your stupid sister."

She had not even finished her sentence when they heard a hysterical voice coming from the corridor. "Lily, come on, Mum and Dad are already waiting at the breakfast table."

Lily rolled her eyes and dragged Jackie behind her to the Evans' sitting room. Lily's parents were very nice, and Jackie was convinced that Lily's sister Petunia must have been accidentally swapped at birth. This horse-faced person who was always in a bad mood simply did not fit in the family.

They enjoyed a lengthy last breakfast before Lily took her Hogwarts trunk and joined Jackie on her way home. Lily wanted to spend the last week of the holidays at Jackie's house to roam the magical world before they started their last school year.

Little did Lily know, but this was the last time she would see her parents alive, and this last school year was bound to change her life forever...

# The Black List

*Chapter 2 of 6*

Lily and Jackie are plotting...

This is another FanFiction from the German "Harrypotter-Xperts" site which I would like to bring to you because I think it is too good to be kept to the German speaking world alone. Heidi, the author of this great story, gave me permission to translate it and I would like to thank her very much for this honour. You can access all of her stories here: <http://www.harrypotter-xperts.de/fanfiction?author=11876&sid=5d0031c3f1d085d2ba5972cc0f5c3fef>

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A/N: Many thanks to my beta, coley21, who always has a hard job correcting all my false punctuation!

## 2. The Black List

Lily spent the last week of the summer holidays at her friend Jackie's house. In this magical household, all things were magic even the mirror Lily used early in the morning.

She was a bit grumpy as the night had not been better than the previous ones. As the only change, she did not contemplate the Marauders in general any more only one, certain, black haired guy with hazel eyes crept into her mind and kept her from sleeping.

Lily gazed into the mirror, which immediately berated her in a shrill voice, "Wherever your thoughts are, girl, a spot of make-up would do you much good." She moaned irritably and padded back into her friend's room on bare feet.

Jackie was still in bed, her gaze locked on the ceiling, a smile on her face.

Lily rolled her eyes and waved her hand in front of Jackie's face. "Earth to Jackie!" she laughed.

Jackie rolled over and moaned, "Hey, I was having a wonderful daydream."

Lily snorted. "Oh yes, and I even know about whom. Black Beauty, right?"

"Stop calling him that," Jackie grumbled, looking a little sad.

Lily sighed and sat on Jackie's bed. She looked into her best friend's face and asked cautiously, "That bad?"

Jacky gave a painful sigh. "Even worse. I start panicking at the thought that I'll meet him again tomorrow."

Lily shook her head. "I don't understand you, Jackie. You've always been the tough one. Why does it have to be Mr. oh-look-how-handsome-I-am Black Beauty? This guy is going to break your heart for sure. You'll be yet another name on a very long list. Do you understand me?"

Lily pitied her friend. Jackie was in love for the first time, and of all people, it had to be a boy who was known as Mr. Heartbreaker Number One.

"Yes, I know," Jackie growled. She closed her eyes and started philosophising, "What would be so bad about being one among many others? At least once in a lifetime I want to be able to say I have kissed Sirius Black."

Lily snorted derisively. "One thing's for sure, Jackie, with Black, there won't be just a kiss. This guy wants to do more than just hold your hand."

Jackie gave her friend an indignant gaze until she saw a smile dart over Lily's face, who said conspiratorially, "You won't get very far unless you use a completely different approach than those pining geese that keep whining at his feet all the time."

Jackie raised an eyebrow and asked suspiciously, "You mean I ought to give him the cold shoulder until he is at **my** feet?"

Lily nodded with a grin. "That's it. You'll have to be a challenge for him and keep him on tenterhooks."

Jackie sighed. "I don't know if I can manage that. He's just so sweet."

Lily lifted her arms in a theatrical gesture and exclaimed, "Merlin help me, my friend has fallen in love with Black Beauty and is about to lose her mind!"

Jackie pressed her hand on Lily's mouth and hissed, "Shut it, Lily, or I will tell all and sundry that you are dreaming about James."

Lily snorted. "I don't dream about James, and I will frighten the life out of him this year. He will be relieved when he can leave the castle at the end of the school year."

Jackie shook her head and grabbed some parchment and quill, saying, "Okay, fire away do you have any ideas for pranks we could play this year? I will make a neat list, and we will be able to tick off the things we have accomplished."

Lily's face lightened up and she said, "Well, first there's the pink underpants. Of course, we will have to hex their trousers so everyone can see the nice colour."

Jackie protested, "That goes too far, Lily. That's below the belt, literally."

Lily shrugged coolly. "They exposed Snape's underpants, didn't they?"

Jackie intervened, "That was a completely different thing, Lily."

Lily dismissed her and pointed to the parchment. "Write what I tell you."

With a pained sigh, Jackie started scribbling:

Exploding trunks (dungbombs)

Lacy bedcovers (light pink)

New hairstyle

Flood of letters (owls)

Girls' attack (love potions)

Pink underpants

Hex brooms

Make homework invisible

Several small things: make bag strap rip, set Peeves on them, water bombs, hex quills, tie shoelaces...

Lily rattled all of these things off so quickly that Jackie could not keep up with her and exclaimed, "Stop, that's enough! If you come up with more, we will have to stay at Hogwarts for five more years to work through all of it."

Lily sighed. "I hope that my Head Girl duties will leave me enough time for all the nice things we intend to do besides school."

Lily's voice sounded a little anguished, but Jackie said with a grin, "Plus, you have to reserve some time for the Head Boy. You are going to cooperate very closely, you know." She ended with a devilish grin that was supposed to coax Lily out of her shell, but Lily waved her aside and snorted. "James Potter will not have time to stalk me because he will certainly be trying to find out who is pulling all those pranks on him."

However, Jackie kept smiling smugly. She knew that Lily would admit her feelings for James Potter some day. Those feelings that Lily probably knew about deep down inside and were the certain cause of her idea to conduct a campaign against the Marauders. Jackie could not wait to see what their last year at Hogwarts would bring. She was curious whether James Potter's prediction that Lily would finally give in to him would come true.

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*Meanwhile, at the Potters' house...*

"Hey Prongs, have you seen my cloaks somewhere?" Sirius exclaimed hysterically while crossing a large, sun-bathed room. He whipped his black, shoulder-length hair out of his face with an irritated gesture and gazed at his friend, who was lying on the bed and staring into space.

"Check the pile over there," James growled and pointed to a huge heap of clothes in the middle of the room.

Sirius almost pounced on it, but then he stopped in mid-stride and said in a calm, almost fatherly tone, "Oh, Prongs, we will go back to Hogwarts tomorrow and you will see your little red-haired witch then. You will even move into the Head Boy and Girl quarters with her."

James breathed out noisily and sat up. He sat on the edge of his bed, his shoulders were slumped and his raven hair stood out at odd angles. He looked quite temerarious, but his eyes lacked the usual gleam. "Pad, I don't know whether I did the right thing, writing her that letter. Evans will consider me a narcissistic fool more than ever now. I mean, I told her that we would be together by the end of the school year! She said she hates me!" His voice sounded desperate, and he fell down on the bed with a huge sigh.

Sirius sat next to his best friend and murmured, "Hey, that doesn't sound like you at all! Just leave her alone for a while and consider her a friend, or a fellow Head, in your case. Evans is a girl you won't win with your charms alone. Give her the cold shoulder. She will come to you all by herself..."

"But she hates me," James interrupted, desperate.

Sirius snorted, "Listen to me, Prongs, if somebody waylaid me in front of the bathroom, spouting on at me like you did, I would probably lose it just the same."

"Thank you, Padfoot, thank you very much for your words of encouragement," James answered sarcastically.

Sirius waved him aside and said dryly, "It didn't come out of my own head, you know. That's how Moony explained Evans' outburst to me." Sirius looked at his best friend, who was now lying in bed with his eyes shut.

James had been after Evans for two years already, although he never wasted an opportunity. Since James' latest snubbing, Sirius knew that his friend was dead serious this time. He had never seen James hurt like that. James had withdrawn into his shell for days, not participated in any pranks, and hardly talked to anybody. Only during Quidditch training would he be different. He would set the shots, and the team would follow.

Sirius said, "You have a lot on your plate this year, Prongs. What with Quidditch, schoolwork, Head Boy duties and pranks to play. Many things to reconcile... I guess the Head Boy duties will do you in. I've heard that there's quite a lot of things involved."

James growled, "I did not fight for the job, you know. To be honest, I don't really like the idea of sharing these quarters with Evans."

Sirius laughed, "If I didn't know better, I'd say that you are scared silly about being alone with her."

James sighed. "You could express it like that, yeah."

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On the next morning, there was a nervous hustle and bustle on Platform 9<sup>3/4</sup>. The impressive red engine of the Hogwarts Express filled the air with clouds of steam. As James would ride in the Head Boy and Girl's compartment this year, Sirius had quickly occupied the one next to it so they could be together anyway. Sirius and James were standing on the platform, looking for Remus and Peter.

Lily and Jackie pushed their luggage trolleys along the platform through the groups of people. Lily saw Black Beauty and Potter from a distance; they were standing next to one of the carriages, casually leaning their shoulders on it and observing the other students. Jackie stopped suddenly and stammered, "Erm, Lily... I will get on the train here and sit with Alice."

Lily followed Jackie's gaze and rolled her eyes. "Get a grip on yourself, Jackie. Black Beauty is standing at least three carriages away and you already start panicking."

But Jackie hoisted her trunk into the train with a bright red face and left Lily standing on the platform. Lily took a deep breath and made a beeline for Sirius and James.

From the corner of her eye, she saw Sirius pushing James with an elbow while he nodded in her direction.

Lily stood in front of them, wiped her hair aside like she always did when she was nervous, and gave them both a cool smile. Sirius looked at her coolly, but James asked with a gallant smile, "May I help you with your luggage, Lily?"

Lily swallowed hard. When had Potter turned into a polite young man? She stared at him for a moment, which must have been a little too long, because Sirius started smiling knowingly. Then she said, "I think I'll manage, James." She took care to draw his name out mockingly.

James shrugged. "Your loss," he said and turned away.

Sirius did not fail to notice the disappointment in his friend's voice.

Lily, on the other hand, pushed her trolley right next to them, heaved her heavy Hogwarts trunk off it and let it fall onto James' foot with a loud thud. "Oops," she said with an innocent expression.

James had closed his eyes in pain, but Sirius saw the devilish glare in Lily's eyes. Without further ado, Sirius took Lily's trunk and hoisted it into the carriage. "To prevent further damage," he said with a grin.

With a small simile, Lily whispered to him, "Thanks, Black."

Sirius gave her a piercing look. When he saw that she seemed to be serious, he said, "My pleasure, Miss Evans. Although James would have been glad to help you just as much."

She could not help but notice the mischievous glint in his eyes. James snorted disdainfully and gave his friend that certain "we'll discuss this later" glare.

In the meantime, Lily dragged her trunk into the Head Boy/Girl compartment, left it in the middle of the corridor and slumped into one of the seats.

The platform emptied gradually, and after a while, the train started moving with a little jolt. Lily sighed and looked out of the window. She would have loved to spend her last trip to Hogwarts with her friends instead of working through Head Girl duties with Potter. With another sigh, she grabbed a file that was lying on one of the seats and opened it. She was just skimming through the directions when James entered the compartment and immediately stumbled across Lily's trunk, falling to her feet spread-eagled.

The colour of his face resembled Lily's hair very much at that moment. Lily turned away discreetly and pressed her lips together hard while James struggled to his feet with a groan. He cursed silently while he heaved Lily's and his own trunk into the luggage compartment. Then he slumped into a seat across from Lily and snarled, "Okay, Evans, tell me about our duties."

Lily did not hear the wavering undertone in his voice. She handed him the file without a single word. James snatched it from her hands irritably, and their fingers touched for one very short moment. Lily quickly tore her hand away and stared out of the window. James was more than astonished about this reaction and could not help but smile while he gazed at the instructions. As was his custom, he treaded his fingers through his tousled black hair, completely lost in thought.

Lily observed him from the corner of an eye. She usually did not like this macho gesture at all, but today she did not find it macho at all, which worried her a little. She closed her eyes to ban this absurd thought from her mind.

James cleared his throat and said with a grin, "Hey, Evans, no sleeping! We have to go to the Prefects' compartment first." He had a hard time, speaking to her in that manner, but he did not want to reveal too much of his inner turmoil. He feared that she would humble and hurt him again and preferred to hide behind his harsh words.

Lily hissed, "I was not sleeping, Potter. There's no need for us both to visit the Prefects. I'll go and tell them what to do while you do the passwords." She pointed to a list on which they were supposed to set the passwords for the houses.

To James, this sounded more like an order than a request, and he snorted. "Why don't you set the passwords while I care about the Prefects?"

Lily planted herself in front of him, placed her hands on her hips and looked down on him. James swallowed hard. His eyes were level with her chest now, which she realised at once.

Her eyes became slits, and she scolded, "When you are through staring at my breasts, you'd better care about the passwords! As far as I know you, you'd never come back from your meeting with the Prefects but disappear in your crazy friends' compartment and leave me alone with all this stuff."

She shut the compartment door with a bang and James covered his face in his hands. He had failed miserably in the first half an hour already, and he hoped that he could at least convince Lily of his hidden qualities through his handling of the Head Boy duties.

Lily, on the other hand, stood in the corridor with an angry red face. She breathed heavily and ranted, "He is such an arrogant, egocentric, macho prat! I guess it's time for my first prank, Mr. Cool Potter."

Instructing the Prefects did not take too long, and soon, Lily was on her way looking for Jackie. She found her rather quickly in a compartment with other Gryffindor seventh-year girls, quickly said hello and pulled her friend out into the corridor. There, she hissed, "We will start our mission 'exploding trunks' now."

Jackie looked around in a panic and whispered, "How do you plan to get the dungbombs into the trunks?"

Lily grinned. "Let me take care of that. All you have to do is cause a little mayhem in the train, and I will prepare those freaks' trunks. Potter's cronies are in the compartment next to ours what a coincidence!"

Jackie stepped from one leg to the other and giggled, "Oh, I am looking forward to seeing their faces. But be careful, Lily. They must not catch you."

Lily gave her a dismissive gesture and got back to the Head Girl/Boy compartment. She took a deep breath and opened the door with a sugary sweet smile, but it was empty. "Potter," she hissed angrily, and her gaze locked on the parchment with the passwords. He had set the passwords for all houses, the Prefects' bathroom and the Head Boy's rooms and left only the password for her rooms open. She looked at the list and curiously searched for the password to his rooms. With a grin, she saw that his password was 'Snitch'. He had been more original with all the others; only his own password reflected his love for Quidditch once more.

Lily quickly opened the lid of her trunk and grabbed a small black bag. She opened the door and looked to both sides of the corridor, but there was nobody. Then she hastily closed the door and the curtains before she took a golf ball sized, red sphere out. Then she opened James' trunk with a wink of her wand and threw the ball inside. After another hex that would make the ball explode upon the next opening of the trunk, she closed it again. As James already wore his school uniform, he would probably open it in his room in the evening.

Lily opened the curtains again and waited for Jackie's sign. She did not have to wait long. Suddenly, there was a commotion in the corridor. There was a little smoke and all compartment doors were opened.

Lily opened her door just a little and heard James' voice from next door, "Come I'm Head Boy and you'd better help me get rid of that mess." Then she heard Sirius' complaint, "Why don't you let Evans help?" But Lily saw that James had already grabbed his best friend by the arm and dragged him out of the compartment, followed by Remus and Peter.

This was her opportunity to slip into the next compartment and take care of the other Marauders' trunks. She started to feel guilty about Remus and left his trunk

untouched, but Peter and Sirius would not escape.

Her adrenaline level soared and she felt extremely happy. After the deed was done, she slumped into a seat in the Head Boy/Girl compartment and closed her eyes with a sigh. She was looking forward to the look on the Marauders' faces, her first evening at Hogwarts, and the results of her first prank.

## 1:00

*Chapter 3 of 6*

Lily's first prank

This is another FanFiction from the German "Harrypotter-Xperts" site which I would like to bring to you because I think it is too good to be kept to the German speaking world alone. Heidi, the author of this great story, gave me permission to translate it and I would like to thank her very much for this honour. You can access all of her stories here: <http://www.harrypotter-xperts.de/fanfiction?author=11876&sid=5d0031c3f1d085d2ba5972cc0f5c3fef>

Disclaimer: All characters you recognise belong to Mrs. Rowling who created the wonderful Harry Potter universe, giving us room for our imagination.

A/N: Coley21 for president! (She beta-reads all this, you know...)

3. 1:0

The carriages were slowly making their way towards the castle. Lily and Jackie had joined Alice and her boyfriend, Frank Longbottom, and Frank asked with a grin, "So, Lily, tell us about the train ride. I mean you and James, alone in the Head compartment, and you are still both alive?"

Lily was well aware of his sarcasm and put on her most beautiful smile before she answered, "Unfortunately, I cannot scratch his eyes out yet, or I will be saddled with all the Head duties on my own."

Jackie and Alice exchanged amused glances, but kept their thoughts to themselves. However, they did not have much time for thinking. Only moments later, a large bunch of chattering students pushed them through the entrance.

Jackie and Lily paved their way to the Gryffindor table, followed by Alice and Frank. When they finally spotted some free places at the very end of the table, they sat down.

Suddenly, Lily heard the well-known voice of Black Beauty who whispered in her ear, "Hey, Evans! I am glad that I got my Jamie back in one piece, you know." James, who was sitting across from Sirius, rolled his eyes and looked at Lily as if to apologise.

Jackie, who sat next to her, whispered, "Could you please switch places with me?"

Lily shook her head with a grin and whispered back, "No, or else you will be hanging on Black's lips before we even start eating."

Jackie sighed loudly, which earned her a suspicious look from James and caused Sirius to bend over the table and look at her. Jackie blushed immediately and looked the other way.

The Sorting was finished, and the tables were laid with so much food that they threatened to break down under the load. Sirius clapped his hands and exclaimed happily, "Finally! I was starving."

Remus had been silent all the time while sitting next to Sirius. He growled. "Hey, Padfoot, you've wolfed down a huge load of Pumpkin Pasties at the train."

Sirius looked around with an innocent expression and munched. "I can eat all the time, as you very well know."

Lily cast a revolted glance and said, "Your table manners leave much to be desired, Black." She was quite repulsed by the way he held his chicken leg in one hand, chewing loudly with his mouth open. But he replied, munching away happily.

"Oh, but I have other amenities, Evans. However, I have to deny them to you because..." He winced and gave his counterpart an angry glare before he hissed, "That was very unfriendly, James."

Lily looked from Sirius to James, but the latter immediately dropped his gaze on his plate again.

Alice and Jackie exchanged a knowing "everything will be well" glance, and Lily gave an annoyed sigh. Her thoughts drifted away to the dungbombs in the Marauders' trunks, and she was looking forward to what would happen when Potter and his cronies opened them.

The welcoming feast was almost over and Dumbledore rose from his seat. After his usual speech, he looked towards the Gryffindor table and said, "This year, both our Head Girl and Boy are from Gryffindor house. Therefore, they will move to separate rooms in Gryffindor tower instead of the usual Head Boy/Girl suite. Please give a big hand for our new Head Girl and Boy, Lily Evans and James Potter."

The Gryffindors started cheering loudly, so Lily and James had no choice but to stand up. They both gave a forced smile, and when Sirius exclaimed, "Hey, James, you won't be very far away from us!" on top of it all, Lily rolled her eyes irritably and plopped down on her seat between Sirius and Jackie. She did not notice the mocking gazes from some students at the other house tables and the booing from the Slytherins, because Jackie said, "I'm sure you'll let me use your bathroom every now and then, right, Lily?"

Lily gave her a small smile while Sirius bent forward and said suggestively, "Of course, Andrews. We might even have fun together in the prefects' bathroom."

Jackie emitted an appalled gasp, and Lily looked at her with that certain 'what did I tell you?' look.

James interrupted them. "I hate to break up your conversation, but Lily and I have an appointment with Gonny." Lily nodded viciously and followed James out of the Great Hall before the other students started moving.

Without a word, they walked towards their Head of House's office. James buried his hands in his pockets and bowed his head. Lily could hardly keep up with him and was quite out of breath when they finally reached McGonagall's office. The deputy headmistress was already waiting for them and gestured towards two chairs in front of her desk.

The Head Girl and Boy sat down, and James immediately crossed his arms in front of his chest in a defensive gesture, when McGonagall said, "First of all, I would like to inform you that there will be a Halloween ball this year. You will organise this event with help from the prefects."

James moaned irritably, but Lily nodded and the Gryffindor Head of House continued. "Moreover, you have got to secure the inspection rounds in the evenings. As Head Girl and Boy, you will have to do the rounds yourself twice a week and assign the duty to the prefects in turn on the other days. Your rooms are located below the stairs to the Gryffindors' dormitories. Of course, you have continued access to the prefects' bathroom. If you have more questions, please ask."

Lily had already opened her mouth, but James growled, "I guess we have enough information for now."

McGonagall gave them another encouraging smile before they both left the office.

Lily had some more questions in mind, but it had been a long day for her and if she thought about it, all she wanted to do was go to bed. On their way to Gryffindor tower, James muttered to himself, "That's just great: patrol two evenings a week, Quidditch training and the bloody ball on top of it."

Lily snickered and said, "We could patrol on Mondays and Saturdays, then you'd have enough time for your training on the days in between." In her mind, she added *and for my pranks*.

James stopped abruptly and screwed his eyes up when he asked, "Evans, since when have you been interested in Quidditch?" He could not believe that she would voluntarily back him up for his Quidditch training.

Lily stood on her toes and whispered in his ear, "I want to coax you into helping me with the preparations for the ball."

James shivered a little when her warm breath caressed his cheek. His breathing accelerated and he cursed himself. No other girl had ever made him lose his composure like this, and he had never before wanted a girl as much as her. He would have loved to ask her for a date, but he wanted to change his approach this year and make no mistakes.

Lily, on the other hand, took one step back when James, as she perceived it, started panting like a dog.

They continued their journey in silence until they finally reached the Gryffindor common room. It was almost empty. Most students had already gone to their dormitories, and only the three Marauders, Jackie, and some sixth years were still awake. Jackie was deeply engrossed in a conversation with Remus, and Lily said a quick prayer, pledging that her friend would start fancying Lupin, nice chap that he was, and forget about Black Beauty.

James plopped down on an armchair and Lily stood next to him hesitatingly. However, a less than profound remark followed immediately. Sirius put on his most irresistible Black smile that helped him twist every girl around his little finger and said, "You could always sit with me, Evans." He patted his lap with his hands in an inviting gesture.

Inside, Lily was seething with rage, but the thought of the dungbombs helped her to keep quiet. She put on a false smile and said, "Maybe another time, Black. At the moment, I am just tired. Your friend has worn me out quite a bit." In a theatrical gesture, she moved the back of her hand to her forehead.

Jackie and Sirius gaped in astonishment. Remus sniggered, Peter understood nothing, as usual, and James pressed his lips together to prevent himself from laughing out loud. He cleared his throat and gave Lily a wink, and then he said, "Oh, yes, Lily and I will retire to our rooms now." He hoped that he had not made a big mistake with these words and that Lily would not scratch his eyes out, but she was in a very good mood and just gave the others a small wave before turning to the door under the stairs, followed by James.

Jackie asked suspiciously, "Did Potter give her something or curse her?"

Sirius laughed. "Listen, Andrews, James certainly does not need to resort to such measures, and neither do I." He gave Jackie a pitying smile, and in spite of her crush on him she scolded, "You know what you are, Black? A narcissistic, arrogant, macho bastard." With these words, she turned around and angrily started trudging up the stairs to the girls' dormitories.

Peter smirked. "She sure let you have it."

Sirius was speechless and a little hurt when Remus said, "Wonders will never cease. There actually is a girl who doesn't drool all over you."

Lily and James entered the rooms they would inhabit during their last year at school through a door that could only be opened with the password "fairy dust". A small corridor ended in a large, brightly lit room, which looked as if it was going to be their common room. On one side, there were large windows with two desks in front of them. There was a fireplace on the other side and an inviting red three-piece suite in front of it. There were two doors in one of the other walls. One bore Lily's name and the other one obviously led to James' private room.

"It seems that we are living next door now," James said and opened his door. Lily peeked inside and found that it looked typically Gryffindor. The bed was a little larger and the room was not very large, but the furniture seemed practical.

Lily did not like the closeness between their quarters at all, but she had already come up with something that would prevent him from simply opening her door. She murmured some words, enchanting her door so she would be the only one who could open it. James did not notice any of it because he was already searching for a bathroom. It could obviously be accessed from the small corridor. He opened the door and murmured, "Well, this is not quite up to Head Boy standards, I'd say."

Lily followed him and gazed through the door. It was a small bathroom that contained all necessary facilities. The only thing she did not like about it was the fact that she had to share it with James. Nevertheless, she said coolly, "There's always the prefects' bathroom in case this one does not come up to your standards, Potter."

James looked at her and hissed, "I am not as fussy as you might think, Evans. Good night. I am going to bed now."

His voice sounded a little hurt and Lily bit her lip. She had no time to think about what she had said because seconds later there was a huge bang and James tore open his door again. He was standing in the middle of a purple cloud and an awful smell surrounded him. His clothes were covered in red, stinking dust, and Lily's eyes widened when James pushed past her, shouting, "Just you wait, Padfoot, I will get back at you for this!" He left the Head Suite with his wand at the ready, running towards the stairs to the boys' dormitories.

Lily, who did not want to miss the spectacle, followed him.

In the common room, he suddenly faced two figures who were equally covered in red dust. Lily made them out as Black and Pettigrew. Remus stood on top of the stairs and almost toppled over with laughter.

The three stinking, red friends were now standing in the middle of the Gryffindor common room staring at each other, dumbfounded. James and Peter were still fully clothed while Sirius wore only his boxer shorts and hissed, "This is a very bad joke, Prongs. How am I supposed to take the fact that my trunk has just exploded, leaving me looking like this, stinking like a load of dragon dung?"

James growled. "Very funny, Padfoot. Do you think I pull my own leg nowadays?" It was then that they realized that Remus had obviously been spared, and Sirius angrily aimed his wand at him. "Moony. It was you! Of course! Your trunk did not explode when you opened it, so it must have been you!"

Lily pressed her hand to her mouth to keep herself from laughing. The three boys were a sight worth seeing, and she was very proud of the fact that her first prank had been such a perfect success. But when Sirius and James simultaneously aimed their wands at Remus because they thought that he was the one behind it, her bad conscience kicked in and she hurried to face them. Ignoring the stench around them completely, she said very loudly, "Stop this at once and go get a shower before people

start swooning from the smell."

She let her gaze wander to appreciate Sirius' almost naked body, which, in her opinion, was quite an eyeful. Swallowing heavily, she heard Sirius, who had regained his mental capacities, answer smugly, "Okay, Evans. If you are through ogling me, I better follow your advice and go get a shower."

Mumbling to himself, Sirius climbed the stairs again, followed by Peter. James disappeared towards the Head Boy room and Lily looked at Remus, who kept standing on top of the stairs, grinning. Their gazes met, and for one moment, Lily felt as if Remus knew. She did not even want to think about it because this would put an end to all the good ideas she had in store.

She turned around quickly and followed James. He was probably already taking his shower because she heard him rail, "If I get my hands on the person who did this, they'd better prepare themselves for my revenge!"

Lily grinned and decided to tell Jackie about her success first thing in the morning. She went to her room and opened her trunk. First, she unpacked her books and lugged them to the common room. She was depositing them on one of the desks when James clad only in a towel he had slung around his hips headed for his room. Lily's eyes nearly popped out of her head it was the second time that evening that she was faced with a half-naked young man, and this one was much more to her liking than his friend Black.

She probably looked a little too long because James pulled his towel tighter and murmured, "You will have to get used to such a sight, Evans. Sweet Dreams..." With these words, he disappeared in his room, swearing quietly. The smell from the dungbomb probably still lingered in there.

Lily closed her eyes in an attempt to ignore the strange feeling that had started to spread from the pit of her stomach. It was a feeling that she did not know because nobody had stirred it up in her yet. She cursed herself for getting those butterflies in her stomach from seeing Potter, of all people, half-naked.

Later, when she was lying in bed, she promised herself to fight these feelings with all her might, and start planning the next prank at once. She would only have to wait until Potter held the first Quidditch training to start her mission "hexed broom". When she finally fell asleep, she had a smile on her face, and her dreams revolved around one very special person...

## Mission: Hexed Broom

*Chapter 4 of 6*

Lily is plotting again...

This is another FanFiction from the German "Harrypotter-Xperts" site which I would like to bring to you because I think it is too good to be kept to the German speaking world alone. Heidi, the author of this great story, gave me permission to translate it and I would like to thank her very much for this honour. You can access all of her stories here: <http://www.harrypotter-xperts.de/fanfiction?author=11876>

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A/N: This chapter was beta-read by Professor M McGonagall. Hugs and kisses and a huge bar of chocolate for her, as she managed to do the betaing while she was moving house!

### 4. Mission "Hexed Broom"

The first day of lessons came, and Lily padded through her dimly lit common room towards the bathroom on bare feet. Her eyes were not really open yet, and she emitted a long yawn when James emerged from the bathroom with damp hair and nothing but a towel around his hips.

His lips twisted in a complacent smile, and he looked Lily up and down appraisingly before he greeted her with a loud, "Good Morning." To him, she looked good enough to eat in her dark green pyjamas and her tousled red hair.

Lily made a dismissive gesture, shuffled past him into the bathroom and closed the door with a loud bang.

James could hardly control himself from laughing. His secret love was definitely not a morning person. He had already forgotten about his humiliation the night before and was on his way to the Gryffindor common room soon afterwards, dressed and ready. Remus and Sirius were already waiting, but Peter was nowhere to be seen. The three Marauders went to have breakfast in the Great Hall.

Meanwhile, Jackie was impatiently waiting for Lily. Without a greeting, Lily immediately told her what had happened the evening before: how the Marauders had suspected one another and finally attacked Remus. Jackie sighed: "It's a pity that I didn't see it." She was a little miffed. After all, she had helped Lily on the train. Without her, the whole dungbomb mission would have been impossible.

Lily took her arm and said in a conspiratorial tone, "During your first Quidditch training session, we will implement our mission 'hexed broom'."

Jackie growled, "Damn, Lily, what if James crashes down? He is our team captain!"

Lily peeked around the corner into the Great Hall. With her gaze on the Marauders, she said, "He will not fall. I need his help with the preparations for the Halloween ball, after all."

Jackie shouted with joy. "There will be a ball?!" She looked towards a certain black-haired boy and sighed. Lily took her hand and urged her on. The girls put enough distance between themselves and the Marauders to converse freely.

James's gaze followed them, and he said, lost in thought, "Wow, Lily is fast. I just saw her go to the bathroom..."

Sirius swallowed his last bite and drawled, "LILY? Since when do you call her Lily?"

James felt the heat rise in his face, and Remus said in a schoolmasterly tone, "He probably uses her given name when they work on their head boy and girl stuff. Am I right, Prongs?"

James looked down and nodded silently. The whole thing embarrassed him very much. Every time he met Lily, she confounded him no end, and Sirius's stupid remarks only made him feel more unsure of himself.

Sirius looked in Jackie and Lily's direction and asked, never averting his gaze, "Hey, Prongs, when did you schedule your first Quidditch training session?"

James followed Sirius's look and answered, "Tonight. Why do you ask, Pad?"

Sirius wiped his chin with his hand and said, "I guess I will come and watch tonight."

Remus raised one eyebrow and said knowingly, "I guess I know why: it's because Jackie Andrews told you what she thought of you yesterday. Let me think of the words... narcissistic, arrogant, macho bastard, wasn't it?"

James chuckled and said, "Welcome to the club, Padfoot."

Sirius growled, "I tell you something: Miss Andrews will have changed her mind about me come Halloween." His pride had been injured, and he did not want to accept that.

"Forget it," said James. "You will find her a hard nut to crack, just as I do with Lily."

Sirius's thoughts were interrupted when Professor McGonagall handed them their timetables and said with a diabolical smile, "Gentlemen, I guess you will have no time for pranks and the associated detentions." Having said that, she turned around and left the Marauders and their tightly packed schedules.

James emitted a loud groan. "Boy, not one free afternoon! I guess this school year's gonna do me in."

Remus patted his shoulder encouragingly and said with a smile, "You'll manage, Prongs."

James laid his forehead on the table top with a frustrated gesture and murmured, "If we only had that bloody Halloween ball organised already..."

Sirius bolted upright with a start and exclaimed, "A ball? Hey, that's great!" His gaze wandered towards Jackie and Lily again and his face split in a broad grin. "That's the occasion!"

Remus shook his head. "Forget it. You won't be able to wrap Jackie around your finger that easily. With her, if you get your hands in the wrong places once, you're dead."

"Well, it's worth a try! Just look at our Jamie here he doesn't give up either," Sirius said with an optimistic grin. He was quite sure that Jackie would accept his invitation to the ball. After all, no girl had ever given him the brush-off. He would only have to turn on his charm, and everything would be all right.

James pulled himself together and chuntered, "Come on, Potions is waiting."

Sirius smirked. "Ah, the head boy shows off."

Remus grabbed Sirius by the collar and pulled him out of the Great Hall, followed by Jackie and Lily, who had almost the same subjects as the Marauders.

The first lesson brought them to Slughorn's dungeons. They had Potions, and to round off the chaos, Jackie and Lily had to share one worktable with the three Marauders and a Slytherin Severus Snape. James kept gazing at his self-proclaimed archenemy, Snape. Snivellus, as he and his friends kept calling him, was a crack at Potions just as Lily was. Even the Marauders had to admit that.

Slughorn, a small, chubby professor and Slytherin Head of House, started the first day with repetitions. Everybody was concentrating, and there was not a sound except for the scraping of knives and the simmering of the cauldrons.

Lily and Snape did not need the instructions on the blackboard, but the others kept looking up. Even Sirius would rather read the instructions three times than risk a mistake. Only James seemed somewhat erratic. When green fumes started emerging from all the cauldrons, his was still blue. Lily gave him a pitying smile, and Snape chuckled quietly. James boiled with rage, and Remus hissed, "Hold your Hippogriffs, Prongs."

James hastily packed up his things and left the classroom with hurried strides long before the lesson was over. He felt his friends' gazes on his back, but he saw no other way at the moment. If he had stayed, he would have hexed Snivellus into next week. Because of Lily, he'd rather clear the field.

Slughorn swept to James's workstation, looked into James's cauldron and turned up his nose. "Miss Evans, please inform Mr. Potter that he will have to do this one again. I don't care how, but I expect him to turn in a sample the day after tomorrow."

Lily nodded silently, and Sirius whispered to Remus, "Oh boy, if Prongs goes on like this, he won't even find the time to sleep."

Lily averted her gaze. At the moment, she honestly pitied James for the first time, although she was on a crusade against the Marauders.

Jackie, on the other hand, did not say one word the entire time and kept staring into her cauldron. Sirius tried to get her attention every now and then by dropping things or making more of a racket than was necessary. "Forget it!" Remus hissed, laughing silently. The fact that this wild girl kept giving Sirius the cold shoulder made him respect her even more. Sirius did not deserve anything better. Remus thought that he took the girls much too lightly and sometimes hurt them a great deal in the process.

Lily did not see James again until lunch. She sat next to him, and Jackie plopped down between her and Remus. Lily took some food on her plate and said, "Potter, you are supposed to hand in a sample of your potion by Wednesday."

James's knife and fork hit the table with a clang, and he growled, "Thanks, Evans." He did not take another bite, jumped up and left the hall in long, fast strides.

Lily followed him with her eyes and said, lost in thought, "What's gotten into him?"

Sirius mumbled through his mouth full of food, "Too much work on his plate, probably. The mountain of homework we already have will probably double by evening. Then there's Quidditch practice and the Head Boy duties. I fear that this might do him in."

Remus nodded in agreement, and Jackie said, "We could have started practice next week. Our first game against Slytherin isn't scheduled until November."

Lily said nothing. Sirius looked at Jackie and murmured, "You know James: Quidditch is sacrosanct to him as it is to you, Andrews."

His words sounded disparaging and Jackie hissed. "If you say so, Mr. Mighty Clever Black." She grabbed her things and swept out of the hall with her nose in the air.

Lily grinned. She was proud of her friend. Jackie really went through with it; she stood up to Sirius wherever she could. Sirius's gaze followed her and he muttered irritably, "What the hell did I do wrong now?"

Remus laughed. "I tell you one thing, Pad. That is not the way to convince her to go to the ball with you."

Lily kept her head down and grinned to herself. But Sirius said coolly, "The evening crowns the day, Moony. Just wait."

The afternoon classes dragged on endlessly and did not finish until one hour before dinner. Jackie immediately sought a calm nook in the common room to do her homework, as she had Quidditch practice after dinner. She already knew from past years that James usually extended the practice. They finished very late on most occasions.

Lily made a beeline for her Head Girl rooms and expected to be alone there, but James was already brooding over his desk, deeply engrossed in his homework. She threw

her books on her table, and James looked up from his parchment. Then he got back to working and said without looking at her, "I have an idea for the Halloween ball."

Lily leaned on her desk and looked at him expectantly. James mumbled, "What do you think about a masked ball?"

Lily plopped down on her chair and thought for a moment. She did like the idea and was quite astonished that James had come up with such a good plan. This had potential. She turned towards him and nodded approvingly. "The idea is good. Maybe we can talk about it during our patrols on Saturday."

James exhaled in relief and continued scribbling on his parchment. He smiled and was very proud of himself in that moment. Lily Evans had agreed to something he had said and not torn strips off him this time.

The hour before dinner spun away, and they both had managed but a small part of their homework. Lily was too distracted because she kept thinking about the Halloween ball and James because being so close to Lily brought him to heel.

James disappeared in his room again to change for Quidditch practice. Lily took a book as a precautionary measure, as she wanted to start her mission "hexed broom" as soon as the Gryffindor team was on the pitch.

Nothing special happened during dinner. Lily and Jackie sat next to Alice and Frank. He also played on the Gryffindor team, and they talked about the upcoming Halloween ball. However, Lily did not disclose James's idea as it was not developed enough yet.

Jackie and Frank went towards the Quidditch pitch with the other team members, and Jackie whispered in Lily's ear, "Take care; he mustn't get hurt." Lily waved her aside, and her eyes followed the seven Gryffindors who left the hall with Sirius in tow. Lily was a little taken aback by the fact that Black followed the team. The team captain was his friend, but Lily knew that he usually did not attend the team practice. She made her way to the Quidditch pitch with mixed feelings. Should Black indeed lurk around, she had to be careful or she would get caught.

When she arrived, she saw Sirius sitting in one of the stands, observing the team practice. Okay, not the team but only one person: Jackie Andrews. The girl had fuelled his ambition, and he wanted to try to win her over that same evening. He did not even notice Lily, who sat down on a bench on the other side of the pitch.

Lily observed the Gryffindor team from the corner of her eyes and put her book on her lap. She knew that James was very focussed during Quidditch and hardly saw anything else. She placed her wand hand under the book and tried to aim. It was quite difficult because James played Seeker and was constantly racing across the field. He kept shouting instructions to his teammates, and when he stopped for a few seconds, Lily immediately seized the opportunity.

She aimed for James's broom and murmured some words. The broom bucked instantly, and James hurtled over the broom handle. He grabbed the handle with both hands and shouted, "What the Hippogriff is happening here?"

Lily giggled silently and was riveted by James's efforts to get back on his broom. He obviously did not manage as he still hung from it. The team circled around him and some of them laughed. Frank said, "Hey, James, do you think you'll come around some time today, or did you anger your broom?" Everyone laughed about his comment, except James and Jackie, whose eyes searched for her friend now.

Two members of the team tried to grab James's bucking broom, but he only lost the grip of one hand because of it. Jackie was upset and shouted, "Frank, move! Grab him and take him on your broom."

Lily heard Jackie's worried shouts and finished the hex immediately. Then she made a hasty retreat from the stadium. On her way, she threw a short glance in Sirius's direction, but he already stood in the middle of the Quidditch pitch, never taking his eyes from James.

Lily had been gone for a while when James landed on the lawn next to Sirius. James took a deep breath and Sirius said, "Boy, I thought you'd come crashing down any moment. What happened?"

James shook his head. "Dunno. If I didn't know better I'd say someone hexed my broom. That's no coincidence: first the dungbombs and now this."

Sirius wanted to say something, but the rest of the team was landing next to them, and Sirius headed for Jackie straightaway.

Jackie swallowed and shouldered her broom when Sirius said politely, "If you don't mind, I would like to accompany you back to Gryffindor tower."

Jackie looked at her teammates, who chuckled and cleared away. Frank turned around and winked at her, which made Jackie roll her eyes, grunting. "C'mon, Black, I've better things to do."

Sirius was mildly shocked about what she said and trudged along with a scowl. He tried to start a conversation every now and then, but Jackie always gave a short answer and that was that. This kind of reaction was quite hard on her, but she wanted to follow Lily's advice and avoid becoming just one more of his booty calls.

Once they reached the corridor and stood in front of the portrait that covered the entrance to the Gryffindor common room, Sirius was fed up with it. With one precise movement, he grabbed Jackie by the arm, backed her up against the wall and pressed himself against her. Jackie's eyes widened, she started panting, and when he lowered his head, she did the only thing that came to her mind: she kned him in the groin.

Sirius's face got beet red and he let go of her instantly. But Jackie boiled with rage and clenched her hand in a fist. She hit him in the right eye with a well-aimed punch. Sirius staggered, and she hissed, "If you think that I'm up for grabs, Black, you're very much mistaken." That said, she disappeared through the portrait hole.

She was snorting with rage when she stormed past Remus and James, who had stayed a while to talk to his friend. Trudging upstairs towards the girls' dormitories, she hissed, "You'd better get an ice bag for Black," before she looked over her shoulder to the common room. It was still rather early and there were many students, but Sirius caught her eye immediately. He entered grumpily, covering his right eye with one hand. This made Jackie smile, and she disappeared into her dormitory in a very good mood.

James and Remus smirked and Remus laughed. "Seems that you did indeed get your hands in Jackie's wrong places! Oh, Pad. I told you that she'd be a tough nut. Well, enjoy yourself, then..." With these words, he left James and Sirius to their own devices. James conjured an ice bag for his friend and said with an emphatic smile, "Take this; it'll reduce the pain."

Sirius sighed and slapped the ice bag on his face. He murmured, "I don't understand it. I turned on all my charm and she reacts like... unlike the other girls. None of them has ever given me a black eye just because I wanted to kiss her."

James was unable to stay serious and laughed out loud. In between bouts of laughter, he managed to say, "Boy, you're lucky that it's only a black eye."

"Oh, shut up, Prongs!" growled Sirius and went upstairs to the boys' dormitories.

James entered the head students' suite, still chuckling. Lily seemed to be taking a shower because he heard the sound of running water and her merry singing *Heavens Lily sings?* he thought, and his grin became even wider. He forgot his bucking broom and started doing his potion again.

His cauldron was bubbling away and he cast a glance inside every now and then, but it did not turn out right. He had not noticed that Lily was standing behind him, observing his every move. She wore her green pyjamas again and her hair was falling across her back, still damp.

Lily had been observing him for quite a while, and she knew immediately what he had done wrong. She pitied James because of this Potions problem, and she cleared her throat. He whirled around, and Lily said, "You have read it wrong. It says 'stir clockwise three times', not two."

James's eyes wandered from her to his Potions book, and he hit his forehead with his palm. "Thanks, Lily," he murmured, and then he hectically tried to save his potion, hoping that she would not notice his embarrassment.

Lily was speechless and did not know how to answer. He had used her given name and pronounced it with so much warmth and tenderness that she felt those butterflies in her stomach once more. Sighing softly, she went to her room and closed the door behind her. Then she threw herself on the bed, lost in thought. The day seemed so unreal to her. But still, she felt that something had changed. Someone had changed. Someone she had considered an enemy. Someone she had wanted to fight. She had wanted to fight him with his own weapons, but now she doubted whether she ought to stick to her plans... But then she came up with something even better. Black Beauty was long overdue, and this way she could spare James this time.

She drifted into dreamland with a smile upon her face and a voice in her ear that kept saying her name over and over again.

## Offended Sensibilities

*Chapter 5 of 6*

Open mouth – insert foot

This is another FanFiction from the German "Harrypotter-Xperts" site which I would like to bring to you because I think it is too good to be kept to the German speaking world alone. Heidi, the author of this great story, gave me permission to translate it and I would like to thank her very much for this honour. You can access all of her stories here: <http://www.harrypotter-xperts.de/fanfiction?author=11876>

Disclaimer: All characters you recognise belong to Mrs. Rowling who created the wonderful Harry Potter universe, giving us room for our imagination.

A/N: This chapter was beta-read by Professor M McGonagall and "gamma-read" by notsosaintly, who found the solutions to some very tricky and almost untranslatable puns for me: woman, you are incredible!

### 5. Offended Sensibilities

Finally, the first week of school came to an end but the seventh-years were flooded with homework. Lily was knackered and had slept through her breakfast date with Jackie. So when someone knocked at her door, shouting, "Hey, Evans, your friend is here. Are you still in there?" she jumped out of bed and rolled her eyes. This voice obviously belonged to a certain person who was responsible for her sleepless nights.

"I'm coming," she answered while she hastily threw on her bathrobe. She glanced at her alarm clock and she murmured, "Oh great, now I have missed breakfast."

She opened the door to the head students' common room in a hurry and stood rooted to the spot. Jackie sat on Lily's desk. James, Remus and Sirius were sitting on the sofa with James's broom on their laps, talking in low voices.

"Oh, Lily. We aren't back but a few days and you already sleep through breakfast on your first Saturday." Jackie laughed.

The three Marauders' heads turned, and Lily answered sarcastically, "If I had known that we had such nice visitors at this time already, I'd sure have gotten up earlier." Then she stomped towards the bathroom in a snit.

Sirius smirked. "It seems that her hair is not the only fiery thing about her."

James poked his elbow into Sirius's side, and Jackie hissed, "Seeing you on an empty stomach does that to a girl, you know."

James and Remus snickered, but Sirius stood up very slowly and stood close to Jackie. She was still sitting on the desk and had to look up to face him. Sirius bowed slightly and put his hands on the table to her right and left. He smiled his characteristic 'Black the seducer' smile and said, "No lady has ever complained about me being the first thing she saw in the morning."

He looked Jackie in the eyes while he spoke, and their noses almost touched. Her brown locks and his black hair hid their faces from view. Remus and James held their breath, eagerly waiting for Jackie's reply. They both knew that Sirius's ego had been heavily bruised on the day Jackie had given him a black eye.

Jackie leaned back a little, crossed her arms in front of her chest and said with a grin, "Well, Black, that does not surprise me at all, since the geese who happen to wake up next to you in the morning usually store their brains in other places than their head."

Sirius swallowed. James looked discreetly away, and Remus laughed openly. Jackie, on the other hand, just pushed Sirius aside, brushed some wrinkles out of her robe and said mockingly, "You are the main subject of conversation in the girls' bathrooms, you know. Those birds who keep their brains in certain southern areas give particularly detailed accounts of your qualities."

She wanted these words to hurt him. Hurt him like he had hurt almost all his past girlfriends, whom he had always exchanged for another after a short adventure. What was more, she did not want to reveal one bit of her true feelings.

Sirius was speechless and felt more than just hurt at that moment. He bowed his head, turned his back on Jackie and sat back down with his friends.

James looked at Jackie, who was biting her lip, and shook his head. This cheeky witch had indeed managed to bring his friend down to his knees. She had destroyed Sirius's ego that seemed to reach the size of a solar system sometimes with a few words.

Remus, on the other hand, admired the girl more and more. To him, it was crystal clear that Jackie had Sirius hooked. He put up a tremendous fight, but Remus suspected that Sirius would never be able to free himself and fall for her hook, line and sinker soon.

Nobody had seen Lily observing the whole scene. She was very proud of her friend and knew for sure that Jackie would soon have Black Beauty right where she wanted him to be at her feet.

Remus cleared his throat and said to James, "I don't think that your broom has been permanently hexed. I'm sure that it was just someone playing a nasty trick on you."

Lily and Jackie looked at each other and had a hard time suppressing their laughter because the Marauders had been trying to find out what had been wrong with James's broom ever since the "broom event."

Lily dressed as fast as she could. Then she disappeared with Jackie in tow, leaving the three Marauders alone. The girls headed for the black lake where they wanted to find a secluded spot and do their homework. Jackie sat down clumsily under a tree and said, slightly depressed, "I guess what I said earlier was not very fair. I've never seen Sirius look so dejected."

Lily waved her aside and said coolly, "It was time he was brought down a peg or two. I bet he will recover from the shock rather quickly." Only a short while later, she was proven right.

Lily and Jackie had almost finished their homework. After lunch, they wanted to lie lazily in the September sun, enjoying one of the last warm days of the year. Some students were playing in the lake, and there were quite a few people around them.

The Marauders were roughly twenty feet away. Peter and James were lying in the sun and Remus was reading a book. Black Beauty wasn't there, but he appeared a little while later. He was accompanied by a blonde girl from Hufflepuff and had his arm draped around her waist.

Lily was the first one to spot him. She rolled her eyes when he sat down on the ground with the pretty sixth-year less than 15 feet away from them. She knew exactly what this was supposed to mean. He wanted to put a damper on Jackie and he succeeded. As soon as Jackie saw him, her eyes were glistening with tears. Her coolness had gone, and she quickly turned onto her stomach to put her nose in a book. However, she did not manage to suppress a little sob.

Full of concern, Lily said, "Maybe we'd better go now." In this moment, she inwardly cursed Black and decided to teach him a lesson.

"No," Jackie sniffed. "I will not give myself away like this. I have a much better idea. I will go for a swim now." She did not wait for Lily's answer, but went past Sirius and his newest conquest with her head held high. Lily shook her head and was quite interested to see what Jackie had on her mind.

Jackie was a rather uninhibited person, and it did not bother her at all to undress in public. Wearing nothing but her light blue underwear, she went slowly into the water, completely ignoring the wolf whistles of some fellow seventh-years. She turned to Lily one last time to give her a small wave. Then she dived into the water.

Lily could not help but look in Black's direction, and she stifled a small laugh. Sirius sat rooted to the spot, eyes and mouth wide open, ignoring the girl by his side completely. However, she could not enjoy this sight for very long because someone plopped down next to her and demanded her attention. "Potter," she snorted and gazed back towards the lake, searching for her friend. When she finally found her, Jackie was romping about in the water with Remus.

James cleared his throat and murmured, "Well, I thought... maybe we could talk about the ball again. You looked as if you had time now."

Lily gave him a frustrated sigh, but then she nodded and pulled a pencil and some parchment out of her bag. Actually, she did not feel like wasting her time on head girl stuff on such a beautiful Saturday afternoon, especially not with Potter, but her sense of duty got the upper hand again.

Expectantly, she turned to James, but he was busy gazing at the lake. She observed his features, saw the light flicker in his brown eyes and the small smile on his lips. The butterflies were doing somersaults in her stomach, but before she had a chance to suppress the feeling, James laid back into the grass and said, "We had already agreed on the masked ball. I thought that 'creatures of the night' would be a good subject." He looked up to Lily, full of expectation.

"Well," Lily said while she thought about it, "there aren't too many of them. At first go, I can't think of any but vampires, death fairies and werewolves." She lay back on the grass, too, turned on her stomach and looked at James.

He replied, "Oh, there are many more. The Azrael, the so-called Angel of Death, the Satyr, some kind of forest spirit from Greek mythology. Then there's the Manticore, some kind of lion with a scorpion's tail and wings. Oh yes, and the Lamies they crave the blood of young men and there are many more."

Lily was amazed about James's explanations and said with an appreciative tone, "You know quite a lot about them."

James rolled onto his stomach next to Lily and said, "I know even more: for example, that your friend is starting to turn my best friend's head while he doesn't even notice."

Lily closed her eyes. James was definitely too close, and she could not help but notice his scent very clearly. He smelled like grass, fresh air and some indefinable aftershave that started charming her senses.

"Ah, so I'm right?" James pressed the subject as he had interpreted her reaction wrong.

Lily blushed and stammered, "What? About?"

James came even closer and whispered in her ear, "Jackie has a crush on Sirius."

Lily got away from him with a jerk, her breath quick and unsteady. She was a little flushed, and she murmured, "Is it that obvious?"

James sat up and gazed at Remus and Jackie, who were applying drying charms on each other, and he said in a low voice, "Not for Sirius but for me."

Lily moved away a little and gave a small sigh. She would not have expected James to see through her friend's feelings. She asked, "Will you tell Black?"

James shook his head, and he smiled a devilish smile when he replied, "No, I won't. I think that Padfoot does need a challenge for once. Until now, he always got everything that he wanted..."

"Just like you," Lily blurted out without thinking. She bit her lip immediately and turned her head the other way.

James breathed out rather loudly and got to his feet. Quietly, with a touch of sadness in his voice, he said, "No. I haven't got what I really want yet." Then he returned to the castle in large, fast strides and did not look back.

James's words kept repeating in Lily's head, and in spite of his departure, the butterflies in her stomach kept on fluttering. An unusual warmth spread through her, and she let her eyes wander, lost in thought. Her gaze caught on Black. He was actually rolling around in the grass with the Hufflepuff girl and had his tongue stuck down her throat. This image made her see red, and she knew that the next prank would be due that night. And it would be directed exclusively at Black's ego.

Jackie and Remus approached her, but Jackie stopped next to Sirius and said, full of disgust, "I see if you like being the talk of the girl's lavatories as much as it seems, just keep it up!"

Remus grinned, and Sirius fumed with anger. He pushed the other girl aside, jumped up and hissed at Jackie, "At least they're talking about me, while nobody wants to have anything to do with you. Doesn't even help that you are running around half naked, does it?"

His eyes were gleaming with anger, and Jackie struggled to keep her composure. His words had hurt her deeply, and Remus gave his friend a glance that was meant to make it unmistakably clear that Sirius had gone too far.

Jackie threw her long brown hair over her shoulder and stomped up to the castle straightaway. She wanted to hide her tears, but Lily was at her side already and put an arm around her shoulders. "He's not worth it!" she insisted. Before they had even reached the common room, Jackie stopped and looked at Lily, tears pouring down her face.

"But he's right! I'm not as pretty as these birds, and I..." Lily hugged her and pushed her through the portrait hole into the deserted common room. Then she headed for the head girl rooms and pulled Jackie inside with her.

James was sitting in on the sofa, staring into the fireplace. Lily hesitated, but James understood without a word and cleared the field with a concerned look at Jackie.

Lily had never seen her friend so utterly devastated. It took half an eternity for her tears to subside. Of course, they had missed dinner Jackie had finally fallen asleep on the sofa.

Suddenly, the door opened silently, and James peeked into the head common room. He held a tray and whispered, "I did not see you at dinner, and so I thought..."

Lily smiled at him thankfully.

James gazed at Jackie, and he said apologetically, "Sometimes, my friend is as much of an idiot as I am."

Lily did not answer, although his words registered deep inside of her. She hesitated a little. Then she said, "We are going to make our rounds for the first time tonight. Do you have any objections against Jackie sleeping here on the sofa?"

James shook his head and said, "You should eat first. Then we can go."

Before he left the room again, Lily whispered, "Thank you."

James had his back turned to her, and so she was unable to see his broad smile a winner's smile that made his whole face gleam.

Lily draped a blanket over her friend before leaving the head students' rooms. Then she let her eyes wander over the people in the crowded Gryffindor common room: James was playing a game of wizard chess with Remus, Peter was brooding over his homework and Sirius was sitting on the windowsill, absent-mindedly staring into the darkness. Lily was sure that he was thinking about something, and she hoped that he would find the courage to apologise to Jackie. But first, she would teach him a lesson.

From the corner of her eye, she saw that James hastily put a piece of parchment into his cloak and said good-bye to Remus. A moment later, he stood next to her and said with a grin, "Okay, let's take a walk around the castle."

Outside, in the corridor, James looked around. Then he grabbed Lily's arm and pulled her behind a large tapestry.

Lily gasped in surprise and hissed, "What...," when she realised that they were standing in a small, dark corridor. She took an involuntary step back, but James had already lit his wand and was rummaging in his cloak pockets. He extracted a piece of parchment, dabbed it with his wand and murmured a few words very quietly, so Lily could not understand them.

She was angry that he had caught her by surprise, but her curiosity got the better of her and she gazed at the parchment.

James held it out for her and said cautiously, "This map shows where students might be out after curfew. I have no intention at all to keep running through the castle all night."

Lily looked at all the small dots and lines in fascination and asked suspiciously, "Where did you get that from?"

James scratched his head in embarrassment and said, "Sirius, Remus, Peter and I made it. It was a hell of a lot of work, I can tell you."

Lily was speechless and continued staring at the map. James observed her, and he hoped that she would keep this secret to herself.

As if she was able to read his thoughts, she said, "Now I know why you never get caught when you sneak around outside. I am impressed about your achievement, and I promise that your secret is safe with me." However, she did not feel quite all right: if one of the Marauders consulted the map while she was on one of her mischievous missions, all her beautifully laid-out plans would go pear-shaped. What was more, she did not even dare to think about the things the Marauders would do to her.

"Here, look. There are two very well known Slytherin students busying themselves in an empty classroom," James said with a grin.

After a glance at the map, Lily said energetically, "Okay, let's go! I want to have my turn at deducting points."

She had already lifted her hand to slip out from under the tapestry when James grabbed her wrist and said, "I know a shortcut." He did not wait for an answer, but took her hand and pulled her farther along the corridor.

Lily was unable to speak. She was fighting the warmth that had started spreading throughout her body, coming from her hand. James made no attempt to let go of her, even when they had reached a brightly lit corridor on the fifth floor.

And Lily? She let it happen because she did not want to lose this feeling that kept flooding through her body. She liked the dancing butterflies in her stomach and the light tingle that made its way all over her skin very much.

In front of a classroom on the fifth floor, however, James let go of her hand, pocketed the parchment and took his wand out. His brown eyes were glinting with mirth when he said, "You're on the job, Miss Evans. Go get some Slytherin arse!" Obviously, he had not thought that his words would be true in the sexual sense.

James opened the door with a flourish, and Lily held her breath. They saw Bellatrix Black, a beautiful black-haired Slytherin and Sirius Black's cousin, with her blouse buttons half undone. She was in the company of none other than Rodolphus Lestrange, another Slytherin. He had obviously been about to lay her the situation was very clear.

Lily vehemently strode past James and shouted, "Okay. What you two've been up to is none of my business, but it's curfew for you, too. Therefore, I'd say ten points from Slytherin for each of you. If I were you, I'd stop fanning around and get off to your common room at once."

James could not help it he grinned, as Lily seemed to be completely oblivious about the double entendre of her words.

Rodolphus quickly got his clothes in order, but Bellatrix just slid her blouse up over her shoulders and licked her lips lasciviously. Then she said, "Well, Potter, if you weren't a Muggle lover and friends with my blood traitor cousin..."

She did not finish her sentence because James started laughing and said, "Oh, please, Bella. Who do you think I am?"

Bellatrix finally decided to put on her blouse correctly. With a devilish grin, she replied, "You are nothing but a bloke, just like all the others. A guy who takes everything that's offered. But if you don't like it, there's a different approach." Before she had even finished her sentence, she already pointed her wand at James. But Lily was faster and spelled it out of Bella's hand.

"You nasty little Mudblood," hissed Bella angrily and wanted to pounce on Lily, but James had quickly Stunned her and Rodolphus.

Lily averted her eyes. Bella's words had hurt her. She was used to getting insulted by the Slytherins, but nevertheless, it still hurt every time.

James put one hand under her chin and forced her to look at him. Lily's eyes were glistening with tears when he whispered, "Hey! You are above this kind of talk, Lilyflower. You are worth the whole Slytherin bunch and then some."

Lily fought back her tears, but she did not want to expose her weakness to Bellatrix and Rodolphus. So she gave James a thankful smile and said loudly, "I guess we ought to deposit those two in front of Slughorn's office. Let him decide what to do with them."

James nodded appreciatively and made LeStrange and Bellatrix float in the air in front of him. He was looking at Lily when he said, "I'll get them sorted out. You may just as well go back." It was a concerned look, and he could not help but realise how hurt Lily really was. She had not even told him off when he had used his special name for her. The name that said it all. Lilyflower. His flower, his love. But he still had to convince her of these things...

Lily nodded thankfully. She needed some time on her own. She was sure that she would be able to clear her mind on her way through the empty and silent castle.

It was two in the morning when she finally returned to the Gryffindor common room. The fire in the grate was the only source of light in the room. Lily felt much better. The peace and quiet in the castle had helped her a lot. But now it was time to take care of Black.

Carefully, she sneaked up the stairs towards the boys' dormitories. In front of the seventh-years' door she hesitated a moment. Then she took a deep breath and pressed the handle down. Very slowly, making no noise, she opened the door and slid into the room.

The room was bathed in silvery moonlight. She saw four beds. Loud snoring could be heard from one of them as Lily approached. Peter grunted and silently smacked his lips. In the next bed, she saw Alice's boyfriend Frank, so she tiptoed silently to the other end of the room. Black's hair caught her eye immediately. He was lying on his stomach, his head turned to one side. The quilt had slid down and Lily got a good view of his naked back. She bent over him again to make absolutely sure that she would not get Remus by mistake in the dimly-lit room. With a diabolical grin, she pointed her wand at Sirius's head and murmured a few words.

Then she crept down the stairs again, not knowing that someone had had his eyes open the whole time, and another someone had followed each and every one of her steps on a certain magical map.

## 48 Hours

### Chapter 6 of 6

Sirius deals with with Lily's latest prank and certain Slytherins cause trouble

This is another FanFiction from the German "Harrypotter-Xperts" site which I would like to bring to you because I think it is too good to be kept to the German speaking world alone. Heidi, the author of this great story, gave me permission to translate it, and I would like to thank her very much for this honour. You can access all of her stories here: <http://www.harrypotter-xperts.de/fanfiction?author=11876>.

Disclaimer: All characters you recognise belong to Mrs. Rowling, who created the wonderful Harry Potter universe, giving us room for our imagination.

A/N: I have not updated this for months first because I wanted to finish "The Godfather" and second because RL has been (and still is) very busy for me. But on the other hand, I still think that this story is too good to be kept in hiding, and I will go on as fast as I can manage. Prof M McGonagall was friendly enough to agree and take the beta job. I am amazed at her courage: this story is 96 chapters long, after all!

### 6. 48 Hours

Lily had intended to sleep in on the Sunday morning following her night time activities. However, things were not going the way she had planned. Early in the morning, she woke from the sound of loud voices in the head students' common room. Cursing, she crawled out of bed and hurriedly put on her dressing gown before opening the door.

The first person she saw was James. He was standing in the middle of the room, and his lips were white because he pressed them together firmly to prevent himself from laughing out loud. He was facing Black at least she presumed that it must be Black because all she saw was a huge mop of long and curly blond hair. But the build of the body beneath the hair indicated that it was Sirius, as did the voice.

He was shouting hysterically, "James, dammit, what can I do? I can't go to breakfast looking like this."

James, on the other hand, seemed quite unaffected by Sirius's desperation, as he exploded in roaring bouts of laughter. He met Lily's gaze, and for a split second, she felt as if he knew everything.

When she cleared her throat noisily, Sirius whirled around. This gave Lily an opportunity to fully appreciate her masterpiece, and she was astonished. Sirius Black, Hogwarts heartthrob extraordinaire, had long, curly blond hair and a blinking banner on his forehead that said, "Fancied by brunettes and blondes alike!"

The letters were flashing on his forehead in a gaudy neon green hue that nearly blinded everyone who saw them. The blond mane went almost down to his bum, and he was fingering it nervously all the time.

Lily could not help herself she nearly fell over from laughing. In between, she gasped, "Somebody seems to have made a good job of it, Black. You're irresistible! The whole student body will be at your feet!"

She was unable to hide the sarcasm in her voice, and James took the same line, saying, "Well, Padfoot, either you come as you are, or you will starve painfully on our living room floor."

Sirius threw himself on the couch and moaned, "I'll be the whole school's laughing stock particularly the girls! I'll die if someone sees me like this."

James stifled his laughter and tried to calm him down "It will certainly disappear soon, Pad, then you'll be as you always were, and everybody will love you." His suppressed laughter re-emerged when somebody knocked on the door.

Lily opened the door and Remus stood there, grinning. Before he came in, he whispered in her ear, "I know it was you, Lily. How long will the hexes last?"

Lily stared at him with wide-open eyes and swallowed hard, but Remus murmured, "That's between us, I promise." His eyes had a certain amused twinkle, but his tone made it very clear that he wanted an answer.

"48 hours," whispered Lily and made a beeline for the bathroom.

"Damn!" she murmured and prayed that Remus would not tell his friends who was behind Sirius's "facelift". Black would surely retaliate, and she was quite afraid of his wrath.

So she took a very long shower, hoping that the three Marauders would have left when she came out of the bathroom. She was lucky: when she left the bathroom, the common room was empty except for Jackie, who sat on the couch with a devilish grin on her face. Yesterday's worries seemed forgotten when she praised Lily's

accomplishments. "That was great, Lily. Mr. 'oh-I-am-the-most-handsome' Black will have something to mull over now, and I hope that the hexes will last until tomorrow when we have classes."

Lily grinned. "Yep. Tomorrow will be his opportunity to show off his newfound beauty in front of all the teachers. But I do have a problem: Remus knows it was me."

Jackie inhaled loudly, but then she said, "I don't think he will tell them, or else he would have done so already."

Lily sighed: "I do hope you're right. Black would hang me on the nearest tree if he knew."

The girls hurried down to the Great Hall because they hoped that Sirius's hunger would be greater than his reserve to be seen in his current state.

When they had almost reached the doors to the Great Hall, three Slytherins they knew all too well blocked their path. Beautiful Bellatrix Black was accompanied by Rodolphus Lestrangle and Snape, who looked at Lily with a nasty smirk.

Jackie already fingered her wand, but Lestrangle spelled it out of her hand immediately. At the same moment, Bella grabbed Lily's long red hair and yanked her head backwards. Lily pressed her lips together and attempted to stifle her gasp because Bella had no mercy. Lily felt Bella's breath on her cheek when she hissed, "I'll tell you something, dirty Mudblood. Pray that I never get you alone, or..."

"Or what?" came a voice from the staircase. The three Slytherins jerked around in the direction of the voice they knew very well.

Jackie gave Lily a quick glance, and they both nodded in silent agreement. Then Jackie aimed a well-targeted blow right on the nose of Bellatrix Black while she was distracted. Lily tore herself away from Lestrangle's grip and stunned him, making him fall on his back stiff as a board. Snape's reaction was too slow, because the person owning the voice jumped over the banister with one leap and pushed him to the floor.

Jackie and Lily watched with wide-open eyes while Snape and the young man were fist fighting on the floor. It was Sirius, as they recognised from the blond locks he wore that day. Remus and James stood at the top of the stairs. They had their arms crossed in front of their chests and grinned.

"Do you think we should help him?" Remus asked, keeping his eyes on the two fighters.

James jumped over the banister with an easy grace and grabbed his friend as well as his arch-enemy by the collar.

Sirius kept flailing his arms and shouted, "Let go of me, James! This creep deserves..."

"No way," growled James. "You make yourself scarce. Lily and I will take care of them."

Bella held her bleeding nose and snarled, "You two are on the top of my list, Potter."

James laughed dryly and answered in a relaxed tone, "And you are on the top of mine. Therefore, I will deduct 10 points from each of you for an underhanded assault on the head girl."

Jackie turned away discreetly because she had a feeling that Bella would explode with anger. She met Sirius's gaze he seemed to be in control again and retrieved an old slouch hat he seemed to have dropped during the wrangling. With both hands, he pulled it over his curly blonde hair and the still blinking inscription on his forehead. Remus pushed him into the Great Hall, and Jackie sneaked after them.

"Get going," James snarled at Lily. She gave him an incredulous look. Never before had he talked to her like that. Sad and hurt, she averted her gaze and trotted behind her friend. As soon as she had disappeared behind the door, James lifted his hand, and his fist hit Snape square in the face. Snape had been caught completely unaware and staggered, but James aimed his wand at his chest and hissed, "If I hear the word 'Mudblood' one more time no matter when, no matter where you three will be looking like that for a very long time."

Bella laughed mockingly. "Oh, Potter... you're still enamoured with the little Mudblood, it seems."

James cracked his knuckles and said, "I won't spare you, Bella." He had to exercise all his self-restraint to stop playing any power games with Bellatrix because he usually was very quick-tempered. At the last moment, he saw McGonagall come down the large staircase and made a beeline for breakfast.

He was quite astonished to find Jackie next to Remus and Sirius next to Lily at the Gryffindor table. Peter was not there yet, as usual, and therefore James dropped down next to Lily, who instinctively cowered in Sirius's direction. She held her head low and ate her muesli without a word. Jackie stared at Sirius, who piled his plate like he always did. When McGonagall stormed past him and tore the hat from his head, he ranted, "Oi, stop it!"

When he turned around, he looked right into his head of house's astonished and mocking face. Professor McGonagall struggled to keep her self-control and quickly placed the hat back on Sirius's head. "You are exempt from the usual rules for today, Mr. Black. Come tomorrow, this will be a bareheaded zone again," she said and hurried towards the head table. Her body was shaking, and it was obvious that she could not help but laugh.

Sirius had only been without his cover-up for a few moments, but they had been enough to give many students a glimpse of his appearance. They all laughed. Irritably, he threw his fork on the table, got up, and stood on the bench. Lifting his hat with a flourish and a bow, he shouted through the Great Hall: "Okay, I suggest you all have a good look at it now, because I intend on eating my breakfast undisturbed afterwards." Then he turned around dramatically and sat back down, but did not don his hat again. "Okay, now I want to eat," he mumbled, ignoring the laughter all around.

Jackie gazed at him in fascination. She had been prepared for many things, but she would never have thought that he'd got the guts for this. True Gryffindor bravery.

Lily looked at Jackie's face and knew instantly that her friend was completely lost now. Nothing she could say would keep Jackie from Sirius any more. Jackie's heart belonged to Sirius, once and for all.

"Do you see what I mean?" a warm voice whispered into Lily's ear. "He's fallen for her, and she for him. End of story."

Lily hastily turned her head in the direction of James's voice and was startled. His face was very near; she could feel his warm breath on her cheek and smell his scent. The Great Hall started to vanish in a blur around her; all she saw were his hazel eyes that rested on hers until someone exclaimed, "Morning, everyone."

James and Lily jumped apart and Remus groaned irritably, "Yes Peter, and a good morning to you."

The spell that seemed to have caught the head boy and girl for a short moment had disappeared, but the knowing smiles on their friends' faces remained. Remus broke the short silence and asked, "Okay, Padfoot, will you visit Poppy now for..." He pointed to Sirius's blinking banner.

Sirius swallowed his last bite and shook his head. "No, I will bear it as long as it's there. Whoever gave it to me probably wanted to convey a message." While he said the words, his gaze lingered on Jackie, but she and Lily stared down at their breakfast as if it were the most interesting thing in the world.

Remus lifted his eyebrows in an expression of utter astonishment about his usually very vain friend. Could this pigheaded, self-opinionated young man have changed that much?

James pushed his plate back and said, "Okay, Lily, why don't we go over the last details for the ball today and present our concept to Gonny afterwards?"

Lily was lost in thought and looked around as if in a daze. Then she gave a quick nod, and Remus interrupted, "Let's all go down to the lake again. Maybe the rest of us have some good ideas, too."

"Yeah, Moony, that's a good idea," Sirius said. "We could take our brooms for a quick tour in between. Jackie, are you game?"

"Homework," she muttered and looked to Lily for help, but Lily let her down.

"But we did our homework yesterday! Come on, Jackie!" On one hand, Lily did not want to be alone with the Marauders, and on the other, she was quite sure that Sirius wanted to take advantage of the situation to apologize to Jackie about the things he had said the day before.

"I'll come later," Jackie exclaimed hastily and jumped off her seat. Then she rushed out of the hall, Sirius's gaze on her back.

He said, "It was her. There's no doubt. Just you wait, Miss Andrews."

There was a hint of respect in his voice, but James said, "It can't be her. She spent the whole night on the sofa in our common room."

James heard Lily's relieved gasp very clearly, but Sirius said, "Who else would do this to me, huh? It must have been Jackie."

Remus laughed and said, "Well, it could have been any one of your past girlfriends. And as we all know, there are loads of them." This time, even Peter joined in the laughter.

McGonagall came to their table once more and addressed James and Lily, "Miss Evans, Mr Potter, I forgot something: You two will open the Halloween ball, and I hope to see a spectacular dance."

Lily's eyes grew big, and James muttered a horrified, "What? But... I can't dance!"

McGonagall smiled. "In this case, Mr Potter, a nice waltz will do just to get things started."

With these words, she disappeared. James clapped his hands in front of his face in despair. "Heavens, why can't I be spared this once!"

Sirius said, "Keep cool, mate. The ball is in seven weeks, and Lily will certainly be delighted to practise."

Lily had already opened her mouth to reply when she heard Remus say, "Oh yes, I think Lily would like that very much." His gaze was glued to her face, and she saw that he would not take any protest. Remus knew that she was the one to blame for Sirius's appearance, and he could always hold this knowledge over her head. She was quite sure that Remus would keep his word, but nevertheless, his innocent face made her nervous.

James looked at her with an expectant but slightly fearful gaze, and she nodded in resignation. Being alone among the Marauders made her feel uneasy, and she got up to flee from the hall when Snape crossed her path. He hissed, "Your beloved head boy will not get off that lightly. You'd better remember that, you..."

With wide-open eyes, Lily looked into Snape's somewhat damaged face. Now she understood why James had sent her away. Although she was flattered that he had come to her defence, she did not like that he had done it in this particular manner.

Without wasting a word on Snape, she crossed the entrance hall and went straight outside. The last warm rays of the autumn sun bathed her face, and she closed her eyes with a sigh. In spite of the warm weather, there was a light breeze on the Hogwarts grounds. Lily wanted to head for the black lake because she hoped that she would find her friend there, but at that moment, Jackie stopped her broom to hover above her and said, "Lils, stop dreaming. Up here."

"Please come to the lake with me," Lily pleaded. But Jackie just laughed and whizzed towards the Quidditch pitch, her brown curls and cape flying in the wind. Lily put her hand over her eyes to observe her friend in the sunlight. She noticed two figures fearlessly jump from the Astronomy tower on their brooms. Lily shook her head and grinned she had recognised Potter and Black. They tried to out-yell each other, then split up. Sirius headed for the Quidditch pitch while James flew down to the lake.

While approaching the Quidditch pitch, Sirius had seen Jackie, who was circling the goal hoops, from afar. He thought that the situation would be a very good opportunity for a private talk. He had tied his blond locks together as a precautionary measure and raced after her on his broom. When he had almost reached her, he stopped and waited for her to approach. Jackie, however, did not want to stop next to him. All she wanted was to be left alone up there and not talk to Sirius, of all people, who always made her a little nervous.

Sirius, however, saw her evasive motion and grabbed her broom handle in a dextrous move. Jackie was a good flyer and stayed on her broom elegantly in spite of his unexpected motion. She was hovering next to him now and mumbled, "What are you up to, Black? If you intend to throw more of your niceties into my face..."

"Please," Sirius said quietly, never averting his gaze from her brown eyes. Jackie leaned back on her broom and crossed her arms in front of her chest in a defensive gesture. She just did not want to let him know how much he had hurt her the day before. His words had devastated her, and she was convinced that she could never hold a candle to all the beautiful girls at Hogwarts.

Sirius scratched his head in embarrassment and said, "I'm sorry, Jackie. For yesterday, you know. I did not really want to say that, and I sure did not mean it that way."

Jackie snorted, "Oh yeah, Black. Spare me your apologies, and just leave me alone." She grabbed her broom handle with both hands and soared away. Deep down inside, Jackie hoped that he was serious. With a light smile on her face, she decided that she would not give in that easily.

Sirius, on the other hand, murmured to himself, "This nut is much harder to crack than I thought. But I will make you change your mind until the Halloween ball, Miss Andrews." Then he chased after her on his broom. Jackie loved this careless game and whirled by between the goalposts, always keeping an eye on her pursuer.

Meanwhile, Lily was sitting down by the lake and had huddled together with James and Remus. They had finalised the concept for the ball, so all they had to do was present it to McGonagall.

Remus said, "You should not organise it all by yourself. Why don't you let the prefects do it?"

James nodded in the affirmative and said in a relieved tone, "I'm all for it. The first game of the season draws nearer, and some of our team's players are quite rusty, thinking of anything but Quidditch." With these words, he glanced at a snogging couple in the grass. Frank and Alice were lying a distance apart from the other students, kissing uninhibitedly.

Remus grinned and said, "Remember your dance lessons with Lily."

Lily winked, and James groaned, "How often do I have to repeat: I cannot dance, and I do not want to dance."

A smile crept onto Lily's face, but it disappeared immediately when she caught Remus's eye. His gaze conveyed the unmistakable message that it was her turn to motivate James. With a sour grin, Lily took off her shoes and socks. Then she jumped up and gave James an expectant look. He had no clue about her intentions. "We will hold our first dance lesson now," she said with a forced smile and gave Remus a withering look. But Remus just leaned on a tree with a relaxed expression and nodded his assent.

"But," James exclaimed in desperation, "I can't just... in front of everybody... no, no way!" He looked around frantically it was a beautiful Sunday, and the grounds were scattered with students.

Remus groaned, "Don't be such a baby. At the ball, they will all look at you."

"But we don't have any music," James replied quickly because he hoped to get out of it that way. But Remus grinned, waved his wand, and surrounded them with soft music.

Lily sighed loudly because she did not like this one bit. By no means did she want to be that close to James and not dance with him, for heaven's sake but Remus wouldn't let go.

James got up clumsily and approached Lily, but she hissed, "Shoes off! I don't want to see Poppy for my broken toes afterwards!" James rolled his eyes and obeyed. Then Lily gave him her hand and looked down to the ground. "On the count of three, James." He nodded quickly and waited for Lily's count. At "three" he started moving. Of course, he went the wrong direction and stepped on Lily's neatly painted toes. She gasped, but put up a brave front and said with a smile, "Okay, we'll try a different approach. Stand beside me let's practise the steps first."

Of course, she felt James become more and more tense with the other students stealing glances to observe them. James gave everything he had, which was not much, until Remus pitied him and stopped the music. "You'll get it eventually," he said with a grin and smiled at a frustrated Lily. She quickly donned her socks and shoes and disappeared towards the castle without another word.

Of course, she had enjoyed this dancing lesson with James and because she had enjoyed it so much, she was scared out of her wits. The little scene in the Great Hall at breakfast had made her realise her fascination with the boy, or rather, man. But would it be wise to give in to this urge of being near to him? Then he would have won already, and his prediction would come true. But to her, he was still a lady-killer who chased after every skirt. Would he change for her? A question that kept chattering inside her head, demanding an answer.