

These Hard Times He Deserves

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Sirius/Remus. Sirius' POV.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Beta'd by Raisinous Fiending

Remus is engaged in a fervent fight with his soon to be ex-girlfriend. The girl a year younger than Remus is yelling at him, but Sirius can see Remus is not listening to a word she is saying. He just stands there, pretends to listen, and when she runs off, Remus lifts his eyes and meets Sirius', who quickly turns his gaze back to his Transfiguration homework. Sirius knows Remus saw him staring at them, but he won't say a word. He will go to bed that night without looking at Sirius and keep pretending he never met him at all. He doesn't know for how much longer the werewolf will keep on ignoring his very presence; he only hopes it will be over soon. But it won't be, and months go by, and Remus either ignores him or glares at him with such hatred that Sirius' insides recoil and he wishes he never existed.

Remus has dated and got dumped by as many girls as Sirius had ever shagged because he has given up on the sexual encounters since he can only picture Remus' face whenever he tries something remotely sexual. It seems to Sirius that Remus doesn't give a damn about these girls. Funny, how before *the prank* Remus would always scold Sirius for being so rude to the girls he shagged and now the same boy is doing just about the same thing. Everyone notices how much Remus has changed. 'He's growing up,' they say. 'He is going through tough times.' They never blame Sirius, though, and he is torn between being thankful and hating these people for not seeing the truth. They talk about Sirius a lot, too about how he, too, has grown up. He no longer shags random girls in random places. He no longer teases the teachers or flirts shamelessly with McGonagall. He isn't too loud, and he keeps average grades in all his subjects. He skips no classes and plans no pranks. Sirius is quite average, nowadays.

He finds it dull to be so average and wonders if that is how everyone else feels. He misses pranks and flirting and being over the top. Still, whenever James plans a prank and makes him a part of it, Sirius can't help but feel miserable and says they'll have to do it without him. Peter always stares at him, eyes wide open; James tries to make him stay, and Sirius almost does, except that Remus is not looking at him and Sirius knows he *must* leave.

It is hard, at times, to watch Remus laugh and tease with James or Peter and then watch his smile fade as he looks at Sirius. But Sirius just smiles in return and Remus looks away. Peter doesn't notice, but James does, and he asks every night if Sirius is okay. Sirius says he's fine and tells James to stop bugging him so much, he's not his bloody child. James laughs before returning to his room (he is the head boy now and has his own room right next to Evans'). He says nothing back because he knows the next day Remus will do something that will hurt Sirius and he will ask him if he is okay again, and thus the cycle goes. Sirius can see James wants to yell at Remus for being such an arse to his best friend. Yet there is something that keeps James from yelling at Remus, and that is the fact that it is all Sirius' fault and James knows he

wouldn't forgive Sirius if he were in Remus' position.

Sirius goes to bed every night with a lump in his throat and prays to whatever god is up there to let him die because he secretly fears he is no longer alive. His prayers aren't answered and Sirius wakes up, cursing the very day he was born into this world.

One morning in late November, he walks sleepily to the shower and sees Remus drying his hair. He stares for a second or two before stepping in the shower. On mornings like this, Sirius likes to take cold showers. They wake him up and make him forget he just saw Remus in nothing but a towel and make him forget about his erection; he is too busy trying not to freeze.

At breakfast, Sirius sits beside James and in front of Peter. Remus isn't at their table. He's talking with his new Hufflepuff girlfriend. Sirius watches them holding hands and kissing, and his erection is back. There was a time when Remus kissed Sirius, just because he wanted to, and Sirius would be only too eager to kiss him back. He can still remember the taste of chocolate in Remus' mouth and how the werewolf was almost ashamed of liking Sirius in that way. He even said once it wasn't normal and that if Sirius didn't want to kiss him, he could stop. Sirius kissed him even deeper. The moan that escaped Remus lips that time still haunts Sirius' dreams. But he can't think about that. Those things are off limits to him. Sirius lowers his gaze and keeps eating. He hopes Remus hasn't seen him. He hopes Remus doesn't know he thinks of him that way.

He doesn't notice breakfast is over but sees James standing up and does the same. James sits next to Evans in Transfiguration, and Sirius sits next to Peter, behind Remus and his girlfriend. He quietly takes some notes he really doesn't need, and when the class is over, Sirius gathers his things and walks out, to his next class. He thinks this will be yet another dull day of his life, but then Remus slips a piece of parchment in his pocket. It says, *'Stop staring at me'*. Sirius' breath is caught and he can feel the lump in his throat is back. He tears the paper in tiny pieces and pretends nothing happened. He pretends Remus doesn't know he still likes him in *that* way. He keeps walking and realizes he is late for his next class and decides he is not going. It's History of Magic, anyway.

Instead, he goes back to his bed and stays there until lunch. He would have stayed there all day, but James comes to fetch him and doesn't stop nagging until Sirius gets up and resumes his activities.

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Sirius decides not to leave for the Christmas holidays. James has invited him to join him for Christmas, and so has Peter. But James is taking Evans with him, too, and Sirius refuses to be the third wheel. And going with Peter isn't any better. He tells himself he's staying because leaving with James or Peter would be just as boring. He tells himself it has nothing to do with the fact that Remus is staying, too. After all, it is not like they are going to talk or anything. He plans to do nothing but sleeping and perhaps some studying for the NEWTs.

Once James and Peter have left, Sirius feels awfully awkward. There are times when he is alone with Remus and he has the need to speak to him, just to say something. He doesn't. The days go by like this until the full moon comes. Sirius sits on the couch in front of the fireplace in the Gryffindor common room. Remus is reading a book on the other couch. As he stands up to leave, he doesn't ask Sirius to come with him. Remus is far too proud to even entertain the thought of asking Sirius to go with him.

Sirius doesn't sleep that night. He stays up, pacing from one side of the common room to the other. He thinks about drinking, but then reflects it won't do any good in case something bad happens. Sirius stays sober until the dawn breaks. It isn't too early, and some other students are already waking up. After what feels like ages, Sirius decides Remus must be already in the hospital wing. He steps out of the Gryffindor tower, and he's already halfway to the hospital wing when he remembers the chocolates. He needs to bring Remus chocolates.

As he fetches the chocolates and goes out again, Sirius starts to feel quite silly. He looks like a girl, running with a bunch of chocolates for his *boyfriend*. Laughing at that thought, Sirius steps into the hospital wing. He feels light-hearted, and his smile is so big he wonders if he has finally lost his mind. He can't help it; he feels happy for no reason at all. As he asks Madam Pomfrey where Remus' bed is, he manages to flirt with her like only he is able to do, and she turns a shade of crimson Sirius knows all too well.

He walks up to Remus' bed and sits on the chair beside the bed. It is the first time he is there in a long time. Remus is asleep. He looks too tired, and Sirius smiles as he brushes a strand of hair off his face.

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It has been a week since the full moon, and Remus has been allowed to rest in his own bed, much to Sirius' distress, as Remus won't talk to Sirius even though Sirius can't help but wants to be of some use. As he stares blankly at his Transfiguration essay, he hears someone coming down the stairs. It must be Remus. He looks up and sees the other boy sit down in front of him. Sirius notices Remus is fumbling with the pages of his book with unsteady hands, a thing Remus only does when he is extremely nervous. He has been like that ever since he came back from the hospital wing. Whenever he and Sirius are alone, he opens and closes his mouth, as if trying to say something but never managing to do so; he twists his fingers and gets up, leaving Sirius wondering whether he should be upset or happy to be affecting Remus in such a way. He thinks it is at least some kind of improvement. At least Remus is no longer nonchalant towards him.

As Remus shifts from one position to another, Sirius can see him opening and closing his mouth again. "Thanks... for the chocolates," Remus murmurs finally and Sirius is barely able to hear him. But he said it and Sirius is mysteriously overwhelmed with happiness.

"You're welcome." Sirius knows he shouldn't, but he is smiling.

He is smiling because, as silly as it is, he likes it when Remus talks to him other than for formal stuff or to ask him to pass the butter. He is smiling because a light blush has crept over Remus' face and he likes being the cause of it. He smiles because Remus' eyes are a pool of emotions that whisper to Sirius and tell him Remus is truly thankful for having Sirius there, beside him. Even if Remus says nothing, he has known Remus for so long and he understands the werewolf expected everything between them to end. He expected Sirius to give up on him. Now Remus is thankful because he knows Sirius would sit right beside him if he ever needed, or wanted, him to. This pool of emotions wavers and then disappears as Remus regains his composure. But Sirius has seen it, and it is the best thing he has seen in a long time. Perhaps some day things *will* go back to normal, Sirius muses.

That night, when he goes to bed, he is still smiling and hope flows through his veins. He hasn't felt so alive in ages.

A/N: Pretty please R&R!! I love to know what you think...plus if this isn't much too horrible I might do a sequel on Remus POV. But I'd like to know what you guys think.