

Harry glanced over at Sirius — he didn't seem to be paying much attention to the conversation, reading over a piece of parchment with Tonks.

After a month of sharing the house with the Weasleys, he'd probably just given up arguing. Harry would have, too.

He ducked out quickly after finishing his lunch, ignoring Hermione's call to go over their summer work together. He caught up to Sirius, who was headed up to his own room. "What's up, pup?" the animagus asked, offering a grin. Harry shrugged.

"Feel like I've hardly seen you since I got here." He didn't say much more — he was uncomfortably aware of the number of portraits on the walls, watching their progression up the stairs. Their painted gazes burned into the back of his head, and he wondered how many of them were loyal to the head of the Black family. Probably not enough to make it safe to talk.

"I know what you mean," Sirius agreed. "Why don't I help you get your room together? Move the last of my teenage crap out of there!"

Harry was glad his godfather seemed to get the hint, and the pair of them headed to Harry's room, immediately throwing up wards. "You alright, kid?" Sirius, asked, concerned. Harry sighed.

"Fine. Just... wishing I was back at Seren Du."

"Tell me about it," Sirius hummed sympathetically. "How was your morning? Were Ron and Hermione awful?"

"Honestly they barely talk to me most of the time. I don't think they're trying very hard to still be friends with me." Perhaps they'd gotten too used to not having him around.

While Sirius fired random spells at the scantily-clad women on the wall, hoping to unstick them, Harry told him all about the cabinet adventures from the morning, as well as the locket he'd given to Bill. Sirius' face went dark.

"Bet it was bloody Reggie," he muttered. Harry eyed him quizzically. "My little brother, Regulus; he was a Death Eater. Died when he was eighteen — either he fucked up something important, or he tried to run, we were never sure. There was never a body recovered; he just showed up as dead on the family tapestry one morning. Little idiot." His mouth was scowling, but his eyes were sad. Harry's heart ached — eighteen was far too young to be serving a Dark Lord, let alone dying from it.

"You think Voldemort gave him the horcrux? What, to look after?"

"This house is safer than most places," Sirius pointed out. "It'd be a good place for it. Y'know, if I hadn't come along," he added with a sharp grin. "Or maybe old Voldie hid it here himself — he certainly visited plenty, my mum thought he was brilliant. He could've tucked it away and left no one the wiser." He shook his head, like he was trying to shake off