

Professor Lupin is a What?

by blue artemis

In her third year, Hermione realizes what Professor Lupin is after Professor Snape assigns his essay on werewolves. He in turn becomes captivated. There will be a chapter per year of school and an epilogue. No worries, there will be no romance until she is of age.

One

Chapter 1 of 6

In her third year, Hermione realizes what Professor Lupin is after Professor Snape assigns his essay on werewolves. He in turn becomes captivated. There will be a chapter per year of school and an epilogue. No worries, there will be no romance until she is of age.

Hermione was intrigued. She wondered why Professor Snape had assigned that essay on werewolves. He wasn't the type to do something arbitrarily, no matter what Ron and Harry said. And the look in his eyes. This was personal. So Hermione decided to do what she did best: research.

Her parents had sent her various medical books on at her request a while back. She found a couple of things there: Clinical Lycanthropy and Hypertrichosis. The first involved a person who believed they turned into a wolf, and the second was a disorder which affected bodily hair growth. She wondered if maybe these weren't reactions by Muggles to having seen a real werewolf. The trauma could have caused the first, and maybe an incomplete transfer of whatever caused lycanthropy was the reason for the second. She didn't think that Professor Snape would approve of that train of thought, though.

One quote in one book caught her attention, though. "The fear evoked at a werewolf movie is the fear of betrayal, the fear of those we trust and care for transforming into something utterly different and destructive." Oh.

Hermione went down to Potions class shortly after her epiphany. She stayed a bit afterward and caught Professor Snape's attention.

"Sir, may I ask you a question?" Hermione asked quietly, her head down, her posture a bit submissive.

"I take it you mean another question, Miss Granger?" Professor Snape was being as particular as ever.

Hermione took a deep breath, "I know Professor Lupin is a werewolf, sir. Your assignment of the essay just cemented the idea for me. How old were you when he attacked you? Was it his fault? Is that why you hate Harry's father? It's all related, isn't it?" She rushed all of that out, afraid he was going to stop her.

Severus was shocked. This little girl had figured out far too many of his secrets. But, as he watched her attempt to stay steady under his gaze, he was also impressed. Her compassion was evident in her queries. She was not condemning him; rather, she was just trying to understand.

"Miss Granger, you should know better than to ask such a personal set of questions. I am certainly not going to respond to a student about my personal history. Now, if you don't have anything else to ask, leave before I take points from Gryffindor!" Severus practically hissed his answer.

Hermione knew she was right, even if he hadn't answered her questions. His response made her want to hug him, and she wasn't sure where that impulse came from. But she was determined to try to get to know this mysterious man.

As her brain was working through this, she looked up, saw the determination on Professor Snape's face, and instead of saying anything else, turned and almost ran for the door.

Severus watched her leave, intrigued in spite of himself, and shook his head. What was it about Gryffindor Muggle-borns that fascinated him so much? Well, she wouldn't be a child forever, he thought. He had some time to figure it out.

A/N: Thank you to Annie Talbot for the beta!

This was written for a prompt from severely_lupine.

Two

Chapter 2 of 6

Fourth year, more to think about.

Hermione saw Professor Snape show his Dark Mark to Karkaroff. She understood that he was frightened of what the Mark getting darker meant. She also understood how brave and courageous he was. But there was nothing she could do about it.

This was only reinforced when she saw him speak to Professor Dumbledore after everything had gone wrong with Cedric and Harry and the maze. She saw him look resigned to the fact that he would have to return to Voldemort's side (although he would never call him that). She also saw his resolve, especially after Dumbledore reminded him that he would be late.

She decided to wait up for him, near his office, under Harry's Invisibility Cloak. And when he returned, battered and bloody, she called a house-elf to help her get him inside and made him some tea.

"Miss Granger, this is highly irregular. You should not be here." Severus was dismayed, and it kind of showed in his pain-filled, gravelly voice.

"I know sir, but no one else was waiting, I don't know where the headmaster is, and you needed some kindness." Hermione replied, the gravity in her voice belying her age.

"Why would you be kind to the great bat of the dungeons?"

"Because he needs it." She wanted to give him a hug again, but she was quite sure it was still not the time.

"Call Poppy, you insolent girl. And then get back to your tower, before I remove so many points from Gryffindor you will not be able to make them up in the next three years!" Severus practically growled at her.

Hermione did as he asked and then ran out the door. She pulled the cloak over her head and went back to the tower, wondering what the heck was going on.

Severus was unsure what to do at this point. The girl was confusing to him. She certainly was growing into herself, as was evidenced by her surprising beauty at the Yule Ball. What could he do at this point, other than wait.

Madame Pomfrey was not sure why Hermione Granger was the one who called her, and she did not get a satisfactory answer from Severus when she asked. But she did not think anything was going on, Severus was far too honorable for that, so she decided to just watch and wait.

Many thanks to Annie Talbot for the beta!

Three

Chapter 3 of 6

Fifth year brings even more things to consider.

Hermione ran back to the castle after leading Madame Umbridge out to the centaurs. She was hoping that they had put the fear of God or Merlin into her. She was such a horrible woman after all, causing all that pain and hardship. And poor Harry's hand. Hermione wanted to ask Professor McGonagall what she knew of the Blood Quill. After all, Harry was ready to go haring off after Sirius, and no one was sure what was going on.

When she returned to the castle, Harry was talking to Kreacher on the Floo. Hermione happened to see his face when he told Harry that Sirius was gone.

"Harry, he's lying. Look at him!" Hermione exclaimed.

"Are you?" Harry demanded. "Are you lying?"

"Like Kreacher would tell the truth to the half-blood. Or would he?" Kreacher cackled to himself.

At this Sirius was roused from his drinking to find out what the noise was. "Harry, what is going on?" Sirius was worried.

"Oh, you are okay. That is wonderful. Voldemort gave me a fake vision. I thought it was real, like the one of Mr. Weasley." Harry was relieved.

They settled that Harry would stay in the school and Sirius would contact Dumbledore.

Harry, Hermione, Ron, Ginny, Neville and Luna were all talking in the Gryffindor Common Room. No one was sure how Luna managed to be there, but they chalked it up to her being Luna.

Professor McGonagall walked in to speak to them. "Well done, children. Dumbledore was able to prevent Voldemort from gaining access to what he was looking for, and no one was injured. I'm glad you did not go off on your own!"

"Professor, did you know that Madame Umbridge was using a Blood Quill for her detentions?" Hermione demanded of her Head of House.

"WHAT?!?" McGonagall was horrified. "Why didn't you tell me, Mr. Potter?"

"Why would I? You told me to keep my head down, Ma'am. There was no reason to tell you." Harry replied so matter-of-factly that Minerva's heart broke.

"You poor child. I've failed you, haven't I?" Minerva McGonagall quickly recovered her composure then turned to the room at large. She pointed to her throat and said *Sonorus*. She then called all of Gryffindor House down to the Common Room.

She found the other students with scarred hands, then ran off to speak to the Ministry. She wasn't letting Albus get in her way. Due to her diligence, Madame Umbridge was put to trial before the entire Wizengamot for her torture of the students.

After they questioned her under Veritaserum, Umbridge not only admitted to using the Blood Quill, supposedly under Ministry sanction, but to setting the Dementors on Harry Potter during the previous summer. Cornelius Fudge, seeing that he was really going to be under fire for this, tried to mitigate the damage by asking for the harshest sentence.

After all of this, the professors were all grouped around the headmaster when Severus Snape noticed Potter, the two youngest Weasleys, Granger, Longbottom and Lovegood all huddled together. Hermione (when did he start thinking of her like that?) was laughing and gesturing, apparently amusing the others.

Severus turned back to the headmaster just in time to hear, "...and without Miss Granger's question, we would never have been able to get rid of Madame Umbridge so decisively. She was also quite ingenious in her method of getting her out to the Centaurs."

Severus thought to himself that Hermione was also quite ruthless. He rather admired her for it. He smiled to himself, although it must have showed on his face in a quirk of his lip because it resulted in a couple of frightened Hufflepuffs.

Many thanks to Annie Talbot for the beta!

Four

Chapter 4 of 6

Sixth Year, everything changes for everyone.

Hermione was about to turn around after setting the canaries loose on Ron when she felt someone come up behind her. She whirled around with her wand drawn.

"Good reflexes, Miss Granger. And I highly approve of setting vicious birds after Mr. Weasley, no matter what the reason." The deep tones of Severus Snape almost vibrated with mirth.

"I'm sorry Professor. I'm just so angry!" Hermione replied.

"Why, Miss Granger? Because he is seeing Miss Brown? Because he is not seeing you? Or because you are not being seen?" Professor Snape asked this without his usual level of disdain.

"I... I... I'm not sure, sir." She replied truthfully.

"Well, no matter, you will, I'm sure, analyze it from every angle and figure it out shortly. I needed to speak to you about a project given to us by Professor Dumbledore." Severus was quite sure that this would entice Miss Granger from her musings over the Weasley twit. He turned and began to stride toward the dungeon.

"Yes, sir!" Hermione quickly turned and followed him. Of course, she was quite willing to help with any projects.

Severus and Hermione spent at least two nights a week and most weekends working on various war projects. Dumbledore wanted potions to help keep the Death Eaters on their guard while fighting, some for strength, some for mental acuity. Hermione had some good ideas, and Severus was quite impressed with her. They became quite friendly, building a rapport. Harry was pleased actually, because he could see that finally, things were being done to facilitate the war effort. Also, he could see Hermione was blossoming under the attention of the dour professor, and, well, vice versa. So, he just kept his observations to himself.

Hermione, for her part, had lost all interest in Ronald Weasley as a possible love interest after the second conversation she and Professor Snape had over a brewing cauldron. She realized she was quite happy to be with a man who didn't think books were stupid and that Quidditch was everything.

Severus was reminded of those heady early years of friendship with Lily Evans, before everything went pear-shaped.

When Dumbledore died of the effects of the curse on his hand, his memorial was quite the spectacle. Less of a spectacle, but notable in any case, was the figure of Severus Snape, his head bowed and his arms around Hermione Granger, who was sobbing into his chest.

This year, he didn't have to wait.

Many thanks to Annie Talbot for the beta.

Five

Chapter 5 of 6

Seventh Year, the final battle, and what does Molly think of all of this?

Seventh year was a blur. The Horcruxes were found with help from Severus. Hermione had been able to convince Harry to tell him what was going on. They were lucky that they did so, because deep in the Malfoy library, Severus found a potion that would remove a Horcrux from a living being. He thought this would only be useful on Nagini if she did turn out to be a Horcrux and so put it out of his mind.

The basilisk venom was quite useful to destroy the Horcruxes. Severus was almost drooling when he saw the well-preserved carcass of the basilisk in the Chamber of Secrets. When Harry told him that he could have whatever he harvested, that destroyed any last pretense Severus had of Harry being anything like James Potter. The elder Potter would never have been so generous.

As they had decided, Hermione cast a spell over the Horcruxes to make sure that they had the correct items. The spell, as created by Severus and Hermione, would make any Horcrux glow with a purple light. They were horrified once they cast the spell to notice that Harry's scar was also glowing. They were dismayed, almost unable to function with the pain of the thought that Harry would have to sacrifice himself, when Severus remembered the potion. They were able to brew the potion successfully, and Harry was no longer carrying a Horcrux.

They trained as well as they could, and when Voldemort finally attacked Hogwarts, all the older students, including those Slytherins who did not want to be associated with the Dark Lord, took their places.

When Voldemort saw Severus fighting with the students, against him, he targeted him almost immediately. Severus fell and was taken to the hospital wing. No one knew if he would live or die.

As distraught as Hermione and Harry were when Severus fell, they continued to fight. And when the chance came to kill Nagini, Neville managed it, with a garden hoe. And Ron saw this, and ran over with the potion to remove the Horcrux. He had just poured it over the snake when he was struck by a curse cast by Bellatrix. When Ron fell, Molly Weasley ran over and cast the Avada Kedavra at the insane witch. She then picked up her son and Apparated to the hospital wing.

By this point Severus was awake and asked how things were going.

"It is down to Harry and Voldemort," Molly replied. "Ron was struck pouring the potion over Nagini."

At that moment a great cheer went up. Molly rushed to the window and said: "Oh, thank Merlin. Harry is victorious!"

"And Hermione, Molly, can you see her?" Severus asked almost desperately.

"No, no, oh, yes, there she is. She looks bloody, but alive." Molly turned to Severus and smiled. "You truly care for her, don't you?"

"Yes, Molly I do. I realized back in her third year that she was exceptional. Each year, her courage and heart amazed me. Last year when we worked together, we became friends. I said nothing of further feelings this year, because so much was going on, but she has become everything to me." Severus thought Molly would be disgusted by his confession.

"That is wonderful, Severus. I gave up on the idea of her and Ron after Lavender last year, but I was afraid she would just get lost in her books. I'm glad to see that you and she were able to find something deeper." Molly declared this more cheerfully than one would have expected, but for all her faults, Molly had raised seven children quite well. She had to have a bit of realist in her.

Hermione had walked in during Severus's statement. She walked over to his bed and asked him, "Did you mean it? Do I really mean that much to you?"

"Yes, love. Had you died out there, I would have gone, too. You mean the world to me." Severus's simple statement caused more than one heart to sigh.

Hermione bent down and kissed him as though nothing else in the world mattered. And you know what? Nothing really did.

Many, many thanks to Annie Talbot for the beta!

Epilogue

Chapter 6 of 6

A small snippet of happiness.

The wedding was beautiful. No one was surprised when Severus asked Remus Lupin to stand with him, as they had become sort of friends over the years since Remus was the DADA professor.

They were a bit more surprised when Hermione asked Harry to stand with her, but as she explained, he was her best friend, her brother, and he had never once doubted her. Even when he was angry over the Firebolt, he hadn't doubted that she meant well.

Severus and Hermione pledged their lives to each other, mind, heart, soul, body and magic. And when the Minister wound the binding cords around their wrists, the light was blinding.

They had two children. Their son, Sebastian, was a Ravenclaw. Their daughter, Selene, was a Slytherin.

And when they were asked, many years later, what had called them to each other, they always responded the same way. "It was an essay. About werewolves. And through it, we learned each other's heart."

Many thanks to Annie Talbot for the beta!