

Greenland, Ho!

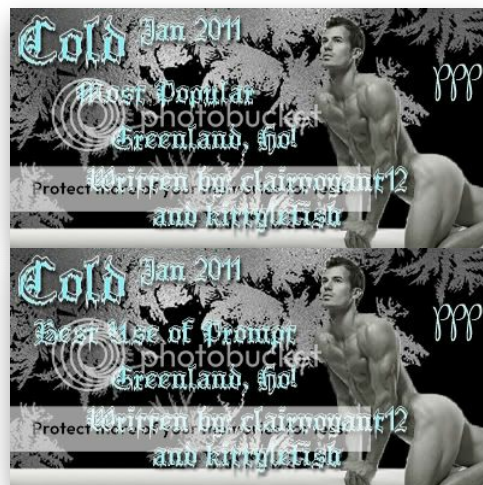
by kitty_clair

So, why am I traveling by dogsled through #@%&! Greenland with Luna Lovegood?*
A collaborative effort by Clairvoyant and kittylefish for the January challenge at the pterpr0nprmts community at LiveJournal.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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The bitter cold bombarded every inch of exposed skin. Neville Longbottom raised his frozen fingers...encased in fur-lined gloves...to his wind-chapped cheeks.

It's official. I can't feel my face... or my hands, for that matter. Whoever said this place is a herbologist's paradise was clearly lying... or nutters. So, why am I traveling by dogsled through bumfuck Greenland with Luna Lovegood? Oh, right, I arrived at this conference feeling gutted. I've dueled Death Eaters and confronted Voldemort himself, so why was I so nervous about attending a bloody conference? Well, I've never been abroad on my own, nor attended a professional meeting before. Luna's was the only face I recognized. And she greeted me with such warmth, although her hug lasted longer than what I consider polite. "Why don't you skive off lectures and join me?" she

said. *In a moment of weakness, I agreed.*

He huffed a sigh through tightly closed lips and turned to his companion. She looked a mess, yet attractive in a wild way: strands of hair escaped her woolen cap, whipping about her pink cheeks and watery silvery-gray eyes, and her smile never faltered.

"Are we there yet, Luna?" Neville whined. "I'm frozen solid. It'll take days for me to defrost."

Her musical laughter mingled with the sounds of the sled runners gliding on the snow and the heavy panting of the eight dogs pulling the sled.

"We'll stop when we reach the forest. The dogs can have water, and we'll eat lunch before starting our search."

"Tell me about this creature you're looking for, Luna."

"The Tupilaq is an avenging spirit. The shaman fashions it from various materials, like animal parts...fur, skin, bone, flesh. It's given life through ritualistic spells and then sent off to seek and destroy a specific enemy."

Neville shuddered at that; quite a feat considering he'd been shivering constantly for over an hour. "Remind me never to anger the local shaman. What does it look like?"

"It varies, but it's short and has two heads...one on its shoulders, the other between its legs. It's interesting because the shaman engages in sexual contact with the bits used to make the Tupilaq."

Neville's cheeks burned, but it wasn't from the chafing wind.

"Oh, and another thing," she continued, "it's sensitive to other magic, so we'll have to do without when we're in the forest. Now, what about your plant?"

"*Chamerion latifolium* has the English name Dwarf Fireweed, but in Greenland it's the national flower *nivarsiaq*, meaning 'little girl.'"

"That sounds charming. What does it look like?"

"It grows in clumps. A short, woody stem with oval leaves... I'll show you a picture later. Professor Sprout says it's never been cultivated in Scotland. If we could manage that, it would bring us and Hogwarts prestige. Oh, and it's a member of the evening primrose family. Professor Snape might find it useful in potions, and that could put me in his good graces."

"I would've thought beheading that big snake did that already."

They laughed together. *Being with Luna makes these harsh conditions much more tolerable.*

Soon they arrived at the edge of the forest. Luna braked to stop the sled. Neville peeled his frozen hands from the handle bar, engaged the snow hooks...to keep the team in place...and tied the snubline to a tree to secure the sled.

"If you start a fire, I'll prepare lunch," Luna offered.

While she unpacked their gear from the sled, he gathered firewood, stones, and pine needles, then, using Muggle matches, built a toasty fire. He packed snow into a saucepan and passed it over the flames...water for the dogs. Neville filled the eight bowls Luna had set out, trying in vain not to spill too much around the rambunctious hounds.

"Settle down, dogs," he ordered sternly as he petted Primus, one of the lead dogs.

The other dogs calmed down, but Primus jumped and growled, pulling at his lead line and the line connecting him to Secundus, his fellow lead dog.

Neville thought it a good idea to separate the skittish Primus from the pack. He was wrong. As soon as the lines were unhooked, the dog took off running into the forest...there one moment, gone the next.

"Primus, come back," Luna shouted. "Neville, we have to find him."

Neville aimed his wand and began to intone, "*Petrificus*..."

Her hand on his arm stilled him. "You can't use magic. Remember the Tupilaq?"

"That's the least of our worries," he said. "Let's go back to the hotel. We can Side-Along Apparate with the dogs."

"But what if Primus comes back and finds us gone?" Her voice trembled.

Neville hated seeing her so upset. "It will be dark soon. Let's set up camp. We'll need a tent. If you handle the Transfiguration, I'll cast the protective charms. When it's light again, we can search for the dog."

"I packed proper equipment in case of an emergency." Luna started pulling a large bundle from the sled. "And no protective charms." She pointed a finger at him. "Tupilaq."

Luna proved surprisingly capable at erecting the Muggle tent. "I've camped with Muggles before," she explained. "That's when I learned to drive a dogsled."

They huddled together for warmth in their cramped, utterly unmagical quarters.

"It's too early to go to sleep," Neville said. "I'm not at all tired."

"Me, either." Luna rummaged in her pack, pulled out two glasses and handed them to Neville. "Here, hold these." Then she retrieved a bottle of champagne, which she thrust toward him. "Open this."

He held up the two glasses occupying his hands.

"Oh." She took one glass, handed him the bottle, and took the other glass. Then fixed her large silvery-gray eyes on him and waited.

Those eyes, like twin moons staring unblinkingly at him, unnerved him. "You ... brought champagne?" He blinked; she still hadn't.

"Champagne is always appropriate, don't you think?" she asked. "Can't you open it?"

"I've got it." Truth to tell, he'd never opened champagne before, but he'd seen it done. Surely it could not be that hard. He removed the wire cage and began to wiggle the cork with his thumbs. Before he knew what had happened, the cork popped out, narrowly missing Luna's eye...fortunately she had good reflexes and ducked...and the fizzy champagne shot everywhere, splashing them both.

"Well, we're a pair." Luna licked at her sleeve. "It's good."

Neville stared at her, entranced. Nothing seemed to faze her. "Is it?"

"Here, try some." She held out her arm.

His eyes met hers, and she smiled... seductively? For a moment, he thought she was nutters; then, he remembered she was simply Luna. With his free hand, he caught her arm and turned it to where a trickle of champagne trailed onto the delicate skin of her wrist. *I killed Voldemort's big snake*, he reminded himself as his tongue flicked out to taste it. The champagne mingled with the salt and sweet that was Luna; "Delicious," breathed Neville.

When he lifted his gaze, Luna still stared at him with those unnerving eyes, a half-smile curving her lips. She held out the glasses, and he divided what remained in the bottle between them. Then, he set the bottle down, grasped his glass, and took a swallow, all under her watchful gaze.

"Not like that," Luna said, taking his glass from his unresisting fingers and setting it on the ground. "Like this." She dipped her finger into the liquid and traced it over his lips. His tongue reached out to catch her fingertip, but she was too quick, and he ended up just licking the champagne from his lips.

"Now, me." She took his finger, dipped it into the sparkling wine, and guided it to her lips. They felt warm and soft as he spread the liquid on them, and her tongue flicked out, tasting the champagne before she caught his fingertip between her teeth and nipped.

Neville's heart raced as she dipped her finger in the glass again and rubbed champagne on his lips, then licked delicately over his skin to taste it.

"Delicious," she sighed.

His hand trembling slightly, he started to dip his finger into his glass again, but he stopped when he saw her lift her glass to her lips and take a deliberate sip, then set her glass down.

Only... she didn't swallow. Her mouth found his, and when his lips parted, she released the champagne into the space now occupied jointly by their two tongues. As the sparkling wine slipped down his throat, her tongue slid against his. Her hands tangled in his hair, and she pressed close to him. He felt her softness even through the layers of clothing that separated them.

She tasted of champagne, and honeysuckle, and moonlight. His arms came around her, and he molded her body to his.

She drew him down beside her, pushing him onto his back, straddling him. Then, she Summoned her glass. She painted the champagne onto his eyelids and cheekbones, her tongue following the path of her finger and licking off the sticky liquid. Neville turned his head and caught her lips again, pouring every bit of longing he'd ever felt for the pale-eyed sprite into the kiss.

When Luna's hand began working at his trousers, he discreetly pinched himself.

"If it's a dream, then I'm having it, too." Exposing his throat, Luna trickled a few droplets of champagne there, then lapped at it like a kitten.

Neville made a slight mewing noise that would have mortified him if he'd been with anybody else but Luna.

He struggled to unfasten her clothing, and, giggling softly, she pushed his hands away and did it herself, exposing a vast expanse of pale, creamy skin punctuated by her pert breasts with their dusky rose tips. With a provocative wink, she picked up her glass and poured the last of her champagne over her breasts.

With a growl, Neville flipped them over and eagerly undertook the task of cleaning up the spill, laving and sucking her nipples, thrilling as she arched into his touch. He fumbled with her trousers, pulling them off her hips, and kissed his way down her body until he found the treasure he sought. He still had some champagne left, and he poured it over her silky flaxen hair as she wriggled her hips.

When his tongue began to lick it up, she laughed her delight. Once he'd got her good and... clean, he slipped a finger inside her, his tongue still teasing. She was warm and wet, and he longed to bury himself inside her, but he wasn't sure what she wanted.

She hauled him up by his shoulders, and he eagerly fumbled out of his trousers. Her small hand closed around him, eliciting a moan as she pulled him towards her.

Plunging inside her, he realized her unblinking stare no longer troubled him. As they began to move together, she pulled his head close and whispered encouragement into his ear. He hadn't expected Luna to have such a filthy vocabulary, but then, she was full of surprises.

As everything began to shift, to tighten, Luna's legs wrapped around his hips, her arms clutching him to her, even her walls seeming to grasp him more tightly, her lips found his, drawing his tongue into her mouth so that they were connected at every possible point of contact. When she exploded in pleasure, the very air in the tent seemed to crackle with the intensity of it.

It was too much for him, and he added his own sparks to the explosion, shuddering against her as she urged him on, spilling inside her.

As they lay together, their breath mingling softly, Neville said, "I hope we didn't disturb the Tupilaq."

"Sod the Tupilaq. I couldn't care less if we did." Luna closed the slight distance between their lips and showed him just how little she cared.

Authors' Notes: Written for the January challenge at the pttterpr0nprmts community at LiveJournal. The prompt was 'cold.' We tied in both categories, best use of prompt and most popular, with two different teams.