

# One Drop Too Few

*by IrishEspressoGirl*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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Sirius plopped onto the bench in the Great Hall with a sigh of exasperation. "I feel like I've been bitten by a mackled malaclaw."

James narrowed his eyes at his friend. "Do you know what a mackled malaclaw *is*, Padfoot?"

"No, but that doesn't mean I can't feel like I've been bitten by one, eh, mate?"

James snorted as Remus explained mildly that the crustacean's bite would give its victim bad luck for a week.

James nodded knowingly. "Who is she, then, mate?"

Sirius groaned and lightly pounded his head on the table. "Marlene McKinnon," came the barely-audible reply.

"Again? What happened this time?"

Following much lamenting on Sirius's part and laughter from his friends, Sirius finally gave in to their prodding. "Last night I was sneaking back from the kitchens...."

*Sirius stepped from behind the fruit-bowl painting, arms laden with goods lavished upon him by the obliging Hogwarts house-elves. Pulling a map from his robes and tapping it lightly with his wand, Sirius whispered, "I solemnly swear I am up to no good." Since most were home for the holidays, Sirius was reasonably sure no one would be about, but he checked out of habit.*

*Glancing down at the Map, he gave a light start and narrowly missed spilling his treats on the ground. "Marlene McKinnon" floated along the fifth-floor corridor, apparently moving toward the Prefect's Bathroom.*

"I knew I'd need a bit of help this time, so I stowed the goods and went down to the dungeons, intending to nick Slughorn's stash of luck potion."

*The molten gold Felix Felicis bubbled entrancingly; tiny droplets leapt to and fro over the cauldron, but none spilt. Sirius captured a few dancing droplets in a small crystal vial. Slughorn had warned them what too much would do, and Sirius only needed enough to last the night.*

*"Happy Christmas," he whispered to himself before upending the small vial.*

*Immediately, a golden warmth spread throughout his limbs, giving the illusion of invincibility—and like he could have anything he wanted.*

"Hold up!" James interrupted. "Where was I when all this was going on?"

Sirius shrugged, glancing pointedly toward the red-haired Head Girl.

"I didn't check the Map again. With Felix helping, there wasn't need."

*Marlene's dark hair shimmered over bare shoulders as she moved gracefully from the bubble-filled pool.*

*Sirius, mesmerized by the glimmering light reflected from the droplets that clung to her exposed skin, moved silently toward the witch.*

*Encouraged by Marlene's alluring smile, Sirius pressed his lips tightly to hers. After a few minutes, Sirius, emboldened by the knowledge of the potion's aid, allowed his hands to drift lower on her backside.*

*The movement seemed to awaken Marlene from a trance, for she jumped away and turned steely grey eyes on her erstwhile lover.*

Sirius choked on his words and stuttered to an abrupt halt.

"What happened then, mate?" James asked conspiratorially.

Sirius shook his head, staring slack-jawed at the witch behind James.

"Nothing." Marlene's cold word effectively froze the conversation.

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**Author's Notes:** Originally submitted to [Romancing the Wizard](#) for their Challenge Twenty-One: Winter Holidays Past. The challenge was to write a 500-word ficlet that took place during the winter holidays from the Founders to the Marauders, contained a magical element, and used the prompt "molten gold Felix Felicis." Many thanks to SealsleWitch for proof-reading.