Florally Screwed (in all ways but one)

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by mrsluigivargas

Summary

We interrupt this regularly scheduled kidnapping for an important PSA: when it comes to foraging guidebooks, make sure yours is actually reputable, or else you might end up eating something that could make you sick or kill you — or worse, force your partners to deal with the consequences of you ingesting a dangerous amount of colloquially-named sex pollen.

Notes

Shout out to istadris for helping me iron out some particulars of the plot, haha.

See the end of the work for more notes

This was supposed to be a normal kidnapping.

Or, wait — does it count as a normal kidnapping if it’s scheduled in advance?

...Whatever. Peaches was sitting in a cage all pretty, Red and Greenie were fighting his army to get to her, yadda yadda yadda. Look, just because they had a peace treaty set in stone didn't mean any of them had to go *soft* about it. It’d be boring otherwise. Even Peaches had agreed during their negotiations.

But anyway, the Marios had burst into the castle at the late end of their estimated arrival time, interrupting Bowser and Peach’s card game that Bowser was totally winning (er, don't look at the cards, yeah?). It wasn't long until they burst into the throne room, too, the final fight beginning in earnest. And it was going great! For Bowser, at least. He’d gotten some good hits in, and some good pick-up lines, too, no matter how Peach and Mario groaned at them.

He’d just knocked Mario aside, even, to drop a new one he’d come up with the other day, at which Luigi blushed hard enough to miss his next hammer swing, sending him careening past Bowser into the nearest wall. But even as Bowser laughed at how dumb Luigi looked crumpled into a heap, and Peach winced in sympathy at the tangle of limbs he’d fallen into, and Luigi groaned as he righted himself for another try, something was off. Mario...still hadn't gotten up from where he’d been knocked down.

“Oi, Red!” Bowser yelled at him, still raring to go. “You giving up already?”

Mario didn't answer. He got to his feet, slower and more painstakingly than his brother did, and when he was upright he swayed where he stood. Bowser’s smirk faded. He hadn't hit Mario *that* hard, had he?

Luigi frowned in worry. “Bro...?”

A flush creeping up his neck and face, Mario blinked slowly. His gaze were cloudy, as it passed between everyone.

“Bowser,” Peach hissed, “Let me out of here; something’s wrong!”

A reflexive protest on his lips, Bowser barely had the chance to be unneededly stubborn when Mario staggered a few steps towards them. Luigi dropped his hammer and ran to meet him, but before he could even get halfway Mario snapped back to attention, eyes widening. In the next moment, he turned and bolted out the door. Almost as one, Bowser and Luigi shouted in surprise. Luigi tore after him, and with a curse Bowser moved to follow —

“Bowser!” Peach called, voice sharp. Oh, right.

With a growl, Bowser stomped over to the cage and pulled open the bars. Peach squeezed out, nodding at him as she passed; as soon as she was free she hitched up her dress and ran out the door as well, Bowser at her heels.

Somehow, Mario was able to keep above pace with Luigi, and Bowser and Peach chased flashes of green through more hallways than Bowser thought Mario knew about. After weaving through crowds of confused minions and piles of discarded weaponry and stray pieces of rubble, their journey end near the guest room suites. Inside one, in front of the bedroom proper, Luigi was pushing at the door. “He locked it,” Luigi told them, confused and offended and hurt and concerned all at once.

“Then get outta the way, Greenie.” Bowser cracked his knuckles. “This door doesn't stand a chance.”

Luigi stepped aside, almost tripping over Peach. She caught him before he fell, keeping an arm around him to rub comforting circles into his shoulder. The little flare of jealousy Bowser felt at that was wholly expected, and Bowser breathed deep as he backed up, using it as fuel to propel his charge forward —

“*Lord Bowser!*”

Bowser tripped, falling flat on his face. He whirled around, teeth bared. “Whaddya *want*, old man?!”

Kamek ‘s stern expression was unmoved by Bowser’s aggression. “What in blazes is going on?!” he asked, hands on hips. “The minions are all in disarray, and here you are *absconding* with —?!”

Before Kamek could get further in whatever scolding he had up his sleeves, Peach stepped forward to clear things up, explaining the little they knew about the situation that had derailed today’s plans. Kamek narrowed his eyes when she finished. “It’s not an illness?” he asked.

“It can't be,” Luigi said. “We’ve been travelling together this whole time and he hadn't shown any signs or nothing before just now!”

“It was very sudden,” Peach agreed.

“It’s stupid, is what it is,” Bowser grumbled. Besides, if he *was* sick, how the hell could he have run so fast?

Kamek gestured to the bedroom. “He’s in there?” Everyone nodded. “I’ll be right back, then,” he said.

With a *poof* of magic, Kamek disappeared. It was only a minute or two later when he reappeared, stumbling, with a sizable scorch mark on his hat that had Luigi’s eyes widening in disbelief.

“*Wha*—? Did he *attack* you?!” Bowser asked, indignant.

Kamek waved both their concerns and Peach’s healing magic away. “It was understandable,” he said, and before Bowser could jump in and say it was *not* understandable, actually, he turned to Luigi. “Did you run into anything unusual, on your journey here to embarrass our

army once more? Strange auroras, miscolored treasure chests, perhaps some pottery with teeth?”

“...We found these weird plants...?” Luigi reached into his pocket and pulled out a handful of blue-green leaves and pale yellow flowers dusted with bright pink pollen. “I’d gotten lost, and we ended up in a meadow filled with these flowers. We’d never seen them before, but they looked like something from the guidebook I had with me. I was going to save some to make tea with later, but Mario just ate some ‘cause the guidebook said they were edible and he was hungry.”

Of course Mario did something like that. Freak.

Barely managing to keep that same exasperation off his face, Kamek snatched the leaves and petals out of Luigi’s hands, inspecting them. “...which guidebook?”

Luigi showed him that, too. Kamek frowned. “That one?” he said with barely-suppressed contempt. “That one probably got it wrong.”

“Then what is it?”

“I’m not sure,” Kamek admitted, “but it looks familiar. I’ll just need to verify.”

“Be quick about it!” Bowser ordered.

“Of course, my Lord. Give me a few moments.” Kamek waved his wand, summoning books to him with a flare of magic. As he began to rapidly flip through them, comparing the notes within to the flora in his hand, everyone else milled about, waiting in various states of restlessness. Bowser tapped his foot impatiently, frowning; he had half an eye on Peach, perched on the edge of the couch looking the picture of patience aside from the crease in her forehead and the minute tugging at her gloves he *knew* she was doing, even if she was hiding it in the folds of her dress. The rest of his attention was caught by Luigi rocking back and forth on his heels, escalating to pacing around and around the room when that didn't burn off enough nervous energy.

Bowser was just warming up to the idea of literally lighting a fire under Kamek to get him to hurry up when a *thump* interrupted the sounds of humming magic and rustling paper. Luigi froze at the sound, attention solely on the source — the door Mario had locked himself behind.

“...Mario?” Luigi whispered. He approached the door, his careful walk turning into a jog into almost a run. He called Mario’s name again. No response. He gripped the doorknob with a hand —

“Don't you dare!” Kamek burst out, startling everyone. Luigi whirled around to scowl at him.

“But —!”

“He’s stressed enough as it is,” Kamek pointed out. “Leave him be.”

At Luigi’s protests, Kamek raised a brow, as well as the edge of his robe sleeve, also singed from his earlier venture into Mario’s room. Luigi’s protests died in his throat. He looked at Peach, pleading.

Peach bit her lip. “...Let’s give him space until we know how to help him,” she agreed apologetically.

Luigi wilted. He forlornly put a hand on the door, leaning forward to press his forehead to it as well, listening to the breathing on the other side that was surely audible, if Mario was truly there trying to listen in on them. Watching him do so, Bowser wished Mario would just get over himself and open the door already, because Luigi was looking uniquely pathetic in a way that wasn't very satisfying nor cute and it was starting to piss him off how he couldn't do anything about it.

Sensing Bowser’s gaze, Luigi turned to him. With a heavy sigh, he shuffled over. Bowser thought he was going to go sit with Peach, but he stopped next to him instead.

“...What?” Bowser tilted his head. Luigi just sighed again, eyes wet.

...Surely Greenie wasn't looking for comfort from *him*, was he? Not when Peach was right over there? Bowser glanced at her, hoping she would do something more competent about this situation than he ever could. But of course, she looked back at him with faint amusement on her face, motioning for him to do something. Do what? He’s not good at this!

In the end, Bowser’s awkward attempt at some semblance of comfort took the form of him putting a hand on Luigi’s head. Luigi leaned into him, turning the contact into more of a proper hug. Bowser ‘s face burned hot. Peach smiled thinly at them both. Bowser studiously ignored her.

In doing so, his wandering gaze found Kamek’s, which was already staring at him. Must be done with his research, then. “What took you so long?” Bowser snapped, drawing the attention of the others.

“Apologies, sire.” Kamek dismissed all the books but one. “But it was important I made sure all the details were correct.”

“What details? What’s wrong with Mario?” Luigi asked.

Kamek paused, considering his words. “The good news,” he began, opening his book, “Is that plant actually *is*, in fact, edible. The bad news,” he continued dryly,” is neither of you bothered to read the part where you’re not meant to eat them raw.”

“But it didn't say anything about that!”

“Because the author of your guidebook is a complete and utter hack.”

Bowser rolled his eyes. “Get to the point, old man.” He plucked the book out of Kamek’s hand — earning him an indignant squawk for his troubles — and squinted at the page. Too

many words, he decided, shoving the book onto Luigi's hands instead. Peach leaned over Luigi's shoulder to read alongside him. Their faces fell almost in unison.

"Stimulate...receptors...?"

"When consumed properly," Kamek clarified. He huffed. "To think, it could have done wonders for the medical industry," he muttered to himself angrily. "But no, the masses got a hold of it, learned it could be used in potions to deepen connections between people, and immediately started peddling it as something for reviving dead bedrooms instead of anything useful."

"...is that all it's for?"

Kamek rolled his eyes. "Might as well be."

Everyone exchanged a hesitant glance.

Bowser clicked his tongue. "So...sex," he said, resigned.

"But..." Luigi's brows furrowed. "We...we could just let it all run its course, though, right? Like it's a bad cold, or something?"

"In this case, no," Kamek responded flatly. "Who knows what would happen if you did; nobody's hardly been recorded being this stupid before. I suppose it could all build like a pressure valve, and then maybe he'll explode."

"..."

"Or maybe he'll simply go mad. At least he'd still be alive that way."

"..."

"...anywho, good luck!"

"Oi!" Bowser reached out to grab Kamek, but Kamek, perhaps wisely, had already teleported away. He left both the key to the bedroom door and an oppressive silence behind. Luigi approached the door again and knocked. No response.

"...so what now?"

"The obvious, probably." Bowser crossed his arms. "Any volunteers?"

Bowser and Luigi both looked at Peach. Peach looked back at them. Her face paled. "...Um."

"What?" Bowser threw his hands up in the air. "You two haven't done that yet? It's been ages!"

Cheeks red, Peach smacked Bowser on the arm, admonishing. "W-well!" she tried to explain, "We were...! Going to...? We had plans, okay!" With a deep breath, she composed herself, a mask of determination settling lopsidedly on her face. "But...if it has to be up to me..."

“Hey, wait a minute,” Luigi interrupted her. “If you're not comfortable —”

“Then what, genius?” Bowser sneered. “We’ve got very limited options, here.”

Luigi opened his mouth to answer. He closed it. Screwing his face up in thought, he frowned. With a deep breath, he steeled his expression, squared his shoulders, and got hit square in the face with a pillow.

Bowser scowled at him, arm still partially outstretched from throwing said pillow. “What am I?” he asked sourly over Luigi’s outraged sputtering. “Chopped liver?”

Luigi and Peach blinked at him in surprise. “Oh,” they said. “You’ve never...”

“So?” Bowser responded. Even though, as they said, he’d never thought about Mario like that. He still remembered Mario’s nervous fidgeting as he’d explained his whole “not really being interested in sex at all” thing, just as well as he remembered the way Mario had laughed when Bowser in response had told him how pointless this conversation was ‘cause it wasn't like Bowser had any interest in fucking him, either. But — Bowser pointed at Luigi. “*You* are his brother” — he pointed at Peach — “and we all know Red’s too much of a good guy to let whatever you guys had planned happen without you having a choice about it.” And if Mario died from this, who was Bowser going to fight on the regular. Greenie? Absolutely not. “So clearly, I’m the only valid option, here.”

“...Okay,” Luigi and Peach said, as Bowser glared at them in a dare to challenge him. Peach bent to pick the key Kamek had left and held it out to him. “If you need backup,” she began.

“If I need backup,” Bowser mocked under his breath. “It’s *Mario*; I don't need any *backup*.”

“Of course you don't.” Despite everything, Peach couldn't help the small laugh that escaped her. “But still.”

“Yeah, yeah.” Bowser plucked the key from her hand. “Just sit pretty with Greenie; Mario’ll be back to his stupidly goody two-shoes self soon.”

Whatever face Peach or Luigi made at his words, Bowser didn't know, for he had already turned around to insert the key into the lock. With a shout of, “I hope you're fucking decent!” Bowser flung the door open.

As soon as he stepped inside, Bowser wrinkled his nose. Barely been an hour and the room already reeked with sweat, along with a vaguely flowery scent floating throughout the room as if taunting him. At the far end of the room by the bed, Mario was curled halfway into a ball, the straps of his overalls slid off his shoulders and his hat nowhere to be seen. The grip he had on the bedpost was white-knuckled, teeth gritted to match, and his eyes were wide and wild and also surprised, upon seeing Bowser.

Bowser regarded Mario impassively. “Greenie’s out there damn near crying about you, ya know,” he finally said. Mario flinched, eyes flicking past Bowser to the open door; Bowser closed it before he could get any ideas, adding, “You’re puttin’ wrinkles in Peaches’ face, too,” just to drive the point home.

Mario didn't move, rooted to the spot and making every effort to keep himself there. Until Bowser stepped towards him, when, as if possessed, Mario lurched forward in response. With a look of panic on his face, he pulled himself backward, both hands gripping the bedpost, now.

...He was really doing this, wasn't he? Bowser huffed. He stood by his reasoning, back then, when he'd volunteered to help Mario out of this mess, but now that it was showtime he was forced to admit he had no idea how to do that.

Well — he knew how *sex* worked, obviously; he's had plenty of experience in that department, recently. But...

The longer Bowser stood there watching Mario, the more Mario shrunk into himself. Bowser frowned.

...Crushing Mario's spirit didn't have quite the same ring to it that it used to, unconventional means aside. How times have changed.

In an effort to stall for time, Bowser reached behind him to feel along the ridge of his shell; with a precise twist of his fingers and some very specific shimmying, he was soon resting his shell against the wall. And when his back finished its mandatory cracking and popping about it, he found Mario watching him, distracted by his own confused curiosity enough for the iron-grip he'd had on the bedpost to loosen to almost nothing. It made him look a little more like himself, in defiance of the pollen-haze he was fighting, and it gave Bowser an idea.

With one more thought spared to the ridiculousness of this entire situation, Bowser hummed, inspecting his claws faux-casually. "Pretty annoyin' of you, using this to cut our fight short," he said, keeping his voice light. "I know you're a sore loser and all, but just because I was winning don't mean you gotta be so underhanded about it. Who knew you had that in ya!"

As Bowser spoke, Mario's eyes narrowed, and — yes, *there* was that spark that never knew when to quit, the one Bowser had always been drawn to, even when he didn't realize it. Bowser's smirk turned more genuine at the sight of it. That stupid pollen didn't stand a chance.

"What, don't tell me you thought you were *winning*?" Bowser continued, scoffing, "'Cause the way things were going? I would have been the one to get a kiss from Peaches for a change!" He cackled at Mario balling his fists by his side. "You're losing your edge, Red!"

"But you know what" — Bowser spread his hands magnanimously — "I'll be nice. Give you another fighting chance after that piss-poor performance. I'll even go easy on you, 'cause I don't think I even need to put my shell back on. It's not like you'll be able to land a scratch on me anyway. So actually," he shrugged, "you should probably just give up now, and I can go get that kiss. Whaddya think, loser?"

What Mario thought manifested as a deep scowl and a challenging step forward. Bowser's grin widened as he sank into a fighting stance.

And then with a surge of motion, they crashed into each other.

End Notes

I was waffling between if they were actually going to have sex or if they were just gonna beat each other up and the sex pollen'd go, "eh. close enough'" and dissipate accordingly. Obviously the second one is funnier, so that's what happens canonically!

Anyway there might be a little omake or postlude or two coming down the pipe for this one, but for now I'm gonna leave it here! 😊

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