

Remus is a Good Boy

by JackieJLH

Six glimpses into the life of Remus Lupin, told through the eyes of those around him.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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1

'Remus is a good boy.'

I am able to say this with such vehemence because I believe it with all my heart. My son has always been well behaved. But I can't say that he is ~~not~~ dangerous... not anymore.

'There's a big difference between a boy and a wolf, Sarah,' my neighbour growls, and I feel my face growing red with anger. Does he think I don't realise what my son is capable of? My anger only grows when Bob's gaze turns from mine to focus on Remus, who presses himself against my side as closely as he can, small tears running down his tiny face. He doesn't remember anything about last night; he doesn't understand what he's done.

'My son would never intentionally hurt anyone, Bob. You know that. You've known Remus since he was born,' I remind him, hoping to stir some compassion in his usually kind heart.

'He tried to get into my house last night!' he yells, pointing at my son accusingly. 'My wife and my daughters were hiding in the attic for hours! We're Squibs, Sarah. We can't just Stun him. What if he gets through the door next time? What if he kills someone? Or, worse, bites them? What then?'

'It was my fault that he got out,' I admit softly, pulling my son closer. 'It won't happen again, I swear it. No one is in danger.'

'I'm sorry, Sarah, but you're wrong.... I know I said I would never tell, but you have to understand my position here. I have to look out for my family, and if that means reporting your boy to the Ministry, so be it. Think about your own family! Your husband is a Muggle! Surely you realise what danger he's in every month, having that monster in the attic? Maybe this is too much for you to handle on your own....'

I've never heard anyone call my son a monster before, and it... it burns. It hurts in a way that makes me sick to my stomach, a way that makes me want to cry. Remus gasps at the hurtful comment; he slips behind me and buries his head into my back, clutching onto my hips and pressing his face into my robes, trying to hide from view as much as possible.

'No, please,' I beg shamelessly, stretching out my hand to grab Bob's arm, but he pulls away and turns towards his home. Tears run down my face as I consider the consequences of what my so-called friend is threatening. The Ministry knows that Remus is a werewolf, but so far we have managed to escape their attention for the most part. If they are given any reason to believe that he is a danger to others, he will be locked up "for his own protection". I can't allow my son to be thrown in a cage like an animal. I would rather die.

'I'm sorry, but this is the way it has to be,' Bob says softly, slumping his shoulders and walking away from us.

Completely forgetting all caution and self-control, I pull my wand from the pocket of my robes, raising it slowly. I feel Remus pull away from me, and I glance back to see the scared, shocked look on his face before turning my gaze back to my neighbour.

'Bob!' I call desperately, and when he turns to look at me, his eyes grow wide with fear.

'Oblivate!'

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'Remus is a good boy.'

'I am prepared to collect him from the school every month, if need be,' Mrs Lupin adds, obviously worried that her husband's reassurances of their son's behaviour will not be enough to ensure the child's place at Hogwarts. Indeed, I don't believe that Mr Lupin, as a Muggle, could ever truly understand the hatred a werewolf faces in the wizarding world. While in the Muggle world werewolves are believed to be mythical, and therefore generally only feared by children, wizards know what damage a lycanthrope can cause, and their fear creates a powerful, though ignorant, prejudice. Remus sits between his parents, looking terrified. I smile at him reassuringly and fold my hands on my desk.

'We've put together a room in the attic where he can be safe, and there's no chance of him escaping.'

'I don't think that will be necessary,' I tell her, shaking my head. 'I'm sure that we'll be able to make the appropriate arrangements. I was actually discussing this issue with my Deputy Headmistress last night, and we believe we may have come up with a solution.'

I can tell that the small family is shocked to hear this. When they came into my office only moments ago, they wore identical looks of dread, mixed with only a little hope, on their faces. The Ministry has left Remus's attendance at Hogwarts up to my discretion, provided that I can assure them that no other children will be put in danger. Andrew Lupin sent me a letter pleading for my help, reminding me that I am their last hope for their son's wizarding education. I invited them to my office, fully intending to admit Remus Lupin to Hogwarts. My determination to ensure that he attends the school is only reinforced after meeting him and his parents.

Leaning forward and resting my forearms on my desk, I peer over my half-moon spectacles at the wide-eyed child and say softly, 'Mr Lupin, have you ever heard of Whomping Willows?'

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'Remus is a good boy.'

'So we're just supposed to believe that he had no hand in this little *prank*'?' Horace looks furious, which is understandable. Mr Snape is one of his favourite students, second only to Lily Evans, it seems.

'Yes,' I say shortly, moving to block Slughorn's piercing gaze...he's been glaring at Remus since he walked into the office. I, on the other hand, have been doing my best to defend him, much to Mr Lupin's astonishment. As his Head of House, I am more than aware that I am often thought of as strict beyond measure. However, I have a lot of faith in this boy. I was the one who recommended him as Prefect to Albus, after all.

'For goodness sake, Minerva!' Horace snaps, rolling his eyes.

There's a sudden clattering of noise outside the door, and I shake my head. It's undoubtedly Mr Potter and Mr Black causing trouble, as usual. I have no sympathy for them when Slughorn throws open the door and shouts at them to stand against the wall and not to move until they're told. I don't think I'm capable of feeling sympathy for them at the moment. It's all I can do to keep myself from wringing their necks.

'That Sirius Black is the problem here!' Filius pipes up in his high-pitched voice, frowning and nodding towards the door that the boys wait behind.

'Definitely!' Horace agrees, throwing his hands up in the air. 'A boy almost died today, and he's out there fooling around! Not that Potter is any better....'

'Professors,' Albus says softly, instantly quieting the room in the way that only he can, 'while I understand that you're upset, we are not discussing Mr Black or Mr Potter at the moment.'

For the first time since entering the office, all eyes turn towards Remus. He slides back until his shoulders are pressed firmly against the chair, eyeing us warily, looking miserable.

'Mr Lupin, I will only ask you once, and I want a truthful answer, do you understand?' Albus asks in a voice that sounds more stressed than angry. Remus nods, glancing around at us cagily, quickly looking at the floor when he comes to Horace's angry glare.

'Did you have any knowledge of what Mr Black was planning to do before you transformed?'

'No, sir,' he says firmly, shaking his head. I believe him. When he was a first-year, he'd admitted to me that his biggest fear was that he would one day bite someone. If he'd known, I am certain he would have done something to stop it. Instead, a student is lying in the hospital wing.

'All right,' Albus says with a nod, seemingly dismissing the very idea from his head. 'You may go, Mr Lupin. Please ask Mr Potter to come in on your way out.'

Rising quickly, Remus stands and swiftly makes his way towards the door, walking stiffly. Normally he receives a Pepper-up Potion upon returning to the school the morning after transformation, to help relieve the aching in his back and legs, but today the potion was forgotten in all the chaos, and I know that he must be uncomfortable, if not in pain.

'Sir,' the boy says hesitantly, stopping in front of Albus' desk, 'I didn't... bite him... did I?' He squeezes his eyes shut as if he's terrified of the answer and clenches his hands into fists at his sides.

'No,' Albus replies, smiling weakly. 'He has a gash on his leg from your claws, and a rather large bump on his head from Mr Potter knocking him out of the way, but he should be fully recovered and out of the hospital wing by tomorrow night.'

'Good,' Remus says, letting out the breath he had been holding. 'Um... Professor... when will I be leaving?'

'Leaving?' I interrupt, confused.

'Well, yeah, I mean, the Ministry won't allow me to stay at Hogwarts now, will they?' Ah... of course Mr Lupin knows precisely the consequences Mr Black's little 'joke' could have caused. If the other children...and their parents...find out about Remus's lycanthropy, their complaints will surely prompt the Ministry to expel him for the safety of the other students. Of course, we've already considered all of this.

'That's why we're not going to tell the Ministry, Mr Lupin,' Albus says with a conspiratorial smile, winking. Reading the confusion in the boy's face, he continues. 'I'll discuss this with Mr Snape and ensure that he doesn't mention it to anyone either.'

Thanking him repeatedly, Remus quickly makes his way to the door, barely sparing a glance for his friends as he rushes through the outer door and into the hall.

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'Remus is a good boy.'

I'm mocking him, and he knows it. He's trying to ignore me, but I'm having too much fun, and I get as close to his face as possible, sneering.

'You may have Dumbledore fooled,' I continue, 'but I know better. You're not taking on this little "assignment" to help the Order. You *want* to join the other beasts, don't you? Finally gives you an excuse to act like the wild animal that you are, I suppose....'

'Go away, Severus,' he says with a sigh, pushing past me and attempting to get out of the infirmary. After years of acquiring Wolfsbane Potion...something I agreed to provide after deciding that it was far better to brew a potion for an enemy than to have a full-grown werewolf wandering throughout wizarding Britain once a month...he isn't used to the pain a normal transformation causes. He made his way to Hogwarts this morning, hiding in the hospital wing like a cowardly child and swallowing as many pain-relieving and muscle-relaxing potions as Poppy would allow.

The knowledge that he must slowly integrate himself with Greyback's group of werewolves and live as they do sickens him, I can tell. Even I could see the look of dread and self-loathing on his face when Albus asked him to go undercover. But I also know that this man almost killed me on two occasions, and I have little faith in his assurances that he takes no pleasure in spending the full moons with his own kind.

'Tell me, Wolf, does running with the pack help you to get over the death of your beloved dog?' I ask, bringing up the one subject that I know will get under his skin. 'After all, the nights must get cold and lonely without a fellow beast to keep you company....'

I know that the last thing Lupin wants at this moment is to be reminded of Black. If he were here, he would be furious with his wolf for agreeing to infiltrate Greyback's little posse. Black had no subtlety. He was "all or nothing", diving headfirst into a cause and displaying his devotion with his every action. He never understood my undercover work, seeing it as simply an excuse to associate with Death Eaters, and I don't think he would have accepted Lupin's new "assignment" without putting up a fight. In a way, I almost wish he'd survived the Department of Mysteries battle, if only because the argument would have been highly amusing to watch.

A look of complete rage comes across Lupin's face, and he suddenly pulls his wand from his robes, catching me off guard. Glaring at the piece of wood pointed at my face, I shake my head, though my heart rate speeds up. I taught myself a long time ago how to keep my features appearing calm when I am nervous, and that self-training is coming in useful now.

'Get *out*, Snape,' he growls, his cheeks flushing with barely controlled fury. No one has the ability to anger him like I do, which is why I strive to make him lose his temper so often. It's a challenge that presents itself so rarely in life, and an opportunity that I can't help but take advantage of.

Sneering at him without a hint of fear in my expression, I roll my eyes and turn on my heels, storming out of the hospital wing.

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'Remus is a good boy.'

He's lying there, so helpless looking, and I feel tears spring to my eyes. 'He's a good boy,' I say again. 'He's always done what he should, and he'll do the same now. We need him to wake up... he *will* wake up, Molly. His body just needs time to heal.'

There's a tapping, a faint knocking, and the door swings open. Nymphadora Tonks, Remus's fiancée, steps into the room as quietly as she can manage, which is hardly very quiet at all.

'How's he doing, Poppy?' she asks. She's been worried sick ever since Remus was brought into the hospital wing yesterday morning. She sounds as if she's been crying again.

'No change yet,' I tell her.

'But it's only been a few hours,' Molly says quickly, reaching out to take Remus's hand in hers. I can only hope that her presence is comforting to her friend, even in his coma-like state.

'What on earth did he think he was doing? He nearly got himself killed!' Tonks cries, flopping down on the edge of the bed and taking Remus's other hand.

'He saved my daughter,' Molly says, and I can hear the gratefulness in her voice. The thought that flashes through my head saddens me...if he should die, at least he did it fighting, which is what he would have wanted.

'I know... I just....' Tonks's voice cracks, and my heart nearly breaks at the sound. I love my job, honestly. But moments like these make me wish that I'd chosen any other field but medicine. There are few pains in this world worse than watching the hurting and suffering of a loved one.

Molly gasps suddenly, and my eyes fly to her hand, where Remus's fingers are gripping hers tightly. Looking up, I smile as he opens his eyes.

'Hi,' he says weakly, trying to smile. I grin, patting his foot tenderly where it rests at the end of the bed nearest me.

'Welcome back, Mr Lupin,' I say warmly, quickly making my way to the side of the bed, nudging Tonks out of the way and Summoning a potion from the cabinet on the opposite side of the room. 'Now, drink this.'

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'Remus is a good boy.'

'Oh, is he?' I ask, smirking as he crawls across the bed towards me, kissing me gently. My husband nods, smiling. His smile is the sexiest part of him, and I trace his lips with my finger slowly. It still amazes me that he's really lying here in my bed, really mine forever. I never thought we'd make it this far, if only because Remus never felt he was "good enough" to find love. To me, Remus was always much, much more than "good enough".

'Well, what if I want him to be a bad boy?' I try my best to look innocent as I ask this, but fail miserably.

He pretends to consider my words for a moment, but I can tell he's trying not to laugh when I give a frustrated mock sigh and sit back, biting my lip. Finally, after a few moments of watching me squirm, he grins mischievously.

'I think I can manage that. Come here, Nymphadora.' Only he can get away with calling me that... only he can make me melt by speaking the name I hate.

Grabbing my shoulders, he pulls me down on top of his chest. Nuzzling my face against his neck, I reach for my wand, dim the lights with a softly spoken spell, and let myself fall back onto the bed.

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