

“No, really!” Harry insisted, desperately not wanting Remus to think he had a problem with two men together. “It’s not that. It’s just, he’s my Potions professor, and he *hated* me for as long as I’ve known him, and to see him being *nice* is just... weird.”

Something in Remus’ posture seemed to ease, and he ran a hand through his messy hair. “Severus is a man of many masks, with many roles to play,” he conceded. “I told you before, he doesn’t hate you. By the end of the summer you two might even be friends.”

Harry gave him a look that said he was pushing his luck. Remus winked. “You never know, Harry. He keeps his emotions close to his chest, but he’s really not as awful as he likes to pretend. The two of you are actually more alike than you know, in some ways.”

His Aunt Petunia’s words drifted through his mind again. Harry swallowed. He wasn’t sure if that was something he wanted to have in common with Snape.

“I expect it to take time for you two to warm up to each other,” Remus continued, oblivious to Harry’s internal conflict. “But he cares for you, deep down.”

“Do you love him?” Harry bit his tongue as soon as the question escaped, cheeks flaming. Remus looked a little abashed, but a soft smile crossed his face.

“I have loved Severus since before I really knew what love even was,” he replied unashamedly. “And difficult as it might be for you to comprehend, he loves me as well. He’s just not the most... expressive man on the planet.” He shook his head, snapping himself out of his daze. “Anyway, enough of my lovesick rambling. Breakfast!”

Harry followed him down to the kitchen, where Professor Snape was already sat at the table, reading the *Daily Prophet* with a cup of tea at his elbow. Ceri was at the stove once again, frying eggs.

“Can Ceri be getting sirs anything to drink?” she asked brightly. “We be having tea, coffee, pumpkin juice, orange juice, milk—“

“Orange juice would be great, please,” Harry requested. With a snap of her fingers, a glass of orange juice began pouring itself from a jug on the counter, and floated its way over to Harry. At Remus’ request, she made more tea.

“Master Sirius be snoozing in late,” Ceri said in fond reprimand, and Remus chuckled.

“He isn’t used to being allowed a lie-in. He’ll be down as soon as he smells that bacon cooking.”

Harry watched as Remus leaned over Snape’s shoulder with one hand on the man’s back, reading the *Prophet* article with a frown on his face. Snape didn’t seem bothered by the contact, merely tilting his head so Remus could get a better look. Then Remus just sat down at the table, in the same spot he had last night.

It was strange. Harry hadn’t seen many couples interacting before. Just his aunt and uncle — never a role model for *anything*, let alone healthy relationships — and Mr and Mrs Weasley.