

To Ev'ry Wandering Bark, A Star

by juniperus

Two lost souls, resigned to loneliness, meet by chance: a tale of rapport and
rediscovery told by two voices.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Christmas. *Again.*

I'm alone.

Again.

As I've been every year since Mum died... my first year teaching.

Twenty years.

It's not the solitude so much as not recalling when I was last embraced.

I'm out of Old Ogden's Finest. It's bitter cold (almost as bitter as I?) outside, but right now *Again*

I'm alone, though I've been invited to the Burrow

again

I declined, as I have each year since our... estrangement. It's too loud, too awkward.

Too *lonely.*

The uncomfortable silence after each stiff embrace hurts more than they know.

I don't usually imbibe, but tonight...tonight of all nights...

I need a drink. The door to the Hog's Head banged as the wind wrenched it from my grasp.

The night is foul, frigid, and the wind howls through Hogsmeade like a Banshee...not loud enough to distract the hags from their alcohol-soaked meditations, I see.

I look forward to joining them in oblivion. I can barely discern the blackness of his cloak under the snow...but I would know him anywhere.

I can't help but stare, transfixed, as he collects firewhiskey and a tumbler from the barman, and I tap a miraculous reservoir of Gryffindor courage.

I motion for him to join me.

There, in the corner, a hand waves me over.

Is that a Weasley?

Percy. I didn't plan for...don't care for...company tonight, but *this* Weasley I can tolerate. Intelligent, quiet... if he wasn't so bloody prim... no.

Best not think on that...there's no one for you, old man. He glowers when he sees me.

Of course he's allergic to Weasleys.

Even *he* should know that apart from the name and the ginger hair I have as little in common with my family as I do the bloody Malfoys.

I can't help staring...again...as he approaches my table.

Misery loves company, after all. He's changed.

No longer tight-laced, he's cynically witty. He's good company on a lonely night, and dutifully refills our tumblers as we talk.

I recall the twins harassing him about fancying *me*, of all people. I didn't believe it at the time.

And he's as alone as I.

Interesting... He's changed.

These years following the battle have been kinder than those preceding it...he's put on weight, no longer appearing so death-pursued and haggard.

And he's as alone as I.

I had rather fancied him my last year at Hogwarts...never stopped, truth be told.

Perhaps he'd be interested...

No, *impossible. Improbable.* And yet... After the third drink has passed my lips I'm warm, but it's not just the firewhiskey.

It might have something to do with his hand on my leg.

The invitation to continue conversing at his flat doesn't come as a surprise.

Being pinned against the wall upon arrival, however, *does*. I watch him...the way he purses his mouth before drinking. The bow of his lip as he speaks is mesmerizing.

As is the feel of his strong thigh under my hand.

I patiently wait for his answer.

But I can muster no more patience once I get him inside.

So hot...Merlin!...his kisses flare like afterimages that burn behind my eyelids. I can hardly stand...hardly stand the onslaught...but I shan't allow myself to collapse here in his foyer.

His fingers travel between us, unwrapping me like a package... carefully, so as to not tear the paper. I can't get enough of the taste of him. I uncover the rough stubble on his neck...button by button...and lick the salt from his skin.

He shudders and his legs shake. I'm torn between my overwhelming need for him and wanting...needing...to give the care he deserves.

I've been torn before. No mercy, no hesitation, no chance to breathe as he drives me forward, relentless; pulling and pushing and taking and making me *feel*.

Sweet Circe! His mouth, have I ever...

I've bourn nights lacking in mercy...but never like this. I thought I had *felt* before...but never like *this*. I fist the front of his robes and drag him to the bedroom, my mouth never leaving his. His fingers ghost down my chest as I push the wool from his shoulders.

When the air dances along the wet trails my mouth has left, he groans.

Perhaps that was me.

I feel feverish, my skin erupts into gooseflesh in the cool air of the room, his hot mouth lavng my chest leaves chill wetness in its wake. I cannot recall when such passion...such care...was spent on me without coin exchanged. No...there was never caring.

I should know. As I kiss down his chest, rub my face against the hair trailing down from his navel, I delight in his muffled sighs and feel trembling as he struggles to maintain control. I look forward to watching it crumble...those who show the least emotion shelter depths.

I should know.

There is nothing...nothing but the tickle of his exhale as he buries his nose against my pubis and his wet mouth engulfing me, nothing but the feel of his hands clutching my buttocks hard enough to bruise, nothing but *him*.

Tonight I want for nothing, want nothing. *Oreverything.* Imagining him back at Hogwarts, robes billowing as he stalked around the classroom, sets a fire to my belly fiercer tonight than any night before. Or maybe it's the feel of his cock in my mouth that has set me alight.

His was always the upper hand. But not tonight.

Limbs tangle, noses bump, glasses fly, and he has misplaced the Muggle lubricant...but I can recall naught so graceful as the swish and flick as he casts *Lubricus*, naught that has brought hope like his worry that he has offended me. *Me!*

Nought so healing as his filling me. I don't know where he ends and I begin...resulting in elbows and ribs and shins painfully connecting the bed frame...but he arches under

my touch, he growls at my hesitation, he whimpers his need, his eyes hold mine as I move above him.

He feels like coming home.

At this moment I am *nothing*...he is *everything*.

It is enough. I don't deserve this...him...but I cannot bring myself to martyr what happiness I might yet glean from my miserable existence.

I watch him sleep, committing to memory every freckle, the curve of his lip... the taste of his skin. I don't know what tomorrow brings, but today...today After padding back from the loo I lay awake, listening to his snoring and noting that in the peace of sleep he loses his frown.

I felt desperation behind his kisses, certainty that this was a fluke...tomorrow I'll convince him otherwise. However many more we'll share, today is special...

I will remember it as the best Christmas, ever.