

Perfect

by firefly124

Trapped by a lockdown at the Ministry, Hermione and Remus are left with little to do but confront why their relationship has stalled. Post-war but wildly AU. Never mind forgetting DH, you could probably forget back to GoF if you wanted to.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Hermione had just about had it. Between the Howlers, the protests, and the threats, it seemed the crackpots had taken over the wizarding world. She incinerated another Howler just as it started to shriek about ignorant Muggle-borns betraying their species. No doubt the wording wouldn't have been quite that polite, but that was what they all boiled down to.

She wondered if the people sending her these missives would find the irony in the approach of the full moon bringing out this ridiculous behavior in them. Probably not.

"You're getting almost as quick on the draw as an Auror," Harry said, poking his head in the door with a grin. "That one barely got two words out."

She gave a mirthless laugh. "Well, at least they're good for target practice. Really, don't people have better things to do with their time?"

Harry flopped into one of the chairs across from her desk. "I think they just need to be scared of something."

"So with no war, they've got to focus on Magical Creatures?"

Harry spread his hands. "I didn't say it made sense to anyone who wasn't mental."

Hermione started to twist her hair between her fingers and then made herself stop. She'd put too much time into it today to muss it up now. Unfortunately, her nervous habit had drawn Harry's attention to it.

"What're you so dressed up for then? Big meeting earlier?"

"Erm, no, not exactly." She willed herself not to blush. The nice thing about working in the department that nobody liked was that there hadn't been anyone around all day to notice that she looked any different. That was the sort of thing she counted on when she had plans immediately after work.

"Big date tonight then?"

"It's just dinner," she said, shifting in her seat. Harry'd been pretty good about this so far, but it was still an uncomfortable subject between them.

His eyebrows went up. "Since when do you wear your hair like that and...is that makeup?...to 'just dinner'?"

"Harry!"

"All right, you're right. I don't want to know." He sighed. "You're both happy, so I'm happy. It just ... takes a bit of getting used to."

"Well, he should be here any minute," Hermione said, looking at the clock. "So you'll have a chance to work on getting used to it."

Actually, he was running a bit late. She frowned.

"I should probably go make sure no one's bothering him on the way in," Harry said. "You'd think being a war hero would be enough for some people."

"You'd think," Hermione agreed, "but you'd be wrong."

With a nod and a grimace, he stood. "I'll just get to it then."

A few minutes after Harry'd left, Remus came rushing into her office.

"I'm so sorry I'm late," he began, until she came around her desk and shut him up with a kiss. "But I see I'm forgiven?"

"You are." She pulled back and looked him over carefully. He was a bit mussed, but not too badly, and she could tell he had dressed up a bit more than usual too. "Did you have any trouble?"

"I got by the protesters easily enough," he said. "They were all up against the Barrier Spell in the Atrium watching Harry leave." He shook his head. "Have they never seen someone use a Floo before?"

Hermione smiled. Trust Harry to find a way to help Remus without letting him know it. The man's pride was fragile enough without having to feel he was being rescued.

"Come on then." She took him by the hand and led him over to a different door than the one he'd entered, this one heavily locked. "Let's get you settled and we can be on our way."

Drawing her wand, she tapped out a complicated sequence on the panels of the door, and with several snicks and whirs, the door opened. They stepped inside the large storage closet...which was several times larger than her office, but considering all it held, she hardly minded...and headed towards the shelf that held Remus' monthly seven doses of Wolfsbane.

He reached into a pocket in his robes, scrunched up his forehead, and reached into another.

"What is it?"

"I seem to have misplaced my quill. Do you have one?"

Hermione rolled her eyes good-naturedly and went back to her desk. She set down her wand, opened a drawer, and took out one of her spare quills. Even for Remus she wasn't going to lend out her favorite after all.

Once she'd returned and handed it to him, Remus signed the pledge on the outside of the case, certifying that he would take all seven doses and, if any were missed, would turn himself in for observation by Aurors in a specially spelled cage during the night of the full moon. The case popped open as soon as he'd finished, revealing a container holding seven phials.

"Might as well get this out of the way so it doesn't ruin dinner," he joked.

Hermione rolled her eyes good-naturedly. Professor Snape had refined the Wolfsbane formula over the years, and as a result, it didn't taste nearly as bad as in the past. At least, that was what Remus had told her. It probably still wasn't exactly something one would want for an appetizer, she supposed.

He gulped down the contents of one of the phials and replaced it in the carrying container with a flourish. He tucked the borrowed quill into the handle and picked up the container. "Shall we go?"

"Absolutely." Hermione grinned. She'd been looking forward to this all day. "So where did you decide..."

A siren pierced the air.

"Barrier Spell failure in the Atrium," a voice announced. "Lockdown Spells activated."

"What?" they both cried.

Hermione grabbed Remus' arm and pulled him towards the door. By the time they reached it, there was only about a six inch space between door and jamb. They both threw their weight against it, but while it slowed, the door continued closing until it clicked shut and all the locks activated.

Remus just stared at it in shock. "We're locked in?"

Hermione shook her head. "No, of course not. I should've just used the counterspell in the first place. Can't think why I didn't."

She reached into her sleeve for her wand.

It wasn't there.

She walked back over to the shelf that held the now-empty case for Remus' Wolfsbane to see if she'd set it down near there somewhere. She hadn't.

She looked at the magical parchment with Remus' signature on it, and the penny dropped.

"Oh, no. No, no, no, no!"

"What?" Remus ran over to join her.

"My wand! I've left my wand on my desk!"

He drew his again. "Here, use mine."

"It won't work! The Security Enchantments are keyed to my wand, not just to me." She bit her lip and tried anyway.

She tapped out the correct sequence on the panels, along with the corresponding nonverbal Charms. Nothing. She handed his wand back.

"So what do we do now?" he asked.

She leaned against the door, her shoulders slumped in disappointment. So much for the perfect evening she'd been hoping for. "Nothing. There is absolutely nothing we can do until they call off the Lockdown."

His eyes widened in disbelief.

Hermione spread her hands before her. "Whatever it is you're thinking, so long as it won't blow us up, by all means try it."

She watched in resignation as he tried to Apparate, send off a message by Patronus, and Summon her wand to roll under the door. When he took off his shoe and tried to turn it into a Portkey, she finally intervened before he ended up smashing himself into the door with it.

"Remus, I was very thorough," she said. "Nothing can get in or out of here. Not spells, not sound, and not us."

His shoulders slumped. "Well, I had to try."

She stepped a bit closer and gave him a small kiss. "That's one of the things I love about you."

He froze, and she cursed herself a thousand times over. She hadn't meant to say quite *that* word. Well, all right, she had. But later. After dinner. If things went very, very well and preferably under much more romantic conditions. Not while they were locked up in a bloody closet waiting who knows how long for the idiots downstairs to get sorted and the Lockdown called off so they could leave. She pulled back and handed him his shoe.

"What? Oh, right." He bent and put it back on.

"Shouldn't be long anyway," Hermione said rather more brightly than she felt. "They must've caught them right away. The Lockdown will have caught whoever breached the Barrier Spell."

"So we might not even be all that late for dinner," Remus answered with a smile.

An hour later, neither of them was smiling as they sat on the sofa Remus had Transfigured from an empty cage she kept for transporting Magical Creatures that had been confiscated from irresponsible owners. Telling the story of how it had last been used to bring a spirited Crup to a remote wizarding farm in Wales had occupied about fifteen minutes, and unfortunately she'd already told Remus that one before. She was sure they'd have had much more to talk about at dinner, but for some reason they weren't managing it here.

So is this it? she wondered. *Are we doomed already? We've only really been dating for a couple of months, and we're already out of things to say?*

She almost wished he'd Transfigured two chairs instead of a sofa. They weren't quite sitting at extreme ends, but it was obvious that they couldn't figure out how close to sit either. Had they been back at her flat watching the telly, as they'd done a few times since discovering a mutual fondness for some very silly programs, they'd have been snuggled up together comfortably, not trying to figure out whether being six versus eight inches apart was too close or too far.

"What about books?" Remus tried.

"But a person can only Conjure a complete book if they remember every word of it," Hermione replied. "And then, what's the point?"

"What if I Conjure one I've read but you haven't, and you Conjure one that you've read and I haven't?"

It sounded like a good idea at first, but they quickly discovered that there weren't that many books either of them remembered completely verbatim in the first place, and once they ruled out the ones that both of them had already read, there were none left.

"What in Merlin's name is taking them so long?" Hermione grumbled.

"Perhaps someone got by the Lockdown, and the Aurors are still searching for them?"

"Maybe." Not every department was as thoroughly protected as hers, after all, though the ones routinely targeted for trouble were. "Why hasn't Harry been up here yet?"

"We don't know that he hasn't."

"Yes, but ..." She could actually picture it. Harry would possibly even have checked her office first, found it undisturbed, probably never saw her poor abandoned wand lying there, and assumed she'd already left before the Lockdown was activated, never bothering to use the Aurors' override to check the storage closet.

By the time she'd finished that thought, she realized she'd moved closer and Remus had draped his arm around her, and she finally figured out why they'd been so awkward till now.

"You're right," she said. "He's probably been and gone and isn't going to burst in here and be horrified."

"I don't think he'd be horrified," Remus said. After a bit he added, "Is he really still that uncomfortable with the idea of us being together?"

"I think it's down to the way he thinks of us both as family," she replied. "He doesn't object. He told me just today that so long as we're happy, he's happy. I just think he's having a hard time thinking of his 'uncle' and his 'sister' being romantically involved."

"That does make a sort of sense." Remus sighed.

Hermione nibbled at her lower lip. This wasn't a subject she really wanted to get into.

Remus passed his thumb over her lip, gently removing it from her teeth, and before she could say anything, he'd lowered his mouth to hers.

She leaned into the kiss, teasing his lips open with her tongue, but not quite pressing into his mouth, inviting him rather into hers. He tended to panic if she got too near his teeth, and it was just as lovely to have their tongues dance together in her mouth as in his. One of his hands cupped her breast, thumb moving gently to and fro.

He drew back after a minute, resting his forehead against hers as both of them caught their breath.

"This is probably not a good idea," he murmured.

"Mmm? Why not?" She'd thought it was a much better way to pass the time than what they'd been doing.

"Because if we keep on, I'm going to want to do more than kiss you."

Hermione still didn't quite see the problem.

"And ... when the time comes ... if the time comes ... I want it to be perfect." He stroked her hair. "Not something that happens because we'd nothing else to do."

"Right." Hermione nodded and pulled back a bit. "Of course."

She couldn't help being somewhat put out over that "if." She'd been hoping the time might be tonight after all. But if he was still that unsure, then clearly it wasn't. Was it?

"So, erm, what would that be like?" she asked.

"Excuse me?"

"What will the perfectly right time look like? Only, I want to make sure we both know what to be looking out for, so we don't miss it."

He gave her a crooked smile and sat back into the sofa a bit, a thoughtful look on his face. "I suppose there should be candles. Candlelight's romantic after all. A bit of wine, though not too much."

Hermione darted a glance at the emergency lighting sconces on the walls. Not particularly romantic, but at least they were candles.

"Anything else?"

"You should have silk sheets," he said softly. "Something to caress any part of you that I'm not."

"That's ... that's the most sensuous thing I've ever heard." She picked up his hand and pressed a kiss to the palm. "But if you're planning to wait until either of us can afford silk sheets, I think we might be too old to enjoy it."

"Hermione ... "

"Now," she interrupted, "you've told me how you want the place to be, but you haven't said anything about when. How are you planning to decide when it's the right time to open the wine and light the candles?"

He pressed his lips together, stood up, and walked over to one of the shelves, keeping his back to her.

"Remus ... "

"When I'm sure," he said at last. "When I'm sure you want me as much as I want you."

She rose and walked over to stand behind him, her arms reaching around his waist as she pressed a kiss to his shoulder and then his neck.

"How can you doubt it?" she whispered into his ear. He didn't answer right away, so she continued. "What makes you think I don't want you every bit as much as you want me?"

He shook his head. "You don't know. You have no idea."

"Then tell me," she said softly, giving him a brief squeeze.

It took everything she had to wait him out. Twice she had to literally bite her tongue to keep herself from asking again. She had just about decided he simply didn't trust her enough and perhaps he was right that it was too soon, when he finally spoke.

"There are rumors about werewolves. I'm sure you've heard all of them. That we mate for life like regular wolves. That we mark our mates. That we turn them."

She gave his waist another reassuring squeeze, resting cheek against his shoulder. Of course she'd heard them all. She also knew they were all false. Well, except for the last, which some werewolves actually did, but he never would. And he knew that she knew all of that. So what was the point?

"They all have a grain of truth to them," he said. "The loneliness. The drive to be part of a pack. The need to have someone who'll always be there." He took a deep breath and let it out slowly. "If we take that step, Hermione, I'm afraid of what I'll do. How I'll be."

She frowned, trying to figure out what he meant.

"You're not a woman who'd ever put up with a man smothering her. You're too independent. That's one of the things I love about you."

Her breath caught as he finally crossed his arms over hers, and she tried to absorb what he'd just said.

"So," she replied, "you think we're not ready because, if we do, you'll start smothering me and we'll break up?"

"That about sums it up, yes."

She pulled back a bit and slid her arms out from under his. As his shoulders started to slump, she placed her hands on them and turned him around to face her. She almost expected him to look down at the floor, but he met her gaze like a man going before a firing squad.

"So the perfectly right time will be never because that risk isn't going to go away, and we absolutely shouldn't take any opportunity we find to enjoy being together as much as possible because someday it'll all go sour."

A sheepish smile tugged at his lips. "It does sound a bit ridiculous when you say it like that."

"That's because it *is* ridiculous." She brushed a stray hair from his forehead and slid her hand down to cup his cheek. "Remus, I can't promise things will always be perfect. I can't promise we'll never break up, even though I can't imagine that ever happening right now. What I can promise, now you've told me all this, is that if you start crowding me, I'll tell you to back off."

His eyes, which had brightened for a bit, appeared sad again.

"And then," she continued, "*you* need to promise, if I tell you that, you *will* back off and not assume there's anything more to it than me needing some space."

"That's fair," he said, nodding slowly as a gleam of hope lit his face again.

"There's that settled then." She slid her hand behind his neck and drew him down for a kiss, which he quickly deepened, pulling her close enough to feel his arousal. And when they broke for breath, she planted a trail of kisses along his jawline and over to his ear, where she whispered, "I love you, Remus. I love you, and I want you. Make love to me?"

Without a word, he scooped her into his arms and carried her back to the Transfigured sofa, laying her onto it gently. He tried to lie down beside her, only to realize that it was far too narrow. He pulled out his wand and Transfigured it again, this time into something that was neither quite a sofa nor quite a bed but at least had a bit more room. Setting his wand down, he joined her on it, peppering her face with kisses and tangling his fingers in her hair, whilst she set about undoing his shirt and running her fingers over his chest, tracing the scars that cut through his hair.

He reached behind her to undo the zip of her dress. Easing it off her shoulders, he kissed each bit of skin as he exposed it, the contrast of the cool room air and his warm lips making her shiver with delight long before he reached her lace-covered breasts, the rich blue a sharp contrast against her pale skin.

She saw the moment he worked out the implications of what she was wearing.

"You'd already planned ... ?"

"I was hoping."

He gave her a boyish grin, then began to trace out the patterns of the lace with his fingers, lips, and tongue until she could hardly stand it and undid the clasp herself. As the lace fell aside, he shifted his attention to her nipples, flicking his tongue over them and gently suckling.

Hermione ran her fingers through his hair, restraining the urge to press further into his mouth, though she noticed he was somehow also sucking his lips inward over his teeth. Instead, she pushed at his shirt, which he shrugged off and cast aside, never taking his attention away from her breasts. An eager warmth began to build in her center, and she felt herself begin to grow wet.

Remus seemed to sense as much, soon trailing kisses down along her belly, easing her dress over her hips and off, then nosing along the edge of her knickers, sometimes darting his tongue just beneath the lacy fabric. After what seemed an eternity of teasing, he slipped them off as well.

Parting her folds with his fingers, he explored her with his tongue, a bit tentatively at first, but quickly learning what pleased her most. She clutched at the fabric beneath her and moaned as he flicked and circled her clit until it seemed she'd shatter with another touch.

And then he pulled away for a moment to shed his trousers and pants before stretching himself over her, nestling himself between her thighs and kissing her. She thrilled to the taste of herself on his lips as well as the pulse of his hardness at her core.

She wrapped her legs around his and pressed against him, drawing him into her just a bit.

He pulled his face back from hers, looking into her eyes. The searching look he gave her was somehow both endearing and annoying, that he could still need her reassurance even now.

"Please," she said, keeping her eyes locked with his.

"Merlin, I love you," he answered as he finally pressed into her, filling and stretching her deliciously.

After that, there were no more coherent words or even coherent thoughts. She quickly found herself lost in the rhythm of their thrusts and counterthrusts as they tried, it seemed, to climb into each others' skin. Something deep within her seemed to coil tighter and tighter as they moved, and as he slid a hand between them, it sprung, a blissful explosion that shot flashes of light through her, and she heard Remus' shout as he joined her.

A second later, she realized that wasn't the only shout she'd heard, nor were the flashes of light entirely the result of the most amazing climax she could remember.

"Merlin! I can't believe ... I'm going to have to gouge my eyes out!" Harry yelled, a hand clasped firmly over said eyes, wand drawn but pointing at the floor.

Mortification quickly turned to anger.

"Harry James Potter!" she yelled back. "What do you think you're..."

"Harry," Remus said in a voice so calm it startled her out of her building rage, "would you please give us a minute?"

"Right. Er. Right." Harry turned and walked back out of the storage closet, his hand on the doorknob.

"Without closing it all the way!" Remus added.

He left it open just a crack.

Hermione turned to look back up at Remus, who was gazing down at her with a worried look in his eyes.

"That was, in case you were wondering, definitely not part of my plans for our perfect first time together."

She couldn't help herself. She giggled, and before it could turn into a full-fledged laugh, she pulled his face down to hers for a kiss.

"It was perfect," she said, "until Harry decided to 'rescue' us."

"Mmm." Remus knelt up, found her dress, handed it to her, and began scrambling for his own clothes.

She dressed quickly, though her knickers were suspiciously missing. She actually hoped Remus had tucked them into his pocket. That would be better than finding them under a shelf someday.

Once they were both presentable and Remus had Untransfigured the not-sofa-not-bed back into a cage, she added, "Not that I wanted to be stuck here indefinitely, mind. But he could've given us a bit longer."

"It's been three hours!" Harry yelled from her office. "And I can hear you, you know!"

"You were meant to hear that!" she called back. More softly, she said, "I mean it, Remus. It was perfect."

"I know," he murmured into her ear. "You were there."

With a smile, she laced her fingers through his, and they went out to face a traumatized Harry and find out which batch of protesters they should thank for getting them locked in.