

Instructions on How to Dance

by Fenrir

A story of two people who loved someone else, getting thrown together by fate -- I mean, testing. Hilarity, romance, angst, and dancing ensue.

Things We're All Too Young to Know

Chapter 1 of 4

A story of two people who loved someone else, getting thrown together by fate -- I mean, testing. Hilarity, romance, angst, and dancing ensue.

A/N:This is in response to the Yenta Livery Company (YLC) Challenge by Lady of the Masque on TPP. Also, I only play with the characters of the Harry Potter realm, and then I put them back in their boxes. Promise.

Instructions on How to Dance

By A.R. Taloff/Fenrir

Chapter I: Things We're All Too Young to Know

Luna Lovegood walked through the fireplace to her and Neville's cottage home and stared around, sighing at the boxes. All of them contained her possessions, as Neville's had been packed a week before.

She looked at the place where their periwinkle blue striped couch had been and felt her heart sink more. It was there that they'd opened up that damn letter.

Remus came home to the flat he shared with Tonks to see her packing things in trunks. Grinning confusedly, he set down his satchel and came up behind her, chuckling.

"Are we taking a trip?" he queried.

She turned, her face quite serious, and his grin faded fast. "Love, what's wrong?"

Tonks' mouth sat at a grim line as she waved her wand and said, "*Accio YLC Letter.*"

Remus looked confused, then understanding hit him. "Ah, yes, the old biddy test, did that show up today? Did they tell us to go to Tahiti?"

The letter was thrust into his chest, and then Tonks wandered away to let him read it alone.

Luna curled up on the carpet and stared blankly at the fireplace, the letter keeping her company since it was the only thing that did. Neville had even taken the cat.

Yenta Livery Company

London ~ Bath ~ Norfolk ~ Carlisle ~ Leeds

"The Best Match for Your Best Money, Guaranteed!"

Dear Miss Lovegood and Mr. Longbottom,

Enclosed are the results of your testing before engagement. We remind you that higher than a 92% match rate is required for marriage.

Compatibility: 34%

The results are finite and go immediately to the government. We are deeply sorry if you have reserved churches, reception halls, tailors, or even bought rings, and will help you negotiate refunds if that is the case. Feel free to go to another source if these results aren't to your liking, but we are the government's top choice in Geneamorphological Agencies, and as such, will be held up first above other agencies.

However, Mr. Neville Longbottom, there is good news! We have found you a 98% match and will send you information about your match in two days time.

Miss Lovegood, as we do all our clients, we will keep your file in our systems, looking for your perfect match. As always, we try to find the closest match percent to 100 we can and will strive to not let you down!

Sincerely,

Maevis T. Ehe

Yenta Livery Company

London Offices

Luna cuddled the paper close, sniffing and trying not to cry as she remembered coming home two days later to find Neville's trunks being loaded into a moving van.

"It's Susan Bones! Remember her? She's in New Zealand right now on a study and just called me today! Isn't that great?!" Neville's face had been glowing with joy, and Luna had just stared at the trunks, then him, in utter shock.

Suddenly, she'd looked at the door, which was wide open. "Angel! Neville, you know Angel likes to sneak out of the house!"

Neville had frowned a bit and reached a hand back to scratch his head. "Em, 'bout that... since Angel is my Gran's cat and all..."

Luna, whose back had been facing Neville while she looked out the window, slumped. "Yeah, you should take her with you."

Two hours later, he had left.

Luna had decided two things then.

1) Do not get the mail. Mail equals bad.

2) She needed to move.

So she had packed things up and started looking for a place while the mail piled up on the floor in front of the door, and the owls cocked their heads, each more confused than the previous one.

Luna rubbed her nose against the carpet and cried.

Remus walked into his office in Hogwarts and sighed heavily. Term would be starting in two months, and he was bone tired and not at all interested in teaching. Tonks had moved in with her match, and Remus had yet to open his match letter. He just wished he could chuck it into the fire and have it be done, but there were charms against burning it. Those Yentas were pretty serious about their job.

"So, why didn't you open this letter?"

The voice in the midst of silence caused Lupin to jump nearly out of his skin. Glaring at the source, who was complacently lounging on the couch with pages and an empty envelope on his chest, Remus retorted, "You know, that is an offense."

Sirius languidly smiled and stretched his long legs out further. "Yeah, luckily it was I who opened your mail." Sirius smirked knowingly. "You would never send me to jail!"

Remus rolled his eyes. "Don't you have to make dinner for Harry or something?"

Shrugging, his old friend chuckled. "Harry is off with his girl, and *you*, mate, need to read this."

Paper shoved in his face, Lupin gently yanked it from Sirius' hands and read it. There was a minor confidentiality, but phone numbers, blood type, hobbies, favorite color, and favorite food were given. No names, merely an extra page asking if, for 15 galleons, he would like to set up a meeting and discussion time with the match at one of the four places listed.

1) Park _____

Remus scoffed. All those dogs and the screeching from random children would interrupt any conversation they might try to have. No, no parks.

2) Coffee House _____

Thinking about that for a moment, Remus weighed the pros and cons. There were a number of quaint coffee shops all over from Hogwarts to London. They were quiet and smelled okay. Often times, they were near restaurants, so if she got hungry, there was a place to go afterwards. Also, he was fond of coffee.

Quickly scribbling an 'X' into the space next to the coffee house option, he sighed. Turning to Sirius, who was currently sneaking chocolates from Lupin's excessive hoards, he rolled his eyes and grunted. "I can't do this. It's ridiculous."

Sirius crammed a last bit of chocolate into his mouth and chewed, swallowing the whole of it in an under chewed mass which made Remus' throat hurt. Lifting an eyebrow at his old friend, Sirius replied, "Look, why can't you? It's not like you can marry anyone else. *And* those Yentas must know what they're doing, 'cause Tonks and Rolanda are *really* happy, if you catch my drift." In the odd event that Lupin wouldn't get that innuendo, Sirius wiggled his brows lasciviously.

With a straight face, Remus sealed the letter with wax and sent it off with an owl.

Luna came through the fireplace and immediately smelled Ginny's perfume. It was utterly distinctive. She and Gin had taken a spontaneous trip to Paris for their twentieth birthdays, and there they'd helped someone who was being mugged. Out of gratitude, the woman, a perfumer by trade, had created two unique scents...one for Luna, one for Ginny, and given the whole batch to them with promises never to sell it to another. Ginny wore it quite often while Luna wore it sparingly, if ever.

Setting down her case of paperwork, she rolled her shoulders. The staff meeting at Hogwarts had been especially trying today, because Minerva had run it while Dumbledore was off on business. Unlike Dumbledore, who frequently took their meetings to another, more comfortable place like the Three Broomsticks, Minerva believed that they should be held in a quiet room far away from temptation or fun.

Rubbing her lower back tentatively, she sighed and bit back tears. Neville was not at the meeting, having left Hogwarts for New Zealand. He had been assisting Pomona Sprout a year longer than Luna had assisted Trelawney. That had been how they'd gotten so close, because Neville had known how it felt to be the new kid.

For a time, it had been the two of them as just assistants. Occasionally they would be allowed to teach one level of students, but on the whole, they graded the papers and assisted with lessons and planning and wandered about the classrooms to help students and catch the errant prank of the day. That was why she and Neville had lived outside of Hogwarts; they weren't required to live within the castle walls, as they were only assistants.

This year, though, Luna had been given the chance to teach all levels while Trelawney took a sabbatical in Tibet. While Neville could've had every right to be jealous, he was very supportive and even took her out for a congratulatory dinner.

Though, now, with no one here, it meant Luna would be on her own, and she felt very, very alone without Neville there to bolster her spirits.

Not seeing him next to the jovial Herbology professor had been nearly more than Luna could tolerate at the moment, and she had generally spent the whole of the meeting, except where she'd presented her class syllabi with her head ducked, ignoring the other professors at large.

At the sound of ripping cardboard, Luna began walking towards the dining room. She stepped over the mail and then made a double take.

The mail was gone.

Ginny grunted, and then turned to see her blonde friend peering at nothingness and sighed heavily. "You know, you could come in here and *help* me."

Walking, still keeping her eyes trained on her lack of mail, Luna replied, "Ginny, where's my mail?" Her eyes finally flickered to the redhead's. "I'm not joking, Gin. Where's my mail?"

Rolling her eyes, Ginny put her hands on her hips in a fashion that was not that different from her mother. "You need to clean and take care of yourself better. Just because things went wrong does *not* mean that you are allowed to wallow in mud."

Luna looked around the room and gave Ginny a dirty glare. "That's nice. Where has my mail gone, Ginny?"

"And that includes not blaming yourself. You didn't do anything wrong, Luna. You both just weren't meant or something." Rolling her eyes again, she shrugged. "Whatever that means."

Luna wandered up to Ginny and used her entire height to tower over the redheaded squirt. "My *mail*, Ginny."

Tiptoeing to try to get to Luna's shoulders, Ginny frowned. "I read it because you certainly hadn't. You know there were bills in there?" Shaking her head, she went back to fighting the boxes.

"And a message from the Yenta Livery Company."

Luna froze and felt a deep stab of hate and pain. "Yeah, so what?"

Ginny tried to look nonchalant. "They found a match. 99%." She turned to look at Luna, who had gone paler than normal. "They wanted to know if you wanted to meet him. He was interested in meeting at a coffee house."

Gears clicking, Luna flickered her eyes up at Ginny. "Wait... found? Wanted? *Was*?"

A smirk played about Ginny's lips, and she replied, saucily, "Yes. I replied for you. Since you certainly wouldn't."

The blonde's jaw dropped. "You didn't!"

At Ginny's 'hah' look, Luna just stared. "I can't believe you!" she exploded. "You deliberately went behind my back and read my mail, even replied to it, and expect me to let you in my house, allow you to be my friend?"

Ginny forcefully took Luna's shoulders in a hold and shook her best friend. "Yes, I did!" she shouted back. "I took the initiative to make my friend feel better! You are so sad, Luna! You've been sad since Neville left a month and a half ago, and I can't take it anymore! I paid your bills, cleaned your dishes and your house, and yes, I replied to the Yentas and told them what dress you'd wear because even if you meet another guy, Luna, I can't have it be the wrong one again!" Ginny inhaled raggedly, her throat tight. "I can't see you so sad anymore. At least this guy will be the one, Luna. The guy you'll be able to marry. He's gotta be great if he's for you. Don't you see that?"

Mollified, Luna opened her mouth to find that no excuse seemed pertinent enough, no blame to be laid at anyone's feet but her own. Sighing, her head drooped forward. "I'm sorry, Gin."

Hugging her, Ginny nodded and then pulled back, lifting Luna's chin. "Don't be sorry to me; just get better, okay?" She smiled.

Luna's lips twitched a little.

Ginny's grin widened. "I saw that twitch. Now, help me find your light blue sundress. It makes your eyes pop and your hair shimmer."

Lifting the box, Luna looked at her friend with mild confusion. "It's not like I am meeting him today."

"Yes, you are. At 5:30 at Layla's."

"Gin, I hate you."

"Yeah. It's how I know you love me."

Remus picked at his shirtsleeve while he waited for the florist to find the bouquet he'd been told to pick up. The Yentas had sent him the reply, and he'd found the note after returning from the meeting, being held by an impatient looking owl.

Yenta Livery Company

London ~ Bath ~ Norfolk ~ Carlisle ~ Leeds

"The Best Match for Your Best Money, Guaranteed!"

Dear Mr. Remus Lupin,

Your match has replied, also interested in meeting at a coffee house!

The coffee house's name is Layla's and is at Church and Townsend in downtown London. It provides an airy and open space with plenty of light and plants along with soft music and delicious coffee. It also serves light snacks and has a friendly, yet not overbearing atmosphere.

The meeting time is set at 5:30pm.

She will be wearing a light blue sundress and will have her hair held back in barrettes.

So that she will know you, a bouquet has been ordered for you to carry and eventually give her...made of her two favorite flowers: Silver Shadow roses and Lily of the Valley.

Your match is, as we mentioned, 99% compatible, which is an elite and rare score. We can't wait to hear of your wedding plans!

Sincerely,

Maevis T. Ehe

Yenta Livery Company

London Offices

He glanced at his pocket watch and caught a glance of himself in the mirror. Sirius had helped him choose a casual, nice outfit, and he was starting to worry. She was wearing a sundress. His khaki slacks weren't pressed, and the linen shirt had long cuffs that Sirius hadn't let him button. The white v-neck undershirt made him feel a little dressier, and the Birkenstocks were helping as well. His longish hair was brushed back with some gel and was beginning to slide forward.

Merlin, he was nervous as hell. He'd not gone on a casual date in a long time, and he hadn't expected to, not with Tonks around.

It certainly did *not* help that this would be the only female he would ever be able to marry.

The pretty young witch returned and smiled as he paid for the bouquet. "She's a very lucky girl, I think," she murmured sweetly, and Remus felt his ears redden.

"Let's hope she agrees with you," he replied while leaving.

Apparating in the Leaky Cauldron, he exited and briskly walked the three blocks it was to Layla's, took a deep breath, and opened the door.

Taking a quick survey, he was impressed by the choice of his match. It was a very nice place, spacious and indeed, not overdone. Soft music played, and the smell of coffee and other baked goods permeated the air without being overpowering. He saw a young woman, well, witch, in a blue sundress and took a long look at her. Long, gorgeous legs, mouthwateringly creamy, ended in a pair of low slung heels. The blue dress made her hair, which was long enough to pass the seat of the chair, shimmer a golden hue.

He thanked God there was no bell on the door and surreptitiously went to the counter to order a mochaccino and whatever she had. Having paid and been told they'd be taken to his table by a waitress, he walked over to his match and fought the urge to flee.

Clearing his throat, he ran a nervous hand through his hair and looked up at her, trying not to stare at her legs.

And found the face of Luna Lovegood staring back at him in shock.

Extra A/N: Lyrics used for the chapter name and title are from 'The Book of Love' by Peter Gabriel. Also, Layla's is a name of a small coffee and bakery my friends and I went to at college. It is now defunct, but it was wonderful. Because Southern brought this up, Silver Shadow roses are a gorgeous, very pale lavender color with a beautiful aroma. Because of this, it makes them a difficult scent to work with in perfume and also a unique scent to wear. (You can go to a rose website to actually take a gander at them.) Thanks to Southern, for jumping into the beta ring for me. You're a sweetie.

Southern's Notes: I felt so sorry for Luna and Lupin. Tonks and Rolanda... muahaha... I'd like to read that one, thanks! Can't wait to see what's up next!

I Know My Heart Can Make You Happy

Chapter 2 of 4

Luna and Remus stumble along the next logical steps in an illogically logical relationship.

A/N: As per usual, I am dabbling in the world of Harry Potter, a land which is run by Queen Rowling.

Instructions on How to Dance

By A. R. Taloff/Fenrir

Chapter II: I Know My Heart Can Make You Happy

Luna stared at him with equal confusion, shocked, she stuttered and stood. "R-R-Remus. I mean, Professor Lupin. I mean, sir. I mean..." She shut up promptly.

His was staring at her dress. *There is no way, no way.... She istoo young. She is a colleague. How could we have not known?*

Luna caught sight of the bouquet and bit her lip. *How had he known? The Yentas, that is how.* There was no way he would've known they were her favorites. Silver Shadows was one of the extracts in her perfume, which Ginny had applied liberally on Luna's wrists and under the ears.

"This can't be."

"I can't believe that this is possible."

They'd spoken simultaneously, and both looked around the coffee shop.

Luna was the first to speak. "Well, as there is no one else here, and you have that bouquet. Am I to understand that you came here to see me, I mean, your *match*?"

Remus nodded, trying to keep his thoughts from her legs, which he'd never thought of before today, and seemed to be all he suddenly could think of. They were very nice legs, and he was thankful they had never come into view until five minutes ago.

"And you're not wearing that blue dress for no reason?" he queried.

She shook her head and sighed. "I suppose we should sit." Luna carefully tucked her skirt under her bum and sat, chewing at her lower lip, completely ignorant of Remus's ogling eyes.

He sat, moving himself so The Legs would be out of his range of sight and thus, out of his temptation. Inhaling, he caught scent of something very intoxicating and decided there and then that what was going on was merely adrenaline and lust.

Clearing his head, he looked at her. Luna looked utterly miserable, and no amount of primping had changed that. He struggled to remember the staff meeting earlier. She was sitting just as uncomfortably as she was now and had been spying furtive looks at the empty chair where Sprout's assistant, Neville, used to sit.

Neville!

The mocha came, and he sipped it thoughtfully. Luna stared at the cup placed before her, filled with chai, and held a finger up as the waitress walked away.

"I paid for it," he proffered.

She caught his eyes and exhaled. "Thank you."

Silence descended again, and Luna tried to figure out what happened to Tonks. The bubbly, interesting Auror and Lupin had been dating since before the war.

Sighing, she met his eyes. "You two took the test?"

Remus drew himself out of his thoughts and nodded. "You?"

"Neville and I " She cut off. "We took it, yes."

That's right; they had been dating. Tonks talked about that a lot. Said it wouldn't last. Well, guess she was right... sort of.

Remus opened his mouth, then shut it. He repeated the process about five more times before finally speaking.

"Well, we should probably get a place."

Luna had decided to take a calming sip of her chai when he'd popped that idea out like a golden egg.

He handed her a handkerchief as she whimpered in pain. Remus had to admit, that was the best spit take he'd ever seen. Not only had it been from the nose, but chai.

She looked like she was in so much pain as she dabbed at her nose, wincing. "I'b neber done thad before," Luna muttered to herself, trying not to giggle.

She knew very well if she started to giggle, that those giggles would turn into hysteria. Glancing up at Remus, she saw him mopping up the mess and looked at him for a moment. He looked... very nice. The shirt wasn't too stuffy, and the khakis were worn. His hair, well, she'd always liked men with longer hair. The fact that he'd dressed so nicely for a woman he thought was his perfect mate made him endearing.

Finishing the mop job, Remus tried to ignore the fact that she was watching him. It didn't help that he found the concept not altogether bad. Never having noticed her before, at least not as he did today, definitely left him feeling stupid. *All this time, quiet Luna, she'd been the girl for me.... How empty headed can one be?*

Luna gave up trying to figure out which excuses would work best and cleared her throat. "Where would we get one?" Trailing her finger around the mug, she thought for a long moment.

On the other side of the table, Remus watched her lonely eyes stare off into chai tea space. She was chewing her lip again, and he felt a little jolt in his nether regions. Realization struck him that Luna wasn't classically beautiful, but she was more mysterious, more enigmatic. And her legs, he decided, as an after thought, were really, really great.

Suddenly, Luna realized something, and her brow furrowed. He tried to look at her seriously without worrying about how those legs looked.

"Wouldn't we live at the school?"

Remus's jaw dropped. "Well," he replied carefully, "we could, but there is the problem of space. I have a single suite and a smaller one at that. I just thought, this way, we're away from prying eyes, and it will give us a chance to get used to each other in a larger space. Renovations will have to be made to the suite for you and I, just like they were for Rolanda and, uh... Tonks." He looked away trying to keep his mind from moving into self-loathing mode.

Luna looked down, feeling mildly better, because she, at least, didn't have to see Neville and Susan cavorting about. A jab of guilt hit for not feeling worse about feeling better despite his unhappiness.

"But with school in session, they'll be far slower," he finished.

"Yeah," she added lamely, letting the silence grow while she cursed her inability to think of anything profound or interesting to say *it was never this hard to deal with the silence with Neville. We would go hours without talking. That was fine.... Why isn't this?*

Remus picked at a stray thread from his khakis. *Tonks and I never had this awkward silence, did we? I don't remember ever being bothered by it before* He took a sip of his Mocha.

"How about London?" she asked suddenly.

The sip went down the entirely wrong path, and Remus coughed raggedly, pounding on his chest. He cleared his throat while Luna stared at him, horrified.

"Are you all right?" she asked, biting her lip and reaching out a hand to wipe some Mocha away.

He glanced at the hand, then at her, catching her eyes. Luna grimaced and retracted the touch, shoving the offensive hand between her thighs.

*Which were probably just as creamy and shapely as the rest of her legs...*His thoughts trailed out, and Remus banished them for later perusal.

Looking up again, he lifted a brow. "Why London? I mean, we could live in a nice wizard community. I'm sure they have temporary housing options."

Luna looked up and replied, "Well, London is nice and close to the da er, uh..." She trailed off. "It's just nice here, and there are a lot of places to see and spend time at. That way, the parents won't be confused by us living together when we're both newly single. I don't want any of my students being taken from classes because of a soiled reputation." Cursing herself internally, she glanced at the table. *Bloody hell, the dance studio! They were probably worried and confused or wondering why Neville and I hadn't come by! I'll have to stop by and... and tell them.*

Not having thought about their living together that way, Remus sat quite silent. It was true that Tonks and he had shared her house, her other apartments, and his room, and that wasn't frowned upon, much. Grimacing, he did remember the occasional offhand remark, but they were never repeated. If he and Luna did rent together in a Muggle community, it would be less likely that any of those people would know them and probable that they wouldn't see the Muggles again if things went South.

*Or North. She must be lonely or wanting children; she and Longbottom were awfully close, and they lived together*he thought, trying to think positive. He wanted children. The thought had crossed his mind more than once before he and Tonks received the letter. It was that reason he had more than once opened the second Yenta letter.

"So, er... do you want to start looking later this week? I can glance at a Muggle paper a bit this week, and if you don't mind checking as well, we could maybe start the process. Are there any, uh, things we need to look for?" Remus noticed she was getting cold. On a sunny day, it wouldn't be an issue, but the sun had disappeared sometime while they were talking, and Luna was rather obviously cold. He could see her gooseflesh and well... other telltale parts of her anatomy, showing her temperature. Standing, he removed his loose coat and ignored her gaping mouth as he slid it about her shoulders. "There," he murmured softly.

Luna had not noticed her impending chill until Remus placed the coat about her shoulders. Its obvious warmth washed over her skin, and she snuggled into it, watching him as he sat, a faint pink tinge edging his ears and coloring his cheeks. Neville had never offered her his coat, but then, she had never asked. Normally she dressed for weather, but today, Ginny had literally shoved her out the door.

She almost asked whether he did that normally, but she held back. Maybe it was just him doing it randomly. *How had he known though?* Ignoring that thought, she nodded slowly. "I'll look around. This is an appropriate time for apartment hunting, so we should be able to find a nice sized flat." Reassured by his nod, Luna continued. "Two rooms, a bath, a decent kitchen area, that sort?"

Remus felt his nostrils flare as she once again continued on her own tangent. Luna seemed to have a knack for doing that, particularly when she was nervous. Her pallor hadn't improved much, and her hands had been completely removed from above the table, probably because she'd realized they were shaking quite badly. A feeling of guilt passed through him. He must seem incredibly old to her, and he was probably nearing the age of her father or doting uncle. On top of that was the idea that they would be sharing space. Even if you included Sirius's inability to maintain space boundaries, Remus hadn't lived with another human being... other than Tonks... in a good long while. *Much less a woman that would actually be staying in the place of abode.* Dora never believed in staying entirely in one place, so while they shared a bed, often she would not be in it.

Oh, Merlin... A light bulb flashed on. Baths... What did the average flat have? *One or one and a half?* What happened if he needed to use the facilities while she was using them? *Or while she showered?* Tonks wasn't around much, so generally it didn't matter, but when she was, they had two baths so that they'd have privacy.

Luna saw his nostrils flare curiously and felt herself trail off. He appeared to be panicking. *Not a shocking idea, really. I've been panicking since the minute I realized who he was. He probably just takes a bit longer to process things.* She felt a little more nervous. "Professor?"

No response. Luna cleared her throat.

He became aware she was making funny vocalizations about the third clearing and felt sheepish for being so worried that he wasn't paying attention. "Yes?"

Unaware of the proper response, Luna stuttered a moment, then gained a thread of questioning. "Is that all right? I mean, I would hate to impose a certain apartment type or even living. Perhaps something larger?"

Remus shook his head. "No, I suggested it. I... think it's the right path. It will give us some time to get to know one another and give us time to get used to one another... yes," he ended lamely. He chanced a look at Luna, who was fingering his coat. *I sincerely hope this works.*

Luna carried the last of her boxes in and held the heavy door open for Remus, who was on his way up the stairs with some school papers. He reached the landing, braced the door so she could walk off, and admired the amount of boxes for a moment.

He knew very well he hadn't had the proper space to become a packrat of any substantial amount and so was always impressed by the amount of stuff any one person could acquire. Luna was an acquirer.

Most of the boxes were labeled generally with a small list descending with the detailed items included. He admired those, too. It was one thing to be a packrat, another entirely to be an organized packrat. He looked up as she exited the kitchen, purposefully shoving a renegade lock of hair behind her ear. Smiling at him tightly, she heaved up a box and walked into her room.

Staring about the flat, he realized he should do the same, and so began the task of unpacking his four boxes.

Three hours and a few peepings around the corner later, he noted that Luna's small mountain of effects had dwindled. He had been done for nearly a hour and found himself bored but unable to think of a way to get to know something more about her, other than the page long list of likes and dislikes that the Yentas had provided. After all, there were only so many things you could infer from someone liking the color blue and appreciating Mozart.

Ambling into the living room, he glanced about, thinking. There was only one large unmarked box left, and Remus decided to be handy and take it in, perhaps help her. He went through scenarios in his head for practice purposes.

'Thought I'd be helpful; here's your last box.'

Luna would smile a little and try to take it, but it would be a little too heavy; after all, she'd been doing a lot of moving all day, so he would grab it too, and they might brush hands. He'd ignore her legs they were in baggy, mid thigh length shorts.

Nodding, he found that one to his liking and imagined another.

'Thought I'd be helpful; here's your last box.'

Luna's smile would be tired, and she'd wipe sweat off her brow and motion towards her bed—queen sized for Feng Shui purposes. They had gone shopping together, and she'd mentioned that. He didn't quite follow, but he'd look it up. She would hop on the bed and ask him to sit, then open the box, only to find her naughtier underthings and blush furiously. He'd console her, and they'd talk about the reason she had naughty undercouth. They'd kiss a little, and...

Shaking his head and wiping the sweat off *his* brow, Remus decided that was not allowed and tried to keep his imagination rated G.

'Thought I'd be helpful; here's your last box.'

She'd smile and ask him to set it on the floor, and he would open it and begin laying out books on her bedspread, enjoying their smell and texture, perhaps finding a few he didn't own or hadn't gotten around to reading. They would talk and become... friends.

Friends. He wanted for them to become friends, rather badly. The inner confession gave him strength, and Remus picked up the box, which was actually quite big and a bit weighty, and paused at her doorway.

Luna was currently putting books on her bookcase, in some specific order, and he hated to interrupt her. Glancing about the room, he smiled at what he saw. She believed in softer color palettes and had infused the room with it. Airy, late spring-colored curtains and sky blue comforter, cream-colored walls and a rag rug made the room lived in. He liked it, quite a bit.

Feeling momentarily like a peeping Tom, he knocked on the doorframe. Luna started, whipping her head about to see who it was, a book at the ready. Blinking owlishly at him, she took a breath. "Oh, yes. Um. What can I do for you?" She stood up, setting the book down, calmly eyeing him.

Remus smiled at her. "I thought I'd bring your last box in, be a helpful bugger."

Luna nodded and screwed her face up at the box, then realized what it was. Remus didn't quite understand the loss of color to her face or the way she furrowed her brow more and turned away from him. "Thanks, just set it on the bed," came a strained command.

Doing as she had requested, he brushed his hands off and glanced about, then at her as she fidgeted with the curtains. Reaching out, he began lifting off the box cover as he said amiably, "How 'bout I help you with the last one?"

Only to find her leaping across the room to push the lid down. "NO!" she exclaimed, angrily. Biting her lip, she breathed. "Just leave it alone, will you?"

Taken aback, Remus stared. "I just wanted to help."

Luna glared. "I didn't ask for it."

Rolling his eyes, Remus replied, "Sorry, what's in there "

"Nothing!" Luna ground out. "It's none of your business. Just old stuff."

Drawing his lips into a tight line, he straightened. "I was going to go grab a bite. Would you be interested?"

"No," came the quick fire response. Then, to soften it barely, she added, "Thank you though."

Turning and leaving the room, he muttered a halfhearted, "You're welcome."

This was not what he planned.

A/N: Sorry this took so darn long to post. I've had the usual business of holidays, finals, and too many projects, but here you all are, and thank you for reading, in advance, along with thanks going out to my darling Beta.

Southern's Notes: I'm happy to see it continued. Now, I can't wait to see what happens next.

'Cause We All Struggle With Forward Motion

Chapter 3 of 4

Luna and Remus deal with each other's space and closeness issues, as true feelings surface and a vent session with the Potions master occur.

A/N: Don't own Potterverse. Just play there.

Instructions on How to Dance

By: AR Taloff/ Fenrir

Chapter III: 'Cause We All Struggle With Forward Motion

I've been banging my head against the wall

for so long it seems I knocked it down, yeah it got knocked down.

Remus tugged on a t-shirt, a pair of socks, brushed off his pants, and walked out the door of his bedroom.

The living room windows were open, letting in the smells from the bakery and market from down the road. Scent was important to him. Even in his original form, Remus had telltale reminders that part of the month he was an animal. Scent was a curse, but it was also a blessing at times.

Times like these where he could smell the baking goods and the fresh vegetables and Luna's perfume and candles, neither of which were too strong. The morning smells of late summer. He liked these things and remembered that if they never fell in love, that at least this tenuous companionship, this flat, and these smells would always be here, just waiting for morning.

Luna had gone jogging...she always did these mornings...then she came home and showered before putting her hair in a long braid and getting ready for school. He hadn't remembered reading about her liking jogging and wondered if that was part of that point one percent that hadn't been in their compatibility.

As it had been for the last few mornings, Luna was out on the rooftop, having a cup of chai tea. He found himself walking that way, too, climbing up the stool to grip the roof for leverage and push off the railing around the balcony. She was there, letting the morning sun and slight breeze dry her hair with a small box containing two croissants and two cream-filled donuts---one chocolate, the other Bavarian cream---by her side and a mochaccino in her right hand.

He had seen her clambering up there like a cat one day and gone with her, only to discover he liked the spot quite well. The more he learned of Luna, the more he found that she could do simple things that left him feeling a little different than he had before. Remus would have never gone on the roof of his flat to enjoy anything, much less a sun and the town below. Sipping the mocha while sitting next to her, he wondered abstractly if that was what true love and all that was about, letting yourself change in good ways due to someone else.

Taking a sip of her tea, Luna felt like her skin was prickling up as Remus continued to look at her, despite having sat down. His watching her was growing more and more disconcerting as their time together went on. He didn't watch her always, but when he did, Luna felt like her nerves were on fire.

For the last week or two, they'd finished putting their flat together. It was homey, and she liked that. There were some paintings they'd found at a flea market and some vases and seashells they'd found at a home decorating store. Thyme, rosemary, chives, and basil were in little pots next to the window.

And *that* box had been put away in her closet.

Two days after yelling at him, she wandered into his room while he was folding laundry and apologized with some chocolate from a chocolatier she'd heard of. A tentative truce had been formed, and she had lied about the contents of the box. Luna admitted, disgustedly, that she wasn't tough enough to not lie. Not yet.

Every morning since three days after they'd moved in, she went to the studio.

Lynette LaToure was 65 when Luna and Neville had decided to join dance classes. Now, at 67, she had been fond of the couple. None but two people had been told about them being magically inclined; Lynette was one of them. Very little, Luna mused, got by the owner of Mamette's Hardwood Floor, and Luna had to practice every nuance of every phrase. It was hard to not cry when she first started to think of the lie she'd tell. No one needed to know, at least not yet, that Neville and she had broken up, and now she was stuck with an old man. No one needed to know that they weren't getting married. At least not yet.

But the one problem with lies, she realized, is that soon it became hard to tell the truth, even to yourself.

Luna was struggling with her books. Again. It didn't take much with Divination as the subject. There were any number of long and boring texts on the subject, and since she was focusing more on the how and why of the art, rather than forcing the talent on her students, it became necessary to cull the idiocy from the good. She'd had a large selection of her own books, but still, there were seven levels of Divination, five of which dealt with the actual learning of all the types, three which required the actual ability.

So naturally, the problem of finding even more books was at hand. Reaching her office door, Luna jumbled the books around to find her wand. Seconds from properly grasping the damn thing, her tenuous hold on the texts broke, and they spilled unceremoniously to the ground.

Slumping, Luna knelt and began picking them up.

It had been a long day, but she'd received an owl from Mrs. Pince that the books she had ordered had shown up. Not wishing to put the librarian out, Luna had finished up at the studio and Apparated over to the flat and to her office. Her legs were tired due to a good workout, and her mind was still going through the steps. Despite all this, she heard the low scrape of leather against cobblestone and turned her head, wand at the ready.

Nothingness.

Luna forced her breathing to get quiet and tried to hear around her heartbeat. Dark places still gave her the chills, and despite the torchlight, she was still aware that it was past eleven and night had turned everything black. Staring into the darkness, she tried to see if there was anyone there and found nothing.

Without turning away from the place, she had heard the noise, she began fumbling with the books and keeping her wand at the ready, *Expelliarmus* at her lips. Realizing she was only getting so far she scooted back a ways as her hand came in contact with another.

Turning, she screamed the spell and pointed at the place the offending party might have been and heard a shout and a thud as the creature was thrown against a wall. Luna panted, pressing against the wall and trying to calm her racing heart.

Glancing about she noticed another wand and grabbed at it, then approached the figure cautiously. Two paces away, it coughed raggedly and moved, and Luna's eyes narrowed. *That cough sounded familiar...* She knelt gingerly at the person's side and nudged him with the pair of wands. "Oi... are you okay?"

It coughed again and turned its head towards her, revealing a pair of glittering gold eyes. Remus's eyes. "In a manner of speaking."

Her jaw dropped and face blanched at that, and Remus felt the nasty comment that was bubbling up dissipate. He also noted her inching back. *Merlin, does she do that with everyone, or do I just horrify her that much?* Rubbing the back of his neck, he sat up slowly, vision clearing. Sighing, he looked at her and smiled amiably. "Sorry for scaring you. I didn't know what was keeping you and saw your note that said you were at Hogwarts."

Nodding slowly, Luna made a motion with the wands. "Sorry for... sending you across the room."

Smiling, Remus felt the back of his head gently and chuckled. "Well, it will certainly teach me to sneak up on you." Her face flushed, and she ducked her head. "I didn't mean to make you feel bad; you did the smart thing. It might not have been me."

Luna nodded again and stood up. Remus tried to do the same and managed fine until his head suddenly felt detached from his body. He heard Luna muffle a cry, and realized, belatedly, that it was muffled against his shirt... and that he was slowly descending back to the floor with her try to stop his fall.

I don't know what he was thinking, checking up on me like this. Merlin knows it's not like he's got anything to worry about. I can take care of myself, and why isn't he waking up?! Luna paced back and forth, thinking and mumbling things to herself at intervals. She had managed to stop him from cracking his skull on the cobblestones again but succeeded also in being pinned down by him. *Mobilicorpus* helped get him to her office, and a Floo to Poppy had sent the mediwitch up to check and make sure Remus wasn't entirely broken.

She had looked him over, given Luna a funny look, tsk'ing the entire time, and after, she'd called Snape up to make her some more of the potion she needed. Then, Snape

had strode in, giving her snide looks; the only thing she'd thought that could have made things worse would be for Albus to appear, which he had, the wanker.

Albus would always be her favorite his wit, his laughter, everything was sweet and guileless, and the affable front covered his steel will and awesome power. What she hadn't known was his nosiness would become such an issue. He, of all the staff, knew about her and Remus, and the whole time and every time they saw each other, much to her consternation, he would hint, whisper loudly, and talk about Remus and she, saying and asking and inferring everything about them living together.

Luna loved him, she did. She just thought that when he was in Yenta mode, he was a wanker. And that, to her, felt justified.

So there they had sat...Snape, Albus, Poppy, and her...staring at Remus. Then the questions had begun. *Why was Remus by her office? What had brought him over here? Were they working on a project together? Did they want the kitchen to send up tea and cookies when Remus awoke? Would he be staying the night at his new flat, I mean, office?* Luna fended them off, doing what she was learning to do best, which was fudge, fib, and flat out lie. Finally the barrage had ended, and Poppy and Snape had left.

But Albus had stayed and asked more questions. Questions about Neville and Susan, questions about her and Remus. It seemed like he just wouldn't leave her alone. Then when she was imminently close to telling him that it was none of his damn business if she brought up her life with Neville to Remus, Albus yawned and made apologies of tiredness and left.

Here she paced now, annoyed with the thoughts that raced through her head and the guilt that had peeked out of its cage. She was guilty feeling for not telling him the truth, not telling him that she still loved Neville, that she didn't want him. That she hated jogging any day and went to the dancing studio. That she wasn't sorry for lying.

Luna slumped on a chair and sighed. It was a sad truth. She felt guilty for lying, but not sorry. Her heart was something she didn't even think about anymore, because the mere mention of it and its broken state might send her overboard. And then she might hate the one man she loved, very deeply. Throat tightening, Luna willed those thoughts away.

Watching the sleeping Remus, Luna wondered how the Yentas figured they would work. He was old, much older than Neville, and he didn't like dancing, she was sure. Yes, they were both professors, but that surely couldn't count for much. And yes, they both enjoyed reading, and plants, and sitting outdoors, and curling up with a good book under a comfy blanket, and yes, when she was a little girl her dream prince was a sandy, shaggy-haired bloke who would tell her that it was okay to like things that others thought were silly.

Oh, damn, Luna, just admit it. They weren't entirely off their rockers.

She didn't mind Remus. He was nice company, and he cleaned up after himself and wasn't out of shape. But he wasn't soft either. Neville, while fit, always had a bit of a tummy to him--Remus didn't. There was a certain leanness to him, one that lent to a kind of finished look. Despite the amount of chocolate he consumed, he never seemed to gain a pound.

Sighing, she looked up and realized he was staring at her. Luna blinked to make sure it wasn't a trick of light and then asked, quietly, how he was doing.

"Fine. My head feels a bit tricky, but fine. Where are we?" He didn't look around, just watched her, and for once, Luna didn't feel unnerved.

"My study. I had a small bed in here for when I would work late."

He blinked, but didn't shift his head, after a moment; he made a small noise of assent. "Sorry for falling on you."

"Sorry for not being able to hold you up." Luna's lips twitched a little as she realized they both seemed to apologize a lot. Maybe that was part of how they were compatible. *Incurably apologetic. Check.* Banishing that thought, she continued, "Poppy said when you woke up that you should take this." Holding up a glass to his lips, she didn't notice that he was still watching her.

Remus really didn't know what to think of her at times. One minute, she could seem so willing for them to work out, and the next, practically allergic to the very thought. There were times when he would make her tea and curl up on the other side of the couch and read a book, and she would share the blanket with him. Then later that night, she would get moody and cross and go jogging. She ran so much, he wondered if he should try running, too. Maybe it would help her to know he was interested in getting to know her.

She was beautiful, he thought, as she patiently held the glass while he swallowed the nasty concoction. It wasn't the first time he'd thought it, nor, he imagined, would it be the last. Her golden blond hair was in a ponytail, and her robes weren't anything particularly revealing. She wore no makeup, and she used a very normal kind of chapstick. But she was beautiful to him. The more he learned about her, the more he liked. The Yentas weren't crazy, and seeing Tonks every day did bother him, but it helped him to see that she was happy and that they weren't meant to be together for always.

When he was finished, he made a grimace and watched Luna smile. "Tastes like an old shoe. Snape made it for me, didn't he?"

"I'd be more curious as to how you know what flavor is 'old shoe,' but yes, he showed up and made it for you on site."

Remus watched her brush her hands off on her robes and smiled. It was the first joke she'd cracked, ever. *Does that mean...*? He kept quiet as she stood, paced a bit, then purposefully inhaled and turned to him.

"Albus said we have tomorrow off by order of the headmaster since we're both up inordinately late, and he wants us to be at the top of our game. He'll make proper excuses and find substitutes. When you're ready to, we can Floo to the flat. I'm going to quickly get some of my books and send them through. Why don't you rest?" Luna breathed and turned to the office room of the study, once again on edge.

Sighing, Remus closed his eyes. So much for hope.

"And then she made that face and said that *she just needs time by herself*. You know, I'm not getting any younger, Snape. I would like companionship in my life." Remus was waiting for the potion for his head again, and before realizing it, he'd begun venting to the Potions master.

Snape, meanwhile, was beginning to bristle further at the inordinate amount of information being thrown at him and was desperately trying to ignore all of it while simultaneously act as though he was interested but not enough for said information to continue being given. It was not working. "Lupin, did it ever occur to you that she is a new professor, and she worries about her job and her sudden attachments to you?" Wondering why he cared enough to make a sound argument, he almost missed the fact that the D.A.D.A. professor had clammed up.

Glancing surreptitiously at Lupin, he mentally sighed. "Or did it never cross your mind that she might not just be trying to ignore you?" Pausing, he continued, "Though one can only hope she's learnt to, she was a little slow on the uptake." Snape handed him the bottle without flourish and lifted a sarcastic eyebrow.

Remus nearly missed the insult to Luna while he pondered what Severus had first said and glared at the greasy git. "Luna isn't slow, and at least she doesn't hiss at natural sunlight." With that, he walked out of the room, slamming the door.

Luna went through the motions of the Laendler last. That was the largest part of her lie, that Neville was coming back and that they would compete. If such was true, she needed to practice their routines. The Laendler was the hardest to do. It was the one that had taken them the shortest time to learn, but it was ultimately the dance that made them want to dance. The Rumba was where they'd fallen in love, but the Laendler was their first time. Their first medal, their first dance, their first taste of glory in

some other field than magic.

Finishing the dance slowly, she looked up to see Gregory, a fellow dancer, watching. Smiling, she began walking around slowly, so that stretching later wouldn't be so harsh. "Hi."

Gregory smiled back and joined her walking. "Hi, heard Neville was out at a research site."

Luna nodded. "It's in New Zealand; he'll be back in a month." She breathed and hoped he didn't notice the slight tremble in her voice. Glancing at him to check, Luna realized he was too busy thinking to actually pay attention to things like that.

"I was wondering if you wanted to practice together? You know, just until Neville gets back and I find a new partner." He stopped walking, but Luna continued on.

Shit, she thought. *Shit, shit, shit*. This was bad. *If I say yes, this will mean if he doesn't find a partner in a month and Neville hasn't shown up I'm going to be his partner. Remus certainly won't dance, so even if that comes up, I'll be with Greg. If I say no somebody will wonder why, and they'll start asking questions.* She grimaced. *Merlin, I'm so sick of questions.*

Thinking further, Luna realized it could be worse. Gregory was talented, he was dark haired and eyed with a tall frame, and he was very fluid. His last partner had gotten into a car accident and that had been the end of their dancing. He knew the dances. He knew some she didn't, and she knew the folk dances. They could work out, even if it might be strange without Neville.

Without Neville was what it really boiled down to.

But if Neville found out Greg and she were dancing, he might get jealous. He might remember the work they'd done, all they'd accomplished, all the history they'd had. He would come back.

He has to come back. He loves me.

"Sure."

A/N: Thanks go out to Sun, my lovely beta, and the readers. I hope this chapter makes you smile. The lyrics in the title and the beginning of the chapter belong to Reliant K, their song, 'Forward Motion,' is one I'd recommend to anyone.

Southern Witch says: Owwooooo, werewolves of London... in dancing class. (I'm singing music in my head!)

What is Left When Everything Else Falls Down?

Chapter 4 of 4

Decisions are made in the moment and lies are exposed when Luna's Muggle dressmaker appears.

A/N: Don't own Potterverse. Just play there.

Instructions on How to Dance

By: AR Taloff/ Fenrir

Chapter IV: What is Left When Everything Falls Down?

Luna walked home, wearing workout clothes and a pair of tennis shoes that she had owned for several years. All she had taken was a five minute run to get herself sweaty again, then had stopped and walked the rest of the way. Remus would never guess what she was doing.

The night had gone well. She and Gregory were a little off, but that would change once Neville returned. Neville and her weren't as proficient as some, but their base of trust was always there, in their steps. They would be able to work on both when he came back from New Zealand.

Jogging up the set of stairs to the flat, she unlocked the door and looked at the scene before her.

The table in the kitchen was set deliciously with two Cornish hens and green beans, a fresh loaf of French bread, and some rice dish. On closer inspection, one wineglass was missing, and the candles were burnt low. The food was no longer steaming hot and the butter for the green beans was slightly congealed.

Oh, piss it. Remus had asked if I planned to go to the library tonight, and I had said no. Shit.

Remus watched from their couch as Luna had come in, carrying a rucksack and wearing jogging clothes. Her long hair was braided again, and she smelled faintly of sweat and something else, something he never could put his finger on, but it always was there. He had asked her if she was going out, she had told him no. It was simple that way. Two months had gone by since they had moved in. The moonrise was approaching, and last month he'd been at a conference, so he had wanted to warn her about how the routine usually went. Snape would show up, give him a potion every day, for four days before, four days after, the full moon. The newer potion allowed for Remus to participate in the world around him and caused less stress on his body.

So he made dinner all by himself, downing nearly half a bottle of wine and taking tastes of the different dishes while they cooked. Giddiness had driven him the whole way, or at least the gift in his pocket had.

He was beginning to love Luna. It hadn't taken too long to like her, to find her attractive, but there were things about her that stuck with him. Her dorky snort and giggle combination, her Jell-o dance, and her laundry shuffle were things he thought of all the time. The plan this weekend was to go get a cat, because she liked them. Remus had never had a pet before and took this as a new adventure, which was generally his entire life with Luna. Escapades and new experiences happened every day they spent time together.

So he'd made her dinner after buying the ring. It was only right.

But she hadn't shown up.

Watching her finger the linen napkins, he felt slightly vindicated that she was guilty looking.

Luna glanced up to see Remus watching her from the living room. He was dressed nice, the casual way he had been when they had met for their 'date'. His golden eyes glittered from the sparse candlelight, and she stood stunned at the strange feeling that him waiting and watching her that way left inside her.

Repressing it, she approached him, sitting on the arm of his chair. "I'm sorry."

"Where is he?" Luna muttered eyeing her watch. She was going to be late.

Remus had asked her to wait before she left tonight, and still feeling the burn of guilt from two nights back, she'd agreed.

Stalking into the kitchen, she began watering the plants, carefully picking off any dead leaves with ease*Whatever is keeping him better be good. Gregory and I still need practice. It might be months away, but the tournament is approaching, and I've got to stay in shape. I can't practice during the day, or night, when I'm here.* Sighing, she stopped for a moment and remembered that *she* was the reason for that. Nothing else.

Tamping that guilt down more, she continued pinching off leaves, but a gentle whoosh of hot air made her jump.

She turned, staring around the kitchen. Plates and cups were air drying in the strainer and the stove was clean, but the overhanging above the doorway was still swaying. Flickering a look to the open window, Luna lifted a hand to see if there was a breeze.

No luck.

Damn.

Remus always said something when he walked in the door, he never used the Floo network to come home anymore, so whatever had caused the breeze wasn't him. No one else knew where they lived, nor did they have their Floo address in the professor lists.

And I was too busy thinking to listen for a door. Where is my wand? Luna looked around, trying to find something to chuck at the intruder, if there was one*What do you mean, if? Didn't Ms. Jenkins downstairs say that there had been a weird bloke poking about and that Dorrie Evans's place had gotten broken into? She just lives down the way.*

Hearing a creak in the living room she bit her lip.*Well no creepy fellow is going to get in here without a fight.*"Accio Wand," she whispered.

It zoomed to her just about the time a pair of black leather shoes and their owners stepped to the kitchen doorway.

"If you would refrain from ruining my shoes, Lovegood, I would greatly appreciate it," echoed the crabby and sarcastic Potions master. Snape began to lift the overhang and found a wand prodding him. Carefully moving back, he received a cold look from the blonde wielding the implement at his throat.

"What are you doing at my flat, Severus?" The question was delivered with a growl, and Snape felt unnerved by the anger writ on Lovegood's face.

Composing himself as best he could, he placed a single finger on the wand and moved it away from his jugular. "Could we dispense with the barbarism? I only came to give Remus the decoction. He wasn't at his study, and the elves seemed to think he went home."

Glancing about, he huffed out an annoyed sigh, then turned when the blonde said nothing. She had a skeptical look now, the wand safely at her side.

"Decoction? You have to give it to him? What decoction?"

Now in the irritating position of bafflement, Severus once again mustered sarcasm, gave a good eyeroll and lifted a brow. "To stop him from chewing your shoes and ruining your carpets once a month." Further frustrated by her lack of deduction skills, he added, "He's a lycanthrope."

Snape wasn't sure what he had been expecting from the mostly morose and spacey Divination substitute. It certainly was not near violent rage that stained her cheeks red and made her mouth a thin line, and he never knew she could poke so damn hard as her finger jabbed him right above the clavicle in a squishy spot he'd never known about.

"I KNOW that you pale, monotoned crow! I can't believe you MEN! All your sweet gestures and your NICE things, and you just waltz into new areas without THINKING OF ANYBLOODYBODY ELSE!" She jabbed him again. "Well, you can tell Mr. Lupin that I am going out and he can bloody well go to one of the nine hells with his 'talk.'"

Severus's jaw remained slack as she slammed down her wand onto the mantel, causing the pictures to rattle, and pulled open the door only to violently slam it shut.

Then the squishy spot started to ache.

Severus was still wondering if Luna had a vicious aunt in her family when the door handle jiggled and a muffled voice shouted something about 'wedding' and 'New Zealand' with a few more curses added.

Finally the door sprung open and a petit brunette with two pigtails found Severus looking very dour in the middle of flat, still rubbing the throbbing squishy spot.

"Who on God's usually lovely green Earth are you? And why are you in Luna and Neville's flat? Are you her Uncle? Or her Dad? Did you use the key, because that's pretty tricky. It being locked still, and all."

Snape had never liked people who talked, which included generally everyone, so a girl he'd never met doing it was really vile, considering the recent poking. "Shut up, you silly girl! *Silencio!*"

She stopped talking, and Severus felt odd.*That's strange. She didn't counter that.* He noticed the dress bag in her hand next, and that the contents were glittery and white. Eyes flickered up to the girl who wasn't dancing about with fear in her eyes about not being able to utter a word. Maybe she was slow.

"Are you slow?"

She shook her head.

Severus shifted his eyes around the room. "Are you a witch?"

Another negative shake made his insides curl.*Shit.*

"Do you know about witches and wizards?"

The nod made his stomach uncurl a bit, but its contents, fresh tuna, rye, and a tomato, continued to curdle.

"Why are you here?"

She sighed with extreme exasperation and put the dress bag hand on her hip and pointed to her mouth with the free hand.

Severus straightened a bit and muttered around the growing stench of desperation and annoyance that was wafting up from the tight ball in his throat. *"Finite Incantatem!"*

Tucking some hair behind her ear, Bridget sighed. "Well, you're a pretty rotten uncle if you do that to every Maid of Honor who uses a hairpin to open the door." Her giddy laugh rang in the empty room.

Gritting his teeth, Snape barely controlled the urge to silence her, mostly by allowing any possible remarks from Dumbledore to enter his mind, especially ones about how a girl with a sparkly dress could even remotely hurt him badly. "I'm not her," Snape drew out the word with a disgusted sigh, "uncle."

"Well, then you must be Neville's. Where is that pudgy tosser anyways? I should fong him for not telling any of us that they moved. Good God but it's beautiful in here, don't you think? Anyways, I'm here to give Luna her final fitting. That girl is always running off, and I had to go through Lynette to find her. Then I heard Neville was off in New Zealand for a dig and thought, what the hell, girl night! After all, we can have an early bachelorette party!"

Bridget by and large had a very talkative family, and most of the discussions at reunions seemed to them as a perfect flow, but to any outsider, it was a cacophony of sound, wherein the only thing accomplished was giving everyone a reason to buy giant tubs of Ibuprofen. Well aware that a slower version of her stream of thought was probably in due order, she looked up, only to see the black haired man rubbing his collar bone. "Are you all right?"

Turning, still churlish with distaste for this whole situation and trying to find an alternate escape route before Lupin appeared and everything went to hell in a neat basket with plenty of flaming, ornately bagged shit, Snape grunted a negative response and then winced as a, "What is going on in here, Severus... Who is this girl?" was spoken at the still wide open door.

Shit.

Luna waltzed with Gregory, enjoying the feeling of being led. Gregory's height was harder to get used to, and her feet were still giving him trouble, but they were getting into the movement, and their trust was growing. He'd asked her for a drink tonight, and Luna was still dodging his continued requests of dinner or lunch, saying she was busy with work, or she had to get home to call Neville. Greg was becoming more incessant, and she was sure he had more than just an inkling that Luna had been spouting lies. She had a feeling he knew and wondered if he would start putting her in the position of dating him to get him to shut up.

That would be incredibly tricky... she thought, finishing with a flourished spin. Smiling at him, she looked up to where Lynette had been sitting at the counter, talking to customers and watching her upper echelon students practice. A brunette was being pointed to where Greg and she were.

Bridget. Luna felt everything go numb and come back to life as she pushed past Greg and ran up to the only other person who knew about her magic life. "Bridge, it's so good to see you!"

Bridget looked sick to her stomach. "Why didn't you tell me, Luna? I'm so sorry."

Luna smiled and shook her head. "What do you mean, I..." voice trailing, she looked up and saw Remus. Snape was standing behind him, a delighted little smirk on his face.

Stepping back, Luna stammered "Re-Remus, I... uh..." With that she lost her breath and ability to speak as she felt every lie disintegrate before her eyes.

Jaw set, Remus looked around and saw a lanky boy walking up with a proprietary look in his eyes, smelled the room and knew this was where Luna went, this was the scent he never could place. Bridget had spilled the truth, not Luna. She'd told Remus about dancing, Neville, and Luna's brilliant little lies. It was all lies. In a frenzy he'd stalked into her room and found that box, the horrible box that started the deceit, and opened it, trying not to destroy everything inside it.

Pictures. Trophies. Newspaper cutouts and magazine articles featuring the pair. Luna's memories of Neville. He wanted to shred it all. Instead he asked where.

Bridget had asked who.

The older lady behind the counter walked up to him. "Are you a relative of Luna's, sir? We're so proud of her here. Greg, come over here and show Luna's... are you her uncle?"

Not turning to look at the woman, Remus strode up to Luna and grabbed her left hand, splayed her fingers. Pulling out the ring he wanted to give her two nights back, he roughly slid it on her fourth finger. "Greg won't be needed." His eyes glittered as realization began to dawn in Luna's face. "And I'm her fiancé."

A/N: You're probably like, jeez, took you long enough! I hope this chapter is as good as the rest, and will try to update by the end of June.