#### "Ah, Ariadne, Hermione, come in," Professor Dumbledore called, stepping up from the little sitting area Ariadne had occasionally noted behind his desk and underneath whatever the raised level of his office was.

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In which I continue beating y’all over the heads with Queen lyrics.It’s a bit of a long’un, but for good reason.Recurring TW: This fic will be dealing with narratives of PTSD manifesting in depression and paranoia.Specific TW: Grief for a family member.Important note: I have never lost anyone - I might not get this right.Ariadne is slightly overwhelmed by what has been left to her in Sirius’ will.Chapter Text  
  
To Ariadne Lily Granger It is my hope that this note finds you well and after a good night’s sleep.If you could come to my office after dinner at 8pm this evening, I would be most grateful - there is the matter of your godfather’s will to attend to, and you have been bequeathed a number of items which need discussing.Your parents will be present, and you are welcome to bring Hermione.My most sincere condolences, Professor Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore, Headmaster.**Ariadne regarded the great gargoyle with apprehension as she and Hermione walked to its side, heeding the note Ariadne had received that morning with her potions.**She could not have forgotten it, as her day had been marked by sickening nerves as eight o’clock in the evening had slowly arrived.It had not occurred to her in the then nearly two days since her godfather had been murdered that he would have left her anything.But it made sense, she knew.She almost wished he hadn’t.To gain from his death felt wrong, but she had to remind herself that Sirius’ will was just that; his will.What he had wanted done with his belongings after his death, and who he wanted to have them, and she wasn’t about to reject that.And so, the pair stopped at the heel of the gargoyle, feet upon the magically marked step, as Hermione squeezed her hand gently.“Fudge Flies,” Hermione said quietly, sending the staircase spinning slowly upward toward the door to Dumbledore’s office.“Are you okay?” she asked, having to look down to face her sister.Hermione had certainly been growing taller than her miniscule sister.Ariadne shrugged, to a forlorn expression.“I’m here for you.I know I’m… just, getting on with things, but I’m here.You’re my sister, and I love you,” Hermione assured her, tensing the fingers in her other hand.“You too,” Ariadne mumbled, rubbing her thumb on the back of Hermione’s hands.She knew Hermione didn’t mean to be distant.She just didn’t know how to handle such things, and when they happened, Hermione got things done because someone had to.And if Ariadne was honest, she needed that from her big sister sometimes.For the last two days, Hermione and Ginny had been the ones making sure she ate, and handling the important things.The statue ground to a halt with a gentle shudder as Ariadne swallowed and stepped toward the door.What awaited her within promised to be an unpleasant occasion, but at least she knew her parents were also behind it, most likely already waiting, and so she took a deep ragged breath, and tapped her knuckles upon the door.With a tiny yellow flash, the door clicked and hung for Hermione to push open gently.“Ah, Ariadne, Hermione, come in,” Professor Dumbledore called, stepping up from the little sitting area Ariadne had occasionally noted behind his desk and underneath whatever the raised level of his office was.Ariadne could only clench her jaw as the pair briskly walked up to the desk to see, in the sitting area, their parents on one of the couches, which bore ornate wooden arms and carvings above its back.“Please, sit down,” he said calmly, waving an arm gently to the second couch, which he pulled with magic out to stand at an angle beside the one their parents were on.Hermione quickly took a seat on the opposite side to their parents, clearly ensuring Ariadne could benefit most from their father’s proximity to their right.“Hey girls,” Valerie said quietly as Dumbledore sat down on a wooden armchair before them.“You two doing all right?” she asked concernedly.“Coping,” Hermione replied, having not let go of Ariadne’s hand.“I am sorry to require this of you so soon, Ariadne, however, as I have explained to your mother and father, I have been named the executor of Sirius’ will.As such, it is my duty to recount his will, and ensure that what has been bequeathed to you is delivered,” Dumbledore explained.Ariadne nodded.“Do any of you have any questions before I begin?I will only be reading the section that is applicable to you all.” Hermione looked over Ariadne’s head to their parents, her expression curious before she shook her head.“Not that I’m aware of,” Valerie replied.“I expect there will be a few later though.”  
  
“I do not doubt it, Mrs. Granger, Sirius left his goddaughter quite a number of things,” Dumbledore said.Ariadne frowned.She wasn’t surprised Sirius had left her a lot, she was his goddaughter, but for Dumbledore to point it out was itself surprising - just how much had he left her?“Shall I proceed?” he asked, flicking his wand to pick up a number of pieces of parchment that lay on the table beside him, which hovered in the air with a tiny yellow flicker.“Proceed,” Dennis said, putting a hand on Ariadne’s shoulder and rubbing it reassuringly.Dumbledore nodded, and took a breath.“ Herein is set forth the last will and testament of Sirius Orion Black the Third, ” Dumbledore recited, his eyes on the hovering parchment as a breath caught in Ariadne’s chest.It hadn’t seemed real until then.“ To my goddaughter, Ariadne Lily Granger née Potter, I leave the complete list of my worldly possessions as detailed below.This includes the entire monetary value of the Black family vault - Vault Seven Hundred and Eleven at Gringotts - to be transferred to the Granger family vault - Vault Six Hundred and Eighty-Seven at Gringotts.This also includes my home - number twelve Grimmauld Place - and all other items listed .” Ariadne frowned.Surely she didn’t need his money, surely Remus needed that more than she did.Hopefully, he’d been left a portion and the section of the will regarding her came second, and so its wording came with the assumption that Remus’ inheritance had already been removed.It would go a long way for the werewolf to be able to routinely afford Wolfsbane potion, and already, Ariadne knew where some of it would be going if he hadn’t.Dumbledore, however, had not finished talking.“Speaking as myself, I strongly suggest that you take young Ariadne’s inheritance of Sirius’ dwelling quite seriously,” he told them.“The house is well protected, and in an excellent position compared to your own home, which is rather harder to protect.Obviously, Mr. and Mrs. Granger, it is not my decision to make, however I would strongly advise that you consider moving there, or at least establishing it as a home for Ariadne to take up when she leaves your care.”  
  
“Definitely,” Dennis mumbled, looking to his wife, who had a finger to her lips thoughtfully.“Val?”  
  
“We’ll have to come to a decision on that later, but, if that place is to be ours… I for one would want some of those protections put back… re-placed?Placed again, refreshed, whatever the word is,” Valerie said to Dumbledore.“Like that um… what was it called, Fidelius thing?The enforced secret.There are a few people with access to that house I’d rather didn’t if it’s going to potentially be our house.”  
  
“Yeah, that Fletcher… Mundungus Fletcher is a worry,” Dennis added, nodding.“We’re well aware he’s a thief, and to be quite frank, I don’t trust him not to take advantage of the house standing empty.Alastor doesn’t even think he should have had access to begin with, as I recall.”  
  
“Yeah.If I may be so bold, the only people I want to be able to access that house if it’s gonna be ours, are ourselves, Remus, yourself if you must, Professor McGonagall, and the Weasleys,” Valerie told them, as Ariadne nodded along.She didn’t know much about the Order members they were speaking of, she’d never even heard the name Mundungus Fletcher, but she knew she didn’t want one Severus Snape turning up and breaking in.She didn’t trust him as far as she, a miniscule girl barely under five feet tall, could throw him.“That can be arranged, I understand your concerns,” Professor Dumbledore told her, nodding.“At present we are already removing all Order materials from the house and moving our headquarters.Any keys to the house are being returned, and you will be relieved to know that Mundungus Fletcher is neither involved nor allowed onto the premises at this time.”  
  
“Oh good,” Dennis said.“Once your lot have finished, we’ll go by and see what work the place needs.I hate to say it, but Sirius, may he rest in peace, didn’t take care of it very well.”  
  
“It’s a big house, stood abandoned for over a decade, who can blame him?” Valerie added, to a nod from Dennis.“Excellent.I will join you for that visit to replace the Fidelius Charm,” Professor Dumbledore said, looking back to the will.“Shall I?” Valerie nodded.“All right.Now, this section is one that perhaps will require some discussion.” Ariadne frowned.Something needed more discussion than inheriting his house?“ Ariadne Lily Granger née Potter is also to inherit any and all rights as the heir to the Noble and Ancient House of Black, as according to her position as my goddaughter, and as such, the Noble and Ancient House of Black is to be known as the House of Granger henceforth.” Ariadne’s eyes went wide and her cheeks white.Sirius had left her a wizarding noble house?!“ Its heraldry is hers to alter as she sees fit, it is my suspicion that she may find the motto Tojours Pur somewhat repugnant .” Sirius was right there, Tojours Pur meant “always pure,” and was a remnant of the House of Black’s Norman and pureblood origins.“ The history of the House of Black has been somewhat disturbing to say the least.It is my hope that the House of Granger will form its own legacy of scholastic excellence and progressive reform instead of one filled with blood purism and incest .” Dumbledore chuckled at that.“ Dennis Toby Granger and Valerie Renee Granger are to be named its Lord and Lady respectively .” Valerie and Dennis were bug-eyed and frantically looking about as the implications of what Sirius had done hit Ariadne and Hermione in unison - after all, Hermione had only just completed an exam on History of Magic, she knew just what had been done.“Woah woah woah woah woah-” Dennis exclaimed, having straightened in his seat significantly in alarm.“I’m sorry, did you just say he made Val and I the Lord and Lady of a noble house?” he asked incredulously.“Yeah, what he said,” Valerie added.“I did,” Professor Dumbledore told them, as Hermione gaped at them all.“ Just what does that entail?” Dennis hissed.“I know the wizarding world’s a bit outdated, did he just…”  
  
“It’s mostly just politics nowadays,” Hermione told them, disbelief in her own tone.“Political influence and titles, that’s it really.The Blacks weren’t particularly influential in the last few decades, and after Sirius went to Azkaban it mostly sort of petered out of relevance.”  
  
“However, given the events of the last week… One can only suspect that the House of Granger will immediately hold quite a bit of political power, especially given the disgracing of Houses Malfoy and Avery after the arrests that followed the battle at the Department of Mysteries,” Dumbledore added pointedly.“Not only that, but the sudden existence of a noble house whose origin is nonmagical, replacing one of the pureblood houses will certainly create waves.” Ariadne inhaled sharply.He was right.Sirius had thrusted some really rather complicated realities upon them, and on top of being the Girl Who Lived, she was now, technically, wizarding nobility.In a sense, she already had been, as Sirius’ goddaughter, but it had never been something she’d taken seriously, it had been a curiosity of technicalities.But this was more direct.“So we’re not, I don’t know, expected to live in a castle or something?” Dennis asked hurriedly.“No, nothing like that,” Professor Dumbledore explained.“As your daughter explained, it is largely only political.The degree to which you wish to engage with it is up to you, however wizarding society does tend to take it rather seriously.For example, if you were to meet with wizarding officials, they would adhere to using your title - in your case, Lord Granger.”  
  
“Oh, do not call me that, that’s gonna wig me out,” Dennis groaned, leaning back, to a slight laugh from Dumbledore.“So it’s not as if we have duties , it’s just, we’ve got political power?”  
  
“Exactly.Now, Ariadne, as I’m sure you understand all of this, perhaps it would be best for you to take a look at this rather more specific list of everything your godfather left you,” Dumbledore said, plucking one of the pieces of parchment out of the air and handing it to her.Ariadne nodded, taking it and flicking her wand out of her sleeve.“ Aurum ink,” Ariadne whispered, as Dumbledore continued.“For example, Lord Lucius Malfoy, now disgraced and soon to be imprisoned in Azkaban, was extremely close to the previous Minister for Magic, Cornelius Fudge,” he said.“Given that Minister Scrimegeour’s appointment was in a way the doing of your daughter, your family may hold a degree of political capital.Obviously, Lord Malfoy’s significant financial support was part of this, however Ariadne has rather suddenly regained the favour of the wizarding world, and that counts for a lot.” Ariadne, meanwhile, read the list Dumbledore had given her.To Ariadne Lily Granger née Potter: The full contents of Vault 711 of Gringotts, save for the aforementioned 6000 Galleons to be left to Remus John Lupin.#12 Grimmauld Place.Any objects within the house, such as its furnishings, are to be considered the property of Ariadne Lily Granger née Potter, with the exception of any property owned by Professor Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore, or any other member of the Order of the Phoenix.Note: I would warn her that a number of objects in the house are somewhat dangerous and will require careful extraction, they were not previously worth the trouble to do so.The full list is as follows: A set of purple robes, that no doubt will stand out to her thanks to her magic sense.These should not be touched directly, instead they are best handled with a long pole of some description - if held, they will attempt to strangle whomever is handling them, I suspect they were an anti-burglary measure on the part of my mother.There is a silver snuffbox in the office that will attempt to bite you.Somewhere around the house is a pair of tweezers with legs that will attempt to stab people who discover it.Smash it with a book or something, it’s nasty.“So, wait, do the girls have titles as a part of this?” Valerie asked curiously as Ariadne peered down the list.There were quite a few objects they’d need to be careful of, and Ariadne wasn’t surprised that some of them hadn’t been removed due to not being worth the trouble.“Yes, however the exact details I am still ascertaining; you see, there are some odd interactions between Sirius’ will and the various customs regarding what their titles would be,” Dumbledore told them, as Ariadne’s heart ran cold as she reached the next item on the list.However, if anyone had described what she read as an object to be inherited, she would have hexed them on the spot.The implications for her late godfather, she didn’t quite have the mentality to process.The house-elf Kreacher.“Why is Kreacher on this list?” Ariadne asked suddenly, cutting off a discussion of how courtesy titles interacted with Sirius’ will.Hermione span to face her, her face horrified as Valerie and Dennis frowned.“Kreacher, what’s Kreacher?” Dennis asked, tilting to see the list.“An elf, enslaved under Sirius,” Hermione replied angrily.“He…” To say that Ariadne was conflicted was an understatement.Sirius had been her godfather, but she could no longer ignore the fact that he’d held Kreacher under his enslavement.“Oh my god did he leave him to you?!”  
  
“I’m sorry, a slave?!” Valerie exclaimed.“As soon as we see him I’m freeing him,” Ariadne said resolutely, gritting her teeth.It was bad enough that Sirius had kept him, but to leave an elf to her in his will when she and her sister were literally running an activism organization devoted to their rights…  
  
“You cannot do that, Ariadne,” Dumbledore told her sternly.Hermione immediately span back to face him, going from looking horrified to being absolutely livid .“ WHAT?!” Hermione half-yelled.“And why’s that?!”  
  
“Kreacher is party to a number of secrets of the Order of the Phoenix, and he cannot be trusted not to take them immediately to Narcissa Malfoy or Bellatrix Lestrange as soon as he is freed,” Dumbledore told them.“The situation is regrettable, but I see no way to avoid it.”  
  
“Why does he know secrets if you don’t trust him?” Valerie asked confusedly, her brow furrowed in anger.“Because we are not fucking keeping a slave, that’s disgusting.”  
  
“Kreacher often performed his duties during Order meetings-”  
  
“You treated him like furniture ,” Hermione hissed.“He’s not some kind of robot, he’s a person!” Ariadne nodded emphatically, her heart hammering at the conflict.“It’s your own fault if he knows things he shouldn’t!”  
  
“I’m sorry, I thought it was possible to magically enforce secrets, like the house?” Dennis pointed out, irritation in his voice.“Can’t you just put a Fidelius thing on the problem?I’m with Hermione here.”  
  
“I’m still going to free him,” Ariadne pointed out angrily.“It’s no wonder he’d go to them if you treated him that badly.” Hermione turned to face her, surprised at Ariadne being so bold.Ariadne was a little too angry to care about social consequences, especially when combined to her turmoil over being, in part, angry at Sirius himself.“Unbreakable Vow,” Hermione suggested.“He’s going to be freed regardless, so if you want him to keep your bloody secrets so badly, you’re welcome to ask him to make an Unbreakable Vow.” Ariadne nodded.It was going a bit far, but if it really was so important…  
  
“An Unbreakable Vow must be made voluntarily, Miss Granger,” Dumbledore pointed out.“If the notion is to be entertained, he cannot be compelled to make it.Do you suggest I Obliviate him of the knowledge if he refuses?” Now that was going too far.“That would include the house!” Hermione exclaimed indignantly.“You don’t know how long he’s lived there, you could be erasing his knowledge of the only home he’s ever known!”  
  
“I’m sorry, Obliviate?” Dennis asked.“Erases memories, otherwise known as a Memory Charm,” Hermione explained, making Dennis draw back in horror.“Okay, that ’s terrifying,” Valerie muttered, wide-eyed and confused.“Would you rather Lord Voldemort receive key strategic information that would allow him to sweep his rule across Britain?” Dumbledore argued.“Hermione, I understand your objections, but this problem is bigger than Kreacher.”  
  
“I’m sure there’s a better solution than wiping his memories!” Hermione pointed out.“And perhaps there is, but at this moment, speculation does us no good.Perhaps I am wrong to worry and the elf would be willing to undergo a Vow, but we cannot know at this moment,” Professor Dumbledore said.“The only way to find out would be to ask him.**Now, Ariadne, if he is under your binding, he will answer if you call him.**I must ask that you give me your word that you will not free him until the matter of his knowledge is resolved.” Ariadne frowned, looking at the blue-coated Professor.“I ca-I can-can’t honestly give you that,” she said quietly.Dumbledore sighed haggardly, before shaking his head.“Your intent is honorable, even admirable, but I do hope you can show some restraint,” Professor Dumbledore grumbled.“Ariadne, if you would call him here, we can investigate the issue.”  
  
“Sir?” Ariadne asked.She didn’t quite know what he meant.“If you call his name, he will be compelled to answer and Apparate here,” Dumbledore explained.“As an elf, he is capable of Apparating to and from Hogwarts.”  
  
“You’re telling me Voldemort doesn’t have enslaved elves?” Valerie asked pointedly.“Lord Voldemort does not view elves as equals or as valuable servants for use in warfare,” Dumbledore replied tiredly.“Neither do you, apparently!” Valerie retorted.“Ariadne,” Dumbledore said sharply, sighing at Valerie, who shook her head.**Ariadne grimaced, facing the floor.**She did not want to do that.She did not want to order an elf around, she did not want a slave.But, for him to be freed immediately, it was necessary.“Kreacher?” Ariadne called questioningly, with a disturbed expression, before, almost immediately, a crack and a whooshing noise accompanied the glimmering magical core of Kreacher, who popped into existence before her, between Dumbledore and her parents and looked around, startled.“Mistress Ariadne,” Kreacher said, a fair amount of reverence in his voice.“Kreacher is at your service.” Ariadne’s heart sank as Kreacher bowed his head.**Ariadne grimaced and slid off the sofa to sit on the ground, her head below his.**“Kreacher, um… I called you here to talk about that,” she said gently, as Kreacher avoided eye contact.“Do you remember when we spoke over Christmas?” she asked.“Kreacher does,” the elf replied simply.“Kreacher has had many months to consider Mistress Ariadne’s words.”  
  
“Oh, um, do you remember what I said about trying to be a friend to elves?” Kreacher nodded.“Basically, um… I don’t want to have a slave.I don’t want to keep you a slave, that’s just wrong .” Kreacher frowned that time, almost stepping back in confusion.“So I’m going to free you.” Kreacher did step back at that, looking about in utter perplexment with what almost registered as fear on his face.“Kre-Kreacher lives to serve the Noble House of Black, or the the House of Granger as it has become, Mistress Ariadne, Kreacher does not complain,” he said hurriedly, actually looking at her as she sat cross-legged in front of him.“No, I-” Ariadne started, before Valerie leaned forward and gently brushed Kreacher’s shoulder to get his attention.“Kreacher?You’re Kreacher, right?” she asked.“Yes, Lady Granger,” Kreacher replied.“Well, what Ariadne is trying to say is that, to us, benefiting from having a slave is wrong,” Valerie explained patiently, looking down at the old elf.“And we don’t want to have a slave.” Kreacher jumped, looking about them all fearfully.“Hey, hey, it’s okay.If you want to stay at the house and work for us for pay , help out around the house, that sort of thing, I’d be fine with that, but none of us are willing to keep you as a slave, that’s just disgusting to us.” Kreacher stopped frantically looking around, his mouth hanging open slightly as his eyes bulged.“You’d be welcome to stay in the house, we’d pay you, give you clothes, and a room of your own.” Kreacher span to face Ariadne again, his magic pulsing in some emotion, exactly which Ariadne wasn’t sure.“M...mistress Ariadne would pay Kreacher?” Kreacher asked, his voice becoming a little more high pitched.“Yes,” Ariadne nodded, as Hermione smiled at the elf warmly.“We-we-we’d have to work out the-the details, but yes.” She bit her lip, mentally looking at Dumbledore who was looking at her sternly.“But um… before I do free you, Professor Dumbledore wants to ask you to take an Unbreakable Vow.”  
  
“Mistress?” Kreacher tilted his head in confusion as he sniffed.He was crying, Ariadne realized with a shock.“B-b-b-b-because you know things, and Professor Dumbledore’s worried about what would happen if someone got a hold of you,” Ariadne explained carefully, somewhat uncomfortable with how Kreacher was referring to her as mistress .“So before I free you, he wants you to make an Unbreakable Vow, is that all right?” she asked.“Of course,” Kreacher said officiously, and turned to Professor Dumbledore, bowing to him as Dumbledore leant forward.“Please take Ariadne’s hand, Kreacher,” he said sternly.Kreacher nodded and turned to Ariadne, as she offered him her right hand and took hold of his bony fingers, unable to help but wonder whether Kreacher was going along out of genuine will or because he had interpreted her words as an order.It was a bit late, however, as Dumbledore pointed his wand at their hands and flicked it, bringing a familiar sort of golden glimmer to their hands that burned into a knot over the link.The golden cord was warm to the touch, almost tickling her wrist as she nodded to Dumbledore.“Kreacher.Over the course of your service to Sirius Orion Black, you were witness, deliberately or not, to a number of meetings and clandestine exchanges between various members of the Order of the Phoenix,” he began clearly, pointing his wand at them.“Will you, Kreacher, ensure that the information contained in those exchanges is not revealed to any individual who was not originally part of them?” he asked, as the loops about their hands brightened.“Kreacher will,” Kreacher replied quietly.With that, a singular loop of golden light flicked about Kreacher’s magic, just like those that had surrounded Ariadne’s core during the Triwizard Tournament, as the heat of the cords increased.Dumbledore frowned, probably at the wording, and looked at Ariadne, who nodded.“And will you prevent the followers of Lord Voldemort and any who work in tandem with him from discerning the details of those exchanges in any way necessary?” Dumbledore asked.“Kreacher will.” Again, a second loop joined the first as another searing flash burned Ariadne’s hand, and presumably, Kreacher’s as well.“And will you uphold the secrecy of the house located at number twelve Grimmauld Place, at any and all times the house is protected by a Fidelius Charm?”  
  
“Kreacher will.”  
  
With a final searing heat that Ariadne felt burn a scar into her hand, the cords about their hands vanished and the ultimate, third loop of magic surrounded Kreacher’s glimmering magical core and their hands detached.Ariadne grimaced at the pain and waved her hand about at it, as Kreacher stepped back and bowed his head again.Ariadne raised an eyebrow and faced up toward Dumbledore, who was slipping his wand away.“You may proceed, Ariadne,” Dumbledore said, almost dismissively.Ariadne smiled and unzipped her bag, digging her arm into it thoughtfully.She didn’t have many clothes inside at the time, most of her clothing had been unpacked at home.After a brief moment, as Kreacher looked curiously at the extended bag, her hand met a fluffy garment and she pulled out the Gryffindor emblazoned scarf.Wordlessly, with a smile, Ariadne held it out to Kreacher.Kreacher regarded it almost like a cat observing a live snake as he stepped slowly toward her, blinking with his face slack.Slowly, the elf reached up to hold his hands around the scarf in her arms, before stopping, his fingers an inch from it as he looked up at Ariadne.She nodded, trying to keep her expression as reassuring as possible.Kreacher had served the Blacks for generations - it wasn’t surprising that he was apprehensive about being freed, he’d known no other life.Kreacher took a deep breath and closed his hands around the scarf.The air was tense as Ariadne let go of it, and Kreacher slowly pulled it closer to himself, staring at it in awe.He was free.Ariadne beamed at him as he held the scarf before him, before he swallowed and slowly draped it over his neck, tying it almost like a tie.It was far oversized on him, and would drape on the floor, but he nodded hesitantly, seeming almost afraid before he sniffed and rubbed his eye on the end of the scarf.“Than-thank you, Mistress Ariadne,” Kreacher whispered in tearful disbelief, his mouth agape a little before he stepped back, looking about at the smiling humans around him.“What… what will Kreacher do, what will…” he started asking frantically, his breath coming heavily before Valerie took his shoulder gently.“Kreacher.Would you like to stay at the house in Grimmauld Place?” she asked kindly.“Kr-kr-rr-Kreacher… Kreacher…” Kreacher stammered, shaking his head in bewilderment.Presumably, he’d never been asked what he wanted once in his life, as a sniffling sob escaped his mouth.“Kr-Kreacher would,” he admitted.“Okay.We’re going to be going there in a few days, and when we do, we’ll discuss what you’re going to do with your freedom,” Valerie told the crying elf gently.Kreacher nodded, making a slight croaking noise.“Can you take care of yourself until then?” Again, Kreacher nodded, before spinning on the spot.“Kreacher is… Kreacher is free,” he murmured to himself through his sniffling.“Kreacher is free.**Kreacher is free!**” he exclaimed, spinning to Ariadne and clearly having made himself dizzy as a joyful tear escaped Ariadne’s eye.“Thank you, thank you Mistress Ariadne!” he cried, falling over beside her.“It’s just Ariadne,” she breathed, sniffing herself as the elf stood up beside her, crying.“Hey, c’mere,” she said, gently pulling him into a hug.“It’s okay.I… I get it if you’re scared, it’s a big change for you.I know what that’s like,” she assured him, remembering her own confusion when she’d first been taken away from the Dursleys and not understood that she was simply allowed to exist.“You’re going to do great.” With that, the happily sobbing elf vanished from her arms, Apparating away.--