

The Unrequited Heart

by rosewood

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Remus Lupin growled as he wrapped his arms around Fleur Delacour and kissed her senseless in a darkened corner of the orchard at The Burrow. Bill Weasley watched the scene unfold in abject horror from the shadows as a jealous fury burned deep within his chest. He turned away from the errant couple and stormed back to the party that was in full swing.

"That was extremely naughty of you, sly wench," Remus softly moaned as he watched his beloved's hair transform back into its usual bubble-gum pink hue.

"Don't think I didn't catch that look in your eye when she waltzed into the room this evening," Tonks replied playfully. "Besides, you knew it was me all along."

"Rightfully so," Remus said as he pulled her closer for another kiss.

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Molly watched Fleur straighten her dress robes for the umpteenth time that evening. It was nearly seven o'clock on Valentine's Day, and her normally courteous son had yet to make an appearance since he left in a huff early that morning.

"Don't worry, dear," Molly said soothingly as she handed her a cup of tea. "I'm sure he has something special planned for just the two of you."

"I don't understand," Fleur replied quietly. "Everything seemed fine until halfway through the party last night. He asked where I had been, and when I told him Ron became drunk and I'd helped you put him to bed, it seemed as if he didn't quite believe me."

"Merlin, help me!" Molly exclaimed while shaking her head. "Men can play such petty fools at times."

"Fleur, my dear, the lad is crazy about you," Arthur chimed. "I'm almost certain he's just running a little late."

A few minutes later Bill walked through the front door bearing fragrant roses, a fine bottle of elf-made wine and a small, white box.

"Ladies, may I say you both look quite lovely this evening," Bill smoothly said. He handed Fleur the flowers before placing a chaste kiss upon the back of her hand and another upon his mother's cheek.

"Son, you know it's not nice to keep a lady waiting on a special day such as this," Molly chided.

Bill merely smiled benignly at his mother before walking to the kitchen cupboard and returning with four wine glasses. After he poured the wine, he raised his glass and proposed a toast.

"Fleur, may tonight fill your heart with all the love and joy you richly deserve."

As she blushed happily at the compliment, Molly and Arthur exchanged a knowing smile while they sipped their drinks.

Bill removed the lid from the small, white box upon the table and presented Fleur with a single, perfect strawberry artfully dipped in dark and white chocolate and coated with a shimmering layer of stardust.

"Please accept this small token of my devotion."

"Oh, Bill! It looks too pretty to eat." She giggled.

"Come now, take a little bite," he coaxed. "I promise you, it's no less than you deserve."

Fleur bit into the succulent delicacy as Bill watched with a hard glint in his eyes. Suddenly, an iridescent wave of magic washed over her body causing her to dangerously sway before falling. Arthur reached out and caught her in his arms before she hit the floor in a daze.

"Sweet Circe, Bill," Molly gasped. "What have you done?"

"As I said, it's nothing less than she deserves," Bill hissed. "Shall I tell my parents, love?"

"I don't know what you are talking about," Fleur replied as tears streamed down her face.

"You lying whore!" Bill spat maliciously. "I caught you in the arms of Remus last night out in the orchard."

"No, that's not true," Fleur wailed, aghast. "I have never been unfaithful to you."

"That is enough!" Arthur yelled at his son. He quickly carried Fleur in his arms and set her carefully upon the loveseat in the sitting room. "I don't know what you think you saw, but I can assure you Remus was with Nymphadora yesterday evening."

"I know what I witnessed!" Bill exclaimed.

"Fleur was with me the short time she was not by your side last night," Molly explained exasperatedly. "The twins spiked Ron's drink with one of their silly concoctions, and he was as drunk as a skunk. The boy could barely walk, and Fleur was kind enough to help me put him to bed."

"Besides, Remus is in love with Nymphadora," Arthur retorted. "In fact, he's proposing to her tonight. There is absolutely nothing going on between Remus and Fleur."

"Bill, I love you," Fleur cried. "Please believe me."

"I should have known it would only be a matter of time before you revealed your true Veela nature," Bill ground out between clenched teeth.

"Son, please see reason," Molly begged. "What have you done to her?"

"'Tis nothing more than a little potion," Bill replied in a mocking tone.

"What kind of potion?" Molly asked as a small chill ran down her spine.

"Nothing that would concern you, Mother dear," Bill said with a sneer. "I suggest my former fiancée seek the guidance of a Potions master." At that, Bill strode out of the house and disappeared into the night.

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The sharp rap upon the door stirred Severus Snape from the warm comfort of his armchair beside the fireplace. He loathed Valentine's Day and fervently hoped his little snakes were smart enough to be discreet in their evening exploits. If he was surprised to find the Headmaster at his door, he was careful to hide it.

"Headmaster, to what do I owe this dubious honor?"

"Severus, I'm afraid there is a matter of some delicacy for which you are urgently needed," Albus gravely replied. "Apparently, Bill Weasley had a lover's quarrel with Miss Delacour and slipped her an unknown potion. She desperately needs your help."

"Where is she now?" Severus asked.

"Arthur and Molly just Flooed in with her and are in the infirmary," he replied. "Poppy is running a few diagnostic tests as we speak."

"Why didn't they take her to St. Mungo's?"

"Some rather unsavory accusations were leveled against Miss Delacour, and it was felt that discretion was necessary to preserve her honor," Albus stated.

As they entered the infirmary, Severus saw Arthur and Molly seated by Fleur's bedside. Poppy walked over to intercept them.

"Poppy, what can you tell us thus far?" Severus asked, getting straight to the matter.

"As far as I've been able to ascertain, Miss Delacour has ingested a very powerful aphrodisiac," Poppy said. "Her heart has been palpitating erratically, and she is bordering on hysteria. I've given her a Calming Draught, but I fear that unless we can find an antidote soon, she won't last until morning."

"Do we have any idea as to what she ingested?" Severus inquired.

"Yes, Molly brought in a half-eaten strawberry," Poppy replied. She handed him the white box with the berry nestled inside. "Severus, there's one more thing you should know. Apparently, this potion Bill has slipped her... has caused her to become fixated upon you."

Severus grimaced at this revelation.

"Perhaps it is best if she not see me at the moment," Severus replied. "I'll take this down to my laboratory and determine exactly what potion she has ingested and whether or not I can create an antidote in time."

"Albus, it would be prudent if Mr. Weasley can be apprehended in the hope that we can further this process along," Severus continued. "As time is of the essence, any information we can garner from him would be beneficial. Especially, in light that the girl only has until the morn."

"I understand," Albus replied. "I'll contact Kingsley right away."

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Severus reentered the infirmary office at half past one in the morning to confer with Albus and Poppy.

"How is Miss Delacour faring?" Severus asked Poppy.

"She is deteriorating by the hour," she grimly replied. "I'm keeping her as comfortable as possible, considering the circumstances."

"Severus, what have you been able to find?" Albus asked.

"The stardust on the strawberry was tainted with a bastardization of Amortentia referred to as The Unrequited Heart," Severus stated. "It is devious in as far as it is keyed specifically between two individuals, the person who ingests it and the intended target of their infatuation."

"Dear Merlin," Poppy whispered. "Please tell me there's an antidote."

"An antidote can be created," Severus said with his brow furrowed. "Unfortunately, it takes thirty-two hours to brew."

"Severus, is there an alternative?" Albus asked seriously.

"Yes, but only with Miss Delacour's explicit consent," he replied.

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"You've made the right decision, my dear," Poppy said quietly to the visibly nervous young woman. She handed Fleur a small glass vial. "This is to prevent... complications."

Fleur nodded in understanding, drank the potion and returned the vial to Poppy.

"Please return to the infirmary afterwards," Poppy said before she turned to leave.

A moment later, Severus knocked quietly upon the door before entering the room. He slowly approached Fleur standing in the center of the small sitting area.

"Professor, I'm sorry you have been involved in this horrid affair," Fleur said quietly. "I have much respect for you and wish we could have become acquainted under more amicable circumstances."

"You've nothing to apologize for, Miss Delacour," he replied softly. "No one should be forced into such an unforgivable situation."

"Please call me Fleur," she asked as a tear began to trickle down her cheek. He lifted his hand and gently brushed it from her face.

"As you wish," he whispered as he lowered his head and softly brushed his lips against hers. She moaned the moment their lips touched, and he deepened the kiss. Without parting their lips, Severus gently lifted her and carried her to his bedroom.

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Later that morning, Severus sat in the Headmaster's office with Albus and Kingsley Shacklebolt.

"How is Miss Delacour?" Albus asked.

"She seems to be fine," Severus replied solemnly. "Poppy is running a few tests on her as we speak. Is there any news regarding Mr. Weasley?"

"Yes, we were able to track Bill down near Leeds," Kingsley said. "Apparently, he was trying to find and confront Remus. Fortunately, we were able to apprehend him before that occurred."

Severus merely scowled and flexed his fist in response.

"Severus, is there anything else you would like to share with us?" Albus asked with a note of trepidation.

"It seems Miss Delacour was a virgin," Severus said after a slight hesitation. "As such, a woman under the influence of The Unrequited Heart can no longer bestow her affections upon another if her virginity has been taken by the object of her desire."

Albus closed his eyes as the words flowed from the Potions master's lips.

"Fear not, Albus," Severus stated. "Miss Delacour and I now share a mutual respect for one another despite the circumstances. I refuse to allow her to become tainted by scandal and scorn."

Albus opened his mouth to speak, but Severus held up his hand to prevent interruption.

"I've already asked Miss Delacour if I may be permitted to court her, and she has agreed."

"How do you feel about this turn of events, Severus?" Albus asked.

"I feel that eventually we will both find peace and happiness. Perhaps even love."

A/N: Many thanks to *sunny33* for taking the time to beta-whip this little story into shape.

Prompt provided by *HermioneDiggory*: "The person of your choice catches their fiancee/fiancee with another on Valentine's eve. That person then decides to get even by making sure their fickle love's Valentine's Day is one that they will NEVER forget."