

Moon-Shade Realm

by quirkslayer

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Thanks to Netra and Wendy for the beta jobs!

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Even though it was summer, he still had to seal himself away when the moon was full even if he was not at Hogwarts. James, Peter, and Sirius would come looking for him on that day and escort him to the sanctuary in Hogsmeade where he would spend the night, enduring the most horrible self-mutilation and insanity.

The more he had to live with his curse, the more he wanted to just fade away. Oh, he was grateful for his friends, but sometimes...sometimes he wanted to be alone to think to think of things as if he had never been bitten. He wanted to know what life would be like if he was a normal boy.

He was going on seventeen and still cursed with this nightmare. And knowing that he would have to endure it for the rest of his life, he felt that maybe he shouldn't be around people at all. That maybe he should just be alone.

He rather liked being alone, and every night before the full moon when there was a sliver of shade on it, he would steal away to his private place, a place that not many people knew about nor cared.

He enjoyed this private place because no one would come and bother him. He could be alone on the night before the full moon and sit in the shadows under the trees, having a moment of peace when he knew that the next night would be full of terror.

He enjoyed these lonely times for a good number of years in this place. That was until 'she' came. After that, everything had changed.

She had been wandering around, no doubt straying off the park path from the Muggle world that connected to this realm. His secret place was a nexus between a very obscure park on the outskirts of London, and its passageway led to an alley between two fairly eccentric shops in Hogsmeade. Sometimes people had used this passageway as a shortcut to the northern far side of London, but otherwise, it was seldom ever used. That's why Remus thought it was perfect.

The thing he couldn't figure out was how 'she' could even get here. The first time he saw her he was indeed surprised. How could a Muggle get past this point anyway? Was she a squib? Did she have latent abilities? He just didn't know.

"What are you doing here?" he asked in almost a gruff voice.

She jumped when she heard him. She undoubtedly thought she was alone. She looked over at him, only to see his form sitting against the brick wall under the bridge in the shadows. She played nervously with her blonde hair. Her voice crackled in fear.

"Who...who's there?"

Petunia Evans had always felt like she was invisible. She was the most normal girl ever, yet her parents somehow shunned her because she was normal and not talented like her sister.

This always irritated her, and she couldn't stand being in the same household as them when her sister was home from school. She hated how they gushed all over her about her abilities and what she had learned in the previous year. So at nights when everyone was sitting around the telly trying to have their 'family' time, Petunia would leave, saying she liked to go for walks to exercise off her dinner. The funny thing was that no one seemed to care if she was there or not.

Their lack of concern enraged her even more, though, there was nothing she could do but leave and have a moment to herself.

She walked down the streets of London for hours, finding herself drawn to a very small park far from her block. She didn't care that she was too far away from her house.

As she got closer to that particular park, she felt sedated, as if her problems were washed away. She actually felt happy, and she would walk over a bridge gazing at the stars. The place was undoubtedly soothing, but there was something else about it that made her feel different.

This place would always make her feel strange, reaching for something deep within her that wanted to remain hidden. A strange power seized the movement in her legs, drawing her closer to that bridge every time. Many times she had sat on the bridge, reveling in the feeling of numbness and serenity the atmosphere had made her feel.

Then on one night, she had felt compelled to walk along the banks of the small creek that went through the park beyond the bridge. As she walked over to the bank to sit down, she was caught off guard when someone spoke to her.

"What are you doing here?"

Frightened, she turned to the source of the voice. She looked to her left, only to see darkness under the bridge next to her. Was there someone under the bridge?

"Who-- who's there?" she quavered, her voice rattling. She squinted her eyes and tried to discern a shape in the shadows. She saw a head poke out slightly from underneath the bridge.

"I'm Remus. Now answer my question. What are you doing here?"

"I I'm ..." she stuttered, but then she suddenly got irritated. How dare this person ask her why she came to her most treasured place? She pursed her lips together and gave him a snotty look. "I'm just sitting here."

"How can you be here, though," he asked quickly. He couldn't believe a normal non-magical person would stumble into this area. This particular part, the bridge actually, of the London park was enchanted.

She sniffed at him. "It's a public park, isn't it? Anyone can come here." She crawled closer over to him, still hesitant about getting too close, and then she stopped to look into his face. "Are you mental or something?"

Remus laughed heartily, which surprised her. She scrunched her face in irritation.

"And what about you? Are you the park beast that lives under bridges? Maybe you're a troll."

She pointed a finger rudely at him. She was being quite prissy, but Remus found her quite amusing. He laughed again.

"I am no troll."

He came out from under the bridge into the open. He sat next to her on the bank by the creek. He was very curious to her origins, since she was undoubtedly a Muggle but still able to come into this realm.

"As for the beast part, I am not sure I want to answer that," he teased, studying her intently.

She stiffened and turned her head, and even in the stark moonlight he saw a pink color come to her face. He was becoming uncomfortable himself, not only because of her, but because he did not enjoy being out in the moonlight, especially on the night before the full moon. His brow began to sweat.

"So ..." Petunia tried to break the awkward silence. "Why are you here?"

Remus smiled, trying to focus on her and not the huge dread hanging in the sky.

"I guess I enjoy being alone."

She nodded with understanding.

"And because I'm sort of an outcast."

"Hrmm ...so am I," she said listlessly while sighing. She clutched her bent knees to her chest.

He momentarily looked down and noticed her pretty sundress, mottled with printings of flowers. Then he looked back at her eyes, noticing that she was staring at him.

"Why are you an outcast?"

He chuckled. "Why else? Because I am different from everyone else."

"Me too!" Her voice was full of slight elation as she found a kindred spirit. "Everyone shuns me because my sister is so talented. I'm just a big nobody."

"Oh, I don't believe that for a second," he said, looking away from her nervously. He was never good with talking to women, but somehow, he felt relaxed around this girl.

"Why do you say that?" she asked. How could he possibly know how she was just by looking at her? "I'm so ... normal."

He laughed. "Well, you can't be that normal," he said lightly, looking at her intensely. He didn't mean to stare. Her grey eyes were trapping him, and he couldn't look away. There was something about this girl, Muggle or no Muggle; she was drawn to this enchanted nexus with him without any explanation. He spoke to her in a very low voice. "You are here, are you not?"

She looked at him in confusion. What could he possibly mean? Could he be strangely drawn to this place like she was? Did he get the same feelings in his stomach every time he walked into this park or came over to this bridge? Did he know exactly what was happening to her?

"Petunia," she said out of the blue.

He stared at her questioningly.

"That's my name."

He nodded, relaxing to her meaning. Nervously, he smiled and locked her into his gaze.

She saw a kindness and fragility there. And when she heard his voice, she felt her body beginning to tremble.

"Good to meet you, Petunia."

"Remus ..."

He almost jumped as his name spilled out of her lips.

"Will you be here tomorrow?"

He froze to her question. As much as he suddenly wanted to, tomorrow was surely not a good day for him to come. However, he didn't want to respond to her as if he wasn't interested in her.

"Um, no, unfortunately, I have to ... help a friend with a favor." He saw her face fall slightly as he declined. "But I will most definitely be here the following day."

She turned to him, struggling to be proper and not appearing too overjoyed. A small smile tugged impatiently at her lips. "It's getting late. I should go home. I hope to see you soon then."

She got up and smiled at him before leaving. She felt an icy tug in her soul as she departed this place. Invisible tendrils of felicity struggled to tie her back, keeping her from leaving here. She fought with them, trying to give herself hope that her parents would actually be worried if she was gone far too long, and she broke off into a run toward home.

Petunia had become more spirited as of late. She didn't care anymore that Lily was getting all the attention. She didn't care that her parents barely said a word that she was staying out later at night on her walks away from the family.

Actually, she was glad for once they paid so little attention to her. This way, she could stay longer in the park.

She could stay longer with Remus.

And sometimes she would actually run to the park instead of walk, imagining the look on his face when he saw her as he crawled out from under the bridge and then joined her under a tree shaded from the moonlight.

They had been seeing each other for a few months, talking about interests, mostly about books that they had read or things about themselves. Sometimes they wouldn't talk at all and just enjoy the silence.

Truly, deep down they both enjoyed being alone. But now, they enjoyed being alone together.

Though after those three months, Petunia had noticed that Remus had still been vague to why others considered him an outcast. He was very charming, smart, and it was evident he was shy, but he was very levelheaded. He disliked fighting and was the most amiable person she had ever met. So she wondered why his peers had considered him an outcast.

Then one time, she braved prodding him again, playfully complimenting him while trying to get a straight answer.

"I don't believe it," she laughed. "How can your classmates consider you such an outcast when you're so good-natured? I would think you'd have loads of chums."

Remus's smile faded slightly, and he looked away. "I wish that were true. But I'm afraid I am segregated from them. Perhaps I am too smart for their liking."

She giggled. "Or maybe you're just normal like me."

He laughed lightly when he heard a snort within her laugh.

"Oh, how I wish," he said, taking her hand. She froze, no longer laughing but smiling prettily. He saw a moonlight ray slash through the leaves of the tree and hit her face illuminating her skin.

She looked down at her knees, but then squeezed his hand in return. "I don't understand how the two of us can be shunned. I feel we are the sanest people in the world."

He inched closer to her, not agreeing with her or feeding her statement any truth. He just nudged closer to her, nuzzling his forehead against her shoulder. He felt her stiffen in surprise, and then relax.

He wished that what she said was the truth, but the truth that they couldn't be together was hurting him the most. He had nudged closer to her because he felt deep down inside that what they had right here and now was forbidden. This realm had brought them together without thinking or caring of who they were separately.

So why were they here when he knew that a Muggle and a werewolf could never be together? He gripped her hand tighter, and she turned to him, suddenly embracing his head into her lap. He sighed contently.

The only place they could be together was here. She would always be a normal woman. And he would always be a werewolf. But here, they were just two lonely people escaping the very world where they did not fit.

"The world must be going mad if two normal people cannot truly be who they are," she said quietly, bending her head and nuzzling her face in his hair.

He nodded, only to please her, but inwardly he nodded only to his own thoughts. 'We can't be together anyway, Petunia,' he thought while reveling in her warmth. But here and now they could try.

"Can't you come tomorrow?" she pouted one time during a late summer month.

He knew that summer was ending and that soon they would both be going their separate ways. He had told her that he went to school overseas and would not be here until next summer. She was very bothered by this, but she seemed hopeful when he mentioned wanting to still keep in contact with her.

Though, now she wanted to see him as much as possible before then, and admittedly he wanted that as well. However, tomorrow was not going to be possible.

Tomorrow was the full moon, and although every fiber within his makeup wanted to be here with her, he could not.

"I'm sorry. I can't." He saw her bow her head down and hug her knees tighter.

"But I can't come after that," she said solemnly. "I'm going off to boarding school the next day. I was hoping that this night wouldn't be our last, that you'd make an exception."

He felt his breath hitch in his throat. Today would be the last day they would see each other, and he felt a sense of dread within him. He felt he couldn't bear it.

He felt as though he had fallen in love with her.

Surely, there was something he could do.

He took her into his arms and she leaned against him almost reflexively. He kissed the top of her head. She looked up at him to read his face. He was smiling.

"I'll try, maybe in the daytime." His soft words and tender embrace seemed to put her at some hopeful ease.

She snuggled closer to him, and he knew that he couldn't come at all. He didn't want her to wait out in the park and have him never come. He thought that he had a little money saved, that maybe he could buy some Wolfsbane and then he could endure it just awhile and leave right away before she could suspect anything.

But he wasn't sure he could pull it off. So he shifted her in his lap and bent down and looked into her eyes. Then, he placed a soft kiss over her lips.

"And if I can't, let's enjoy this night as if it was our last. And if not, then tomorrow will be even more special."

She closed her eyes and smiled at the sound of his voice softly tickling within her ear. She snuggled closer to him.

Yes, for tonight, she would arrive home just a little later.

They had agreed to meet late in the afternoon. She waited by the bridge for him, anxiously watching anyone or any movement in the park to see if it was him. Each failure to see him as one of the small numbers of people that passed by the park made her even more depressed.

She started to wonder if he could really come after all.

Finally, the last time she turned around he was behind her, paler than usual but still smiling. She ran up to him, hugging him right away and then settling within the groove of his chest.

"You came."

"I can't stay long."

His voice was hoarse, and she felt him shaking. She looked at him worriedly, only to see his hair was unkempt, and he was more nervous than usual.

"What's wrong? Are you sick?" she asked.

He nodded and smiled sheepishly. "Sorry."

"You came while you were sick?" She was surprised, but more than anything, she was touched by his devotion. Her heart fluttered at the sight of his smile.

"Let me walk you home. You look like you should be in bed," she said, and he froze to her mentioning his 'home.'

He certainly didn't want her to walk him to Hogsmeade, and he wasn't sure if she could even get there.

"No, no. I'll stay for a little bit and then get going on my own."

She seemed slightly disappointed, but nodded anyway.

"Always the loner," she said, and he laughed.

"Have you seen any trace of Remus?" Sirius had asked Peter at their meeting point. The boy shook his head, and James nodded with him.

"I haven't seen him all morning, as a matter of fact," James said with worry stroking his chin.

"This is bad!" Peter whined, fidgeting and pacing. "He was supposed to be at the meeting place two hours ago!"

"Calm down, you prat! I can't think with that blubbing," Sirius growled at Peter. Peter recoiled back and tried to muffle his whimpers.

"James! James!"

The three boys were broken out of their contemplative thoughts when they heard a girl calling James's name.

"Lily?" James turned around as Lily ran up to him. She stopped before them and tried to catch her breath.

"Have you seen Remus? I desperately need to speak to him!" Lily inquired with agitation.

"Actually, we're looking for him as well. He seems to be missing," Sirius said with irritation.

"So why are you looking for him?" James asked with a hint of jealousy.

Lily shot him a glare. "I need to talk to him about my sister!"

"Your sister?" James laughed. "What does Remus have to do with that stuck-up snot?"

She continued to glare at him, and then she pulled out a book from her bag. "This is my sister's journal. I know I shouldn't have read it, but she's really boring, and I couldn't help it."

The boys looked at her in wonder to where her story was going. Sirius was getting impatient, and Peter continued to shake as Sirius shot him unpleasant looks. James just seemed to be mesmerized by Lily's presence.

"I was surprised when I read it. Really, I had no idea. My sister talks about seeing Remus in private at night!"

Peter's jaw dropped. Sirius gave her a skeptical look, and James suddenly fell out of his daze.

"What! That's ridiculous! How can he "

Sirius grabbed James's arm roughly. "This is no time to be gossiping! We have to find him."

Lily looked confused. Obviously, there was something she was missing here.

"Lily, it's the full moon tonight," James had told her.

Her eyes widened in fear when she realized the reason for their hasty concern. James had told her not too recently in secret about Remus's condition. Actually, he had to tell her because she had snooped out his Animagi form. She was sworn to secrecy, and she did keep her word, but she was slightly more frightened of Remus than before.

She clasped her hands over her mouth. "Oh, no! Petunia!"

"C'mon, let's go," Sirius ordered, waving them to follow. Lily ran up to jog next to him, and Sirius turned to speak to her. "He's at that bloody bridge isn't he?"

Lily nodded. "That's what she mentioned in her diary."

"Fool!" Sirius said, and they had to move quickly to that connecting spot of Hogsmeade and that London park.

Remus was shaking more than ever, and Petunia was becoming more concerned. He wanted to stay longer than he could, but the Wolfsbane would not help him for long.

"I have to go ..."

"Stay!" she cried, grabbing onto him.

He stepped back as he felt pain course through his body. "I can't bear this much longer," he grunted, and then he suddenly fell to his knees.

Petunia let out a desperate scream and then hugged him, trying to help him to his feet.

"What is wrong with you, Remus? Just how sick are you?" Her mind was in frenzy as she watched him coil to the ground, clutching himself while sweating and grunting in pain. Her eyes widened as she saw his skin suddenly bubble as if something was underneath.

Did she imagine that?

Then suddenly she realized something. "This is why you're an outcast. This is why you're alone."

"Petunia, please ..." There was no way she could understand. There was no way she could know.

"You're sick, aren't you? I mean, you're really sick as if you can't be cured." She was crying now, and he felt her wet tears against his clothes. "This is always why you're so sad when I talk about us being together."

"You need to get away..."

"I can't leave you like this! I'll help you! We'll go to the hospital!"

"No ..." he uttered, sucking in the air coarsely as he fought back the pain. His head throbbed, and he could feel the Beast within him begin to surface. Suddenly he pushed her away. He started to run off, but she caught him from behind. He stopped. She tried with all her small might to not let him leave her.

"Don't leave! I don't know what I'd do if you died. You're the only friend I've ever had!"

He sighed, and he let the pain overwhelm him. He looked up, only to see dark dusk filtering over the late afternoon sky.

Then it came. He pushed her off again, and she swore she heard him growl. She looked at his hands, suddenly thicker and hairier than she remembered them.

He still turned his back to her, shielding her from seeing his horrifying transformation.

"You need to go. Now."

She stayed motionless, still confused and scared as to why he was suddenly acting this way and pushing her aside.

He turned around to let the truth be known. He knew once he did, he was going to lose her. It was his unfavorable fate.

At first she did nothing but whimper. Her face paled, and she brought her hands up to her face, clutching her cheeks as she screamed. She backed away quickly, tripping on her heels and then landing on her rear on the ground. She looked up at him, her once gentle boy turning into a large terrifying beast.

"Oh, my God!" she screamed again, and she heard footsteps behind her.

She turned around, only to see her sister with that Potter boy and two others behind her with their wands out. She screamed as their magical world suddenly invaded her special one. First Remus turns into a monster, and then her sister comes with all her strange friends. She felt as though her world was suddenly slipping away into an abyss.

"Lily, get your sister out of here!" James screamed, watching Remus closely as he suddenly lost himself to madness.

Lily rushed over and helped her sister up, and Petunia glared at her slightly before resorting back to her horrified betrayed face. She felt dazed, and suddenly she began to forget where she was and who she was. She barely felt her sister to her side, running and leading her to a safe place.

She thought she had heard Remus yell her name before she departed, but she dared not look back. She heard the boys that were with her sister talk about settling him down as they remained behind.

When they came home, Lily stayed with Petunia on their front stoop. Petunia was still in shock, barely uttering anything but random muttering. Tears continuously fell down her cheeks. Finally, Petunia spoke to her sister in a broken tone.

"What was that, Lily? Was that thing really Remus?" Her words strung together weakly, and she was becoming too exhausted to cry.

"Yes. Remus is a werewolf. He goes to Hogwarts." Lily watched anger rise over Petunia's face. As she told her more and more of Remus's origin, her sister became more displeased.

"So he's one of you people," she snapped bitterly. Lily nodded. Hurt and confused, Petunia stood up rigidly and glared down at her sister. "I hate you. I hate you all!" Her nostrils flared.

Lily gave her a pitying look.

"You're all a bunch of freaks!" She stomped into the house angrily, slamming the door and running up stairs in a huff.

Lily knew that she had been hurt by this, that her sister couldn't understand. And she never would understand. She didn't want to. She didn't even speak of the matter ever again. Her world, her love, her happiness, had all been a lie. It had been crushed because of Lily's world because of her people. And Petunia hated them all. She had hated them before, and now that the one thing she had held dear in her life had been crushed, she despised them now more than ever.

Not too many years later, Petunia had forced herself to forget about Remus. He had, in turn, reluctantly done the same, especially when he had talked to Lily about Petunia's reaction to the whole thing. He knew it was inevitable, but dealing with a broken heart was still painful despite it all.

Petunia, on the other hand, had found someone else. He was entirely too boring and normal like herself. And on the day she took his hand, she knew that he would have nothing to do with her sister's world. She knew that he was too dull to have secrets. He was too dull to be a beast.

She took Vernon's normal dull hand into hers, and she felt safe. Being normal was being safe.

The End