

30 Days. 30 Ships.

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by Anonymous

Summary

A 30-day writing challenge featuring 30 different Harry Potter M/M pairings. Each chapter is a complete standalone story of approximately 1,500 words, combining a randomly selected pairing with a randomly selected scenario.

Update.

I am still doing this challenge. There will be thirty prompts/stories.

I am, however, suffering from a lot of pain in both my wrists which is making things slower for me.

Notes

This is a collection of standalone one-shots written as part of a 30-day challenge.

Each chapter will feature a different pairing and prompt. Relationship tags will be added as each chapter is posted. I will list any warning tags on each chapter.

See the end of the work for [more notes](#)

Chapter 1: Barty/Severus. [A Quiet Morning] (Rating- T.)

“The tea is lukewarm, and your posture is offensive.”

Severus did not look up from the parchment he was grading. He simply dipped his quill into a pot of ink that smelled faintly of crushed beetles and regret, marking a particularly egregious error in a third-year’s essay on the Draught of Living Death with a sharp, violent flick of his wrist.

Barty was perched precariously on the edge of the heavy oak table, swinging his legs like a schoolboy despite being a grown man and profoundly unstable. He was wearing one of Severus’s old linen shirts—far too large in the shoulders, slipping off one side to reveal a jagged scar of a tattoo.

“The tea is lukewarm because you spent ten minutes criticising the stirring motion,” Barty replied, his voice a frantic, melodic chirp. He reached out and flicked a stray piece of parchment. “And my posture is a rebellion against the rigidity of the Ministry. Father would have loved the symmetry of my slouch.”

Severus finally looked up. His dark eyes were tired, rimmed with the kind of exhaustion that sleep could not cure, but there was a softness there—a specific, curated kind of tenderness that he reserved for only one person in the world.

“Your father was a man of checklists and clockwork,” Severus said smoothly. “He would have found your current state of disarray... tedious.”

“Exactly,” Barty beamed, his eyes widening with a manic sort of glee.

The morning was quiet, save for the rhythmic scritch-scratch of the quill and the distant, muffled sounds of the castle waking up. They were in a hidden alcove of the dungeons, a space carved out of damp limestone that served as a sanctuary from the prying eyes of the faculty.

It was a fragile peace, earned through years of shared bitterness and a mutual understanding of what it meant to be a tool used by someone more powerful.

Barty slid off the table, his movements jerky and unpredictable. He circled Severus, his footsteps silent on the stone floor, until he was standing directly behind the chair. He leaned in, resting his chin on Severus’s shoulder. The smell of Barty was a chaotic mix of ozone, burnt sugar, and the metallic tang of the potions he had been “experimenting” with in the cellar.

“You’re thinking of the students again,” Barty whispered, his breath warm against Severus’s cheek.

Severus stiffened, though he did not pull away. “I am thinking about the lack of basic competence in the current student body.”

“Liar,” Barty chuckled, a low, raspy sound. He reached around and gently took the quill from Severus’s hand, setting it aside with an exaggerated air of importance. “They are a nuisance. A smudge on a clean page. Why bother grading the smudge when you could be looking at me?”

Severus let out a long, slow exhale. He leaned back into the touch, his spine curving against Barty’s chest. It was a rare surrender. In the eyes of the world, Severus was a monolith of control; here, in the dim light of a Tuesday morning, he was simply tired.

“You are an insufferable distraction,” Severus murmured.

“That is my primary function,” Barty replied.

Barty’s hands, scarred and stained with ink, moved to Severus’s temples. He began to massage the tension there with surprising gentleness, his thumbs tracing small, rhythmic circles. He knew exactly where the stress pooled—where the weight of living two lives and grief lived in the muscle.

For a few minutes, the silence returned, but it had changed. It was no longer the silence of two people ignoring each other, but the silence of two people who no longer needed to speak to be understood.

Barty shifted, pressing a kiss to the side of Severus’s neck—a quick, sharp peck that felt like a spark of electricity.

“I want to burn something today,” Barty whispered.

Severus closed his eyes, leaning further into the warmth. “The library is off limits. The students’ essays, however, are practically begging for it.”

“A date!” Barty cheered, pulling back just enough to grin.

Severus opened his eyes and looked at the man—the wreckage of a son, the loyal soldier, the chaotic spark—and felt a flicker of something that felt dangerously like contentment.

“Five more minutes,” Severus commanded, reaching back to catch Barty’s wrist and pulling him closer. “And then we shall see about the arson.”

Chapter 2: Albus/Gellert [Mistaken Identity] (Rating T)

“The third button from the top is loose,” Gellert observed, his voice low, in the silence of the library.

Albus didn’t look up from his parchment. “Your attention to my tailoring is touching, Gellert, but I suspect your interest in my buttons is a diversion from the fact that you haven’t finished your translation of the 12th-century runes.”

“Detail is the soul of precision, Albus. Whether in linguistics or dress.”

This was the rhythm of their summer: a constant, humming tension of intellectual rivalry and an attraction so potent it felt like a physical weight in the room.

The mistake happened three days later, in the suffocating heat of the late August solstice.

It started with a mask. Not a magical one, but a physical thing—a heavy, velvet-lined carnival mask Gellert had found in a dusty corner of the attic, intended for a joke they were planning for the house-elves. It was a grotesque, gold-leafed thing that obscured the upper half of the face.

Gellert had donned it to sneak up on Albus in the gardens, a childish whim to break the stifling tension. As he stepped from the shadows of the towering hedges, he saw a figure leaning against the stone fountain.

The figure was wearing Albus’s oversized robes. The same shock of auburn hair—though Albus’s was more gold than red in the sunlight—was tucked under a wide-brimmed hat. The figure turned, and for a fleeting second, the angle of the jaw and the tilt of the head were identical to the boy Gellert loved.

In the dimming light of the golden hour, and through the blurring lens of a sudden summer squall, Gellert didn’t see that it was merely a cousin, a distant relation with a passing resemblance and a penchant for mimicking Albus’s slouch.

He saw Albus. He saw the boy who had challenged his every thought and awakened every dormant nerve in his body.

Gellert stepped forward, the mask still clinging to his face, and pulled the stranger into a kiss that tasted of desperation and long-suppressed longing.

The reaction was immediate. The stranger gasped, stiffened, and pushed him away with a look of utter bewilderment.

“Good heavens!” the boy exclaimed, his voice an octave too high to be Albus. “What on earth is wrong with you?”

Gellert froze. The world tilted. He ripped the mask from his face, his eyes wide. “You aren’t ___”

“I’m Theodore,” the cousin replied, smoothing his robes with an offended huff. “And while I appreciate the enthusiasm, I believe you’ve mistaken me for someone far more patient with your eccentricities.”

The humiliation was a cold shock, but it was eclipsed by the sudden presence of the real Albus Dumbledore, standing ten feet away, leaning against a cedar tree with his arms crossed. He had seen everything.

Albus’s expression was unreadable—a mixture of amusement and something sharper, something that looked dangerously like jealousy.

“Teddy is a clumsy mimic, Gellert,” Albus said, his voice cool. “But your aim is improving.”

The silence that followed was thick, heavy with the weight of the mistake. The air crackled with the unspoken. For a moment, the angst of the misunderstanding hung between them—the fear that the moment had been wasted, the embarrassment of the wrong target.

Gellert stepped toward him, the gold mask forgotten on the grass. “I thought—”

“I know what you thought,” Albus interrupted. He stepped forward, closing the gap until their chests nearly touched. He reached out, his fingers grazing the collar of Gellert’s shirt, right where the fabric was strained. “And for the record, the third button on your cuff is missing.”

Gellert let out a breath he hadn’t known he was holding. He reached out, grabbing the front of Albus’s robes and pulling him in, not with a mistake this time, but with a certainty that shook his very bones.

The kiss was not a mistake. It was a collision of two stars, a desperate, frantic confirmation that they were no longer just students, no longer just rivals. It was the taste of cinnamon and old parchment, the feeling of a world shifting on its axis.

As they pulled apart, breathless and flushed, Albus rested his forehead against Gellert’s.

“You are a complete idiot,” Albus whispered.

“And you,” Gellert murmured, leaning back in for another, “are terribly distracting.”

Chapter 3: Truth or Dare [Remus/Severus] (Rating-Light M)

“If you use a Legilimency probe on me, I am pouring this entire bottle of Firewhisky into your shoes.”

Severus didn't look up from his book, though the corner of his mouth curled.

“The likelihood of my wasting Legilimency on you is roughly equal to that of Potter paying attention in class.”

They were sprawled across the damp grass of a hidden alcove behind the greenhouses, a bottle of smuggled firewhisky sitting between them. It had started as a way to kill time during a particularly suffocating weekend, a bored challenge between two boys who hated each other almost as much as they respected each other's intellect.

Remus shifted, his worn sweater slipping off one shoulder. He looked tired—the full moon was three days away—but there was a glint in his amber eyes that Severus found irritatingly persistent.

Truth or dare.

A childish way to pass the time...

“Truth,” Remus said, his voice a low rasp.

“Predictable,” Severus sneered. “Tell me: do you actually enjoy the company of Black and Potter, or do you simply find their incompetence a comforting foil to your own mediocre talents?”

Remus laughed, a dry sound. “A bit of both. They're loud enough to drown out the sound of my own thoughts. Now, my turn.” He paused, leaning in, the scent of old parchment and chocolate clinging to him. “Severus. Truth or Dare?”

Severus felt the trap closing. Remus was too perceptive for truths; he'd ask something that would peel back a layer of skin Severus had spent years thickening.

“Dare,” Severus snapped.

Remus's smile didn't reach his eyes, but it widened. “I dare you to stop pretending you haven't been staring at my mouth for the last twenty minutes.”

The silence that followed was heavy, punctuated only by the distant call of an owl. Severus froze, the book in his hand suddenly feeling like a lead weight. He wanted to recoil, to spit insults about Lupin's delusions of importance, but the physical reality of their proximity—the heat radiating off Remus's leg against his own—anchored him.

“You're arrogant,” Severus whispered.

“And you’re shaking,” Remus countered.

Severus didn’t think; he acted. He lunged forward, grabbing the collar of Remus’s sweater and pulling him downward. It wasn’t a graceful kiss; it was a collision of teeth and desperation, a clash of two people who had spent years translating attraction into aggression.

Remus let out a muffled sound of surprise that quickly melted into a groan, his hands finding purchase in the coarse fabric of Severus’s robes, pulling him closer until there was no air left between them. The kiss tasted of firewhisky and repressed longing, frantic and clumsy.

Severus pushed him back against the soft earth, his knee sliding between Remus’s thighs. The friction was electric, a sharp contrast to the chill of the evening. Remus’s breath hitched, his fingers digging into Severus’s shoulders, grounding them both.

For a moment, the rivalry vanished. There was no war, no Marauder’s cruelty, no Slytherin pride. There was only the slide of a hand beneath a waistband and the rhythmic, shallow breathing of two boys who had finally found a language they both spoke fluently.

When they finally broke apart, breathless and flushed, Severus didn’t pull away immediately. He rested his forehead against Remus’s, his dark eyes searching the other’s face.

“That,” Severus breathed, his voice trembling slightly, “was a statistically improbable outcome.”

Remus chuckled, reaching up to brush a stray lock of black hair from Severus’s forehead. “Truth or dare, Severus?”

Severus leaned back down, his lips grazing Remus’s ear. “Dare.”

Chapter 4: Draco/Harry [Kiss In The Rain] (Rating T/Light M)

"If you touch me again, I will personally ensure you spend the rest of your existence in a jar."

The threat was breathless, vibrating with a level of aggression that didn't quite match the way Draco's hand was gripping the front of Harry's robes.

They were in the corridor leading to the Astronomy Tower, a narrow stretch of stone that felt far too small.

Outside, the Scottish highlands were dissolving into a grey blur. The rain wasn't just falling; it was assaulting the castle, drumming against the high windows with a violent, rhythmic intensity.

Harry shoved him. It wasn't a magical shove, but a raw, physical heave that sent Draco stumbling back against the cold wall.

"You're pathetic, Potter," Draco spat, though his voice lacked its usual polished edge. It sounded frayed. "Obsessed. Always hovering. Always watching me."

"I'm watching you because you are always up to something," Harry snapped. He stepped forward, closing the gap, his boots clicking sharply on the stone. "What is it today?"

Draco lunged. He didn't use his wand; he grabbed Harry by the shoulders and slammed him back against the opposite wall. The impact knocked the air out of Harry's lungs in a sharp, wheezing gasp.

For a moment, they stayed there. Chest to chest. The air between them was thick with the smell of wet wool, old parchment, and a sudden, electric tension that felt like a lightning strike.

Harry's heart was hammering against his ribs, a frantic bird trapped in a cage. He could see the pale flicker of Draco's pupils, the way his grey eyes were blown wide, searching Harry's face for something—an apology, a blow, a sign of surrender.

"I hate you," Harry whispered, though he was the one who reached up first.

He didn't know if he was trying to push Draco away or pull him closer. He just knew that the space between them had become unbearable.

The kiss was less about romance and more of a collision. It tasted like salt and desperation. It was a fight translated into a different language—teeth clashing, breaths hitched, a frantic scramble for dominance.

Draco made a low, guttural sound in the back of his throat, a noise of surrender that sounded suspiciously like a sob. He pressed Harry harder against the wall, his hands migrating from the shoulders to the small of Harry's back, pulling him flush against his body.

"Shut up," Draco murmured against his lips, his voice a ruined wreck. "Just, shut up for once."

Harry didn't. He groaned into the kiss, his fingers tangling in the blonde hair at the nape of Draco's neck, pulling him closer, deeper.

The rain intensified, a sudden roar of water against the glass that seemed to isolate them in a bubble of grey stone and heat.

Harry's hand slid down, gripping the curve of Draco's hip, pulling him tight. The friction of their robes was irritating, too many layers of fabric between them, and Harry felt a sudden, violent urge to strip them both bare right there in the hallway.

Draco's breath was hot against Harry's jaw, his kisses migrating down to the sensitive skin of his neck.

"You're infuriating," Draco whispered, his teeth grazing Harry's pulse point.

"You're a prat," Harry gasped, arching his neck to give him more room.

They were shaking—not from the cold, but from the sheer, exhausting weight of six years of resentment finally collapsing into something physical.

When Draco pulled back, just an inch, his lips were swollen and his expression was one of utter confusion. He looked like he had just survived a shipwreck.

Harry looked back, his glasses skewed, his chest heaving.

"I still hate you," Harry said, though he didn't let go of Draco's waist.

"Obviously," Draco replied, his voice trembling. "Now do that again."

Chapter 5: Remus/Sirius [Snowed In] (Rating T.)

Chapter Notes

No actual described sexual act.

"If we die, I am going to haunt you."

Sirius said it through gritted teeth, his voice vibrating with a violent shudder.

Remus ignored him. Over the past few decades, he had learned how to do that with his best friend quite well. It was a survival mechanism, much like the way one ignores a leaking roof until it actually starts raining on the dinner table.

Instead, Remus returned his focus to the hearth. It was a miserable, damp heap of stone and sodden peat in a cottage that had been abandoned since the Great War. It was hard to concentrate, however, when all he could hear was the sound of Sirius's chattering teeth.

They had been walking back from the village when the sky had collapsed. Not a storm, but a whiteout—a wall of frozen snow that had erased the horizon and coloured the path in ten minutes.

Now, they were snowed in, huddled in a space that smelled of wet wool and dust.

"You're not even listening," Sirius snapped, though the effect was ruined by a sudden, hacking cough. He was shivering so hard his boots were drumming against the floorboards.

"I'm listening," Remus murmured, his fingers numb as he struck another flint.

Sirius murmured something Remus didn't catch.

Remus finally caught a spark. A tiny, orange bloom flickered in the peat. He leaned in, shielding it with his cupped hands, his breath ghosting in the freezing air.

"Come here," Remus commanded.

Sirius didn't argue. He slid across the floor, his movements stiff and clumsy, and pressed himself against Remus's side. He was radiating a desperate, shivering heat that felt like a dying ember.

They sat in silence for an hour, feeding the fire with the few dry planks they'd scavenged from the attic. The room didn't get warm, but it stopped being lethal.

"We're going to be fine," Remus said, though he didn't know why he was saying it.

The friction of their coats—heavy, damp wool—rubbed together. Sirius was close enough that Remus could smell the scent of wet dog and expensive tobacco. It was a smell that had anchored Remus for half his life.

Sirius looked up at him. His grey eyes were clouded with exhaustion, his lashes tipped with frost. He looked fragile, a state Sirius Black usually spent a great deal of effort concealing.

"Remus," he whispered.

"Yes?"

"I need to know, in case we die..."

Remus didn't let him finish. He didn't want to hear the hesitation or the apology that usually followed Sirius's moments of vulnerability. He leaned in, closing the small, freezing gap between them.

The kiss was clumsy at first, tasting of salt and cold air. It was a collision of hunger and years of waiting. Sirius let out a sound—half-sob, half-sigh—and surged forward, knocking Remus back against the stone hearth.

The cold of the room vanished, replaced by a sudden, searing heat that had nothing to do with the fire.

Sirius's hands found the back of Remus's neck, pulling him closer, as if trying to merge their bodies. Remus groaned, his hands sliding beneath Sirius's heavy coat to find the warmth of a sweater, the heat of a chest heaving with breath.

They tumbled backward onto a pile of old, moth-eaten rugs. The movement was frantic, a sudden release of tension that had always been building.

Sirius's mouth moved from Remus's lips to his jaw, his teeth grazing skin in a way that made Remus arch his back. He felt Sirius's fingers tangle in his hair, pulling him down, demanding more.

It wasn't a gentle thing. It was the frantic energy of two men who had spent too long pretending they didn't want to touch.

Remus felt Sirius's hand slide down, gripping his thigh, pulling him flush against a hip that was trembling for a different reason now. The friction of their trousers, the sudden weight of Sirius pinning him down, the sound of ragged breathing filling the small room—it was a different kind of fire.

They didn't make it out of their clothes entirely; the air was too biting for that. But they found the places where skin met skin—the warmth of a neck, the press of a palm against a chest—and clung to each other as if they were the only two solid things left in the world.

When it ended, they stayed tangled.

Remus lay on his back, staring up at the rafters, feeling the rhythmic thrum of Sirius's heart against his ribs. Sirius was tucked into the curve of his arm, his forehead resting against Remus's collarbone.

The fire had settled into a low, humming glow. Outside, the wind continued to howl, shaking the walls of the cottage, but the silence inside had changed.

"You're still shivering," Remus whispered, kissing the top of Sirius's head.

Sirius made a sound of contentment, tightening his grip on Remus's waist. "Just hold me."

And so Remus did.

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Chapter 6: Regulus/James [X Marks The Spot] (Light M)

“If you actually touch my face with that, I am going to hex you,” Regulus muttered, though he didn’t move away.

They were in the Room of Requirement, which had decided to manifest as a dusty, oversized attic filled with the remnants of failed Ministry experiments from the 1800s.

James had found the map tucked inside a leather tube that smelled of old seawater.

It wasn’t a map of a place, which was the first thing he noticed. It was a detailed sketch of a human body.

It looked like a medical textbook, but the ink shimmered with a rhythmic, slow pulse, like a sleeping heart.

“I’m just testing it!” James chirped, his glasses sliding down his nose. He was vibrating with energy that Regulus usually found exhausting but was currently finding... distracting.

James reached out and gingerly tapped the gold-inked representation of the collarbone.

Regulus let out a sharp, sudden gasp, his shoulder jerking upward as if he’d been struck by a physical blow. He stumbled back a step, his grey eyes wide.

“Did you—did you feel that?” James asked, his voice dropping an octave.

“Feel what?” Regulus snapped, though his breath was hitching. “The sensation of a phantom finger poking my clavicle? Yes, James, I felt it.”

James frowned, leaning in. He touched the map again—this time, a slow, deliberate slide of his finger from the shoulder down to the elbow.

Regulus let out a soft, broken sound, his back hitting a stack of old trunks. His eyes fluttered shut, and his head tilted back. It felt as if the sensation was originating from inside his own nerves, bypassing the skin entirely. It was more intimate than a touch because there was no barrier of clothing or air. It was just the feeling of James’s presence, mapped directly onto his nervous system.

“Oh,” James whispered. He looked at the map, then back at Regulus, whose chest was heaving. “Oh, this is incredible.”

“Don't get any ideas, Potter,” Regulus breathed, though he didn’t move to stop him. He stayed pinned against the trunks, his gaze locked on James with a hunger that had been simmering for months.

James didn’t answer. He was staring at the map with a sudden, focused intensity.

He began to explore.

He traced the line of the ribs, the curve of the waist, the dip of the hip. Each movement of James's finger on the vellum sent a corresponding wave of warmth through Regulus. It was a slow-motion arson, lighting fires in places Regulus hadn't known were flammable.

Regulus groaned, his hands gripping the edge of the trunks so hard his knuckles turned white. "James," he warned, though it sounded more like a plea.

"Just seeing where the boundaries are," James murmured. His voice was thick. He shifted his hand, his finger hovering over the lower abdomen of the sketch.

He didn't press hard. He just brushed the surface of the parchment, circling the area. Regulus felt a sudden, sharp pull in his gut, a magnetic tension that made his toes curl in his boots. The air in the room felt heavy with the sudden, electric charge between them.

James watched Regulus's face—the way his lips were parted, the way his pupils had swallowed the iris. James wasn't looking at the map anymore; he was looking at the boy in front of him.

"You're shaking," James whispered.

"Because you're playing with my nerves like a harp," Regulus gasped. "Either stop or—or actually do something."

James's breath hitched. He looked down at the gold ink. His finger drifted lower, tracing the line of the thigh, the inner curve of the groin. He stopped right at the center.

James paused. He looked at Regulus, asking a silent question.

Regulus reached out, grabbing the front of James's robes and pulling him closer until their foreheads touched.

"X marks the treasure, Potter. Now, discover it."

Chapter 7: Harry/Tom Riddle|Voldemort [Enemies Forced to Cooperate]

"Stop squirming, Potter. Your frantic breathing is distracting me from the instructions."

Lord Voldemort sat perched on the edge of a velvet chaise, staring intensely at a pile of jagged, neon-plastic pieces. In his other hand, he held a chocolate shell, half-consumed.

Harry, bound by shimmering magical cords to a heavy oak chair, blinked. He looked at the Dark Lord, then at the disassembled miniature plastic dragon on the table.

"Is that... a Kinder Egg?" Harry rasped, his voice dry.

"The Muggle shopkeeper insisted it was a marvel of engineering," Voldemort hissed. "But the assembly is illogical. The wing does not snap into the socket. It is a design flaw of the highest order."

Voldemort tried to force the piece again. A snap echoed through the room. A tiny plastic claw flew across the floor.

The Dark Lord froze. His pale face twisted in a mixture of genuine rage and profound helplessness. He looked at his own long, spindly fingers—too clumsy for such a microscopic task.

"You," Voldemort pointed a wand at Harry. "You are small. Your hands are unremarkable. Fix this, and I shall consider not killing you for the next hour."

With a flick of his wrist, the bonds vanished. Harry slumped forward, rubbing his wrists. He looked at the toy, then at the man who had spent a decade trying to murder him.

"You're actually serious," Harry muttered.

"The dragon must be complete, Potter. Now, move."

Harry crawled toward the table. As he reached for the plastic pieces, his hand brushed against Voldemort's cold skin. Neither of them pulled away immediately.

The silence shifted. The air grew heavy, not with hatred, but with a sudden, sharp curiosity.

"You're shaking," Voldemort observed, his voice dropping to a low, dangerous purr.

"It's because you're a psychopath," Harry whispered, though he didn't move his hand.

"And yet," Voldemort murmured, leaning closer until Harry could smell ozone and old parchment, "you are the only one capable of solving my problem."

Harry looked up. He should have run. Instead, he clicked the plastic wing into place with a satisfying *pop*.

Voldemort didn't look at the dragon.

He was looking at Harry.

"Remarkable," he murmured.

Harry frowned. "The toy?"

Voldemort was silent for a long moment.

"...No."

Harry's ears warmed.

"Don't make that weird."

"I merely observed," Voldemort said smoothly, though his gaze lingered a heartbeat too long.

"Competence is... unexpectedly attractive."

Harry stared.

"Did you just flirt with me over a Kinder Egg?"

Voldemort looked genuinely offended.

"Certainly not."

He picked up the dragon with all the dignity of a Dark Lord.

"...It was over your manual dexterity."

Chapter 8: Draco/Ron [Jealousy] (Rating T)

Chapter Summary

Prompt was jealously.

Draco had no idea why he allowed Pansy to talk him into this. Just because she had decided falling in love with Potter was acceptable didn't mean they all had to suffer the presence of the golden boy and his chums.

He spotted Blaise across the room talking to—or, more accurately, being talked at by Ginny.

"You look like a horde of wasps have decided to take up home in your mouth."

Draco felt himself cringe. Why? Why did the ginger bastard have to single him out?

He didn't want to turn. He really didn't.

Unfortunately, the Weasel appeared determined to occupy every inch of Draco's personal space until he did.

Ron had always taken up too much room, as though the world naturally shifted to accommodate him. He was no longer the lanky boy Draco remembered from school. Somewhere along the way he'd filled out, broad shoulders stretching the fabric of his shirt, solid muscle packed onto an already ridiculous frame.

Draco wasn't blind. The idiot had grown into himself.

He looked like he could sling a fully-grown wizard over one shoulder without much effort.

Not that Draco had ever considered such a thing.

Obviously.

"Is there a point to your idiotic chatter, Weasley?"

Ron grinned, leaning against the fireplace.

"And here I was thinking you looked lonely. A little green with jealousy as you gazed so longingly at Harry and Pansy."

There wasn't enough whisky in the world for this conversation, Draco decided as he drowned the rest of his drink.

"I was thinking Pansy has clearly lost her mind."

Ron stepped closer, and Draco hated that he noticed.

"Really?" Ron's breath was warm against his neck as he leaned in to whisper. "To me, it looks like you're feeling a little left out."

Draco tried to move, but found himself boxed in by the wall and Ron's chest.

"Looks like all your miserable little friends are busy." Ron's expression shifted into a predatory smirk. "Oh no. Who's going to save the damsel if a big bad wolf comes along?"

Draco cursed himself as his gaze flickered to Ron's mouth.

The git's grin only widened.

He should say something. Something devastating. Something witty.

Instead, his mind emptied completely.

Ron smiled—a slow, satisfied smile.

"There you are."

And then he closed the space between them.

Chapter 9: Severus/Sirius [Wedding Guests] (Rating G)

Chapter Summary

Severus forgets his gift.

Severus frowned as he looked into the gift bag.

"That's impossible."

"What is?"

"I appear to have forgotten the wedding gift."

Sirius stared at him. They stood just outside the wedding venue, Sirius turning away from the stream of arriving guests.

"You?"

"I am aware this is unusual."

"You colour-code your potion ingredients."

"I know."

"You've had Christmas presents wrapped by October."

"I know."

"You once reminded Minerva it was Filius's birthday."

"I know, Black."

Sirius folded his arms, trying—and failing—not to grin.

"So... the impossible has happened."

Severus pinched the bridge of his nose.

"I was distracted."

"By?"

"You."

That stopped Sirius for half a second.

Then the grin returned twice as wide.

"Well." He nodded towards the gift in his own bag. "You can put your name on mine."

Severus looked suspicious.

"I assume there are conditions."

"There are always conditions," Sirius said, his grin widening.

"What do you want?"

Sirius pretended to think very hard.

"One kiss."

"Done."

"And."

"I knew there was an 'and.'"

"You have to call me Sirius for the rest of today."

Severus looked horrified.

"No."

"Then no gift."

"You are blackmailing me."

"No. I am giving you exactly what you need... and asking for fair payment."

"That is the very essence of blackmail, Black."

"And yet you're standing here giftless."

Severus sighed the sigh of a man making a terrible life decision.

"...Very well."

Sirius held out the gift tag with theatrical flourish.

"Pleasure doing business with you."

Severus took the tag, signed both their names with neat, elegant strokes, then handed it back.

"There, Sirius."

"There?" Sirius echoed. "That's only half the payment."

Before Severus could answer, Sirius stepped forward and stole a quick kiss.

It was brief, barely more than a brush of lips, but when he pulled away he was positively insufferable.

"Transaction complete."

"You are impossible."

"And yet you keep doing business with me."

Later—

"Could you pass the salt... Sirius."

Remus looked up so quickly he nearly inhaled his champagne.

James dropped his fork.

Lily blinked.

Sirius looked unbearably pleased with himself.

"What was that?"

Severus closed his eyes.

"Sirius."

"I didn't quite catch it."

"Sirius."

"Louder."

Severus leaned across the table.

"If you push your luck, Sirius, I shall ensure the next wedding we attend is your funeral."

Sirius only laughed.

"Worth it."

Then, before Severus could protest, he leaned over and stole another quick kiss.

A horrified gasp came from somewhere down the table.

"I believe," Remus said, reaching for his wine, "we've just witnessed extortion followed by public indecency."

Chapter 10: Severus/James [Nightmares] (Rating G)

Chapter Summary

Severus has a nightmare.

Severus snapped awake.

His breath caught like a jagged shard in his throat, and his skin felt too tight for his frame. For a heartbeat, he didn't know where he was.

Then the dim, golden light of their bedroom came into focus. The smell of old parchment and cedarwood replaced the phantom scent of ozone.

James was propped up on one elbow, his glasses crooked on his face, watching Severus with quiet concern.

Severus didn't move. He couldn't quite shake the phantom feeling of cold stone against his back or the crushing certainty of being small, hated, and utterly alone. He let out a shuddering breath, his shoulders finally dropping an inch.

"The corridors again?" James asked softly.

Severus closed his eyes, hating the vulnerability of the question.

"It was... nothing. A remnant of a tedious childhood."

"You were shouting in your sleep, Sev. Something about 'blood' and 'bastards.' Very dramatic. Ten points to Slytherin for flair."

A reluctant sound escaped Severus—half laugh, half broken sigh.

He shifted closer, drawn instinctively toward the warmth beside him. The transition from the frozen emptiness of the nightmare to the solid reality of James—warm, familiar, and infuriatingly alive—left him feeling unsteady.

James didn't offer empty reassurances. He didn't tell him everything was alright or that the past no longer mattered. They both knew memories had a habit of lingering long after the danger had passed.

Instead, James slid a steady hand across Severus's shoulder blades, grounding him in the present.

"You're here," James whispered, all traces of teasing gone. "You're in our house. The doors are locked, the wards are up, and I'm far too loud to let anyone sneak up on you."

Severus rested his forehead against James's collarbone, letting the steady rhythm of his breathing calm the frantic beat of his own heart.

James cupped his jaw, gently tilting Severus's face upward.

The kiss was slow.

Safe.

A quiet reclaiming of home.

A reminder that this was real.

That he was no longer alone.

Severus sighed into it, his fingers curling into the fabric of James's shirt as the warmth slowly seeped back into his bones, pushing the shadows into the corners where they belonged.

"Go back to sleep," James murmured against his forehead. "Or I'll start reciting the rules of Quidditch until you pass out from boredom."

"You are a grotesque man," Severus murmured, though he made no attempt to move away.

James smiled.

"But I'm yours."

This time, Severus laughed properly.

The sound was quiet, but real.

He closed his eyes again, and for the first time that night, sleep no longer felt like something to fear.

Chapter 11: Cedric/Harry [Birthday Surprise] (Rating G)

Harry blinked, squinting into the dimly lit space. He hadn't expected to find the Hufflepuff champion crouched behind a row of screaming Mandrakes, looking remarkably rumpled for someone usually so well kept.

"It's your birthday," Harry said, leaning against the doorframe. "Why are you hiding in Spout's greenhouse?"

Cedric emerged from the foliage, a smudge of soil across his cheekbone and a crooked grin that made Harry's stomach do a slow, precarious roll. "Because the Hufflepuff common room is currently a riot of yellow streamers and cake. I'm trying to find a moment of peace before the madness hits."

"You didn't have to hide," Harry murmured.

"It might shock you to know I hate surprises," Cedric replied. "Well, the kind that involves people jumping out at me and screaming."

Harry nodded.

He stepped closer, the movement slow and deliberate. He could understand that.

"Well, can I give you my gift?"

Cedric looked confused for a moment, then nodded.

Harry pressed lips gently against the other boy's. Cedric could smell the chocolate and pumpkin juice Harry had eaten earlier. He didn't pull away when Harry held him closer.

The kiss was clumsy at first. A collision of teeth and muffled giggles.

From a moment nothing else mattered other than this moment, and then they heard the others calling their names.

Harry pulled back, resting his forehead against Cedric.

"Happy birthday, Cedric," Harry whispered.

"Best one yet," Cedric smiled back.

End Notes

I would appreciate feedback.

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