

“Wait ’til you see the inside,” Sirius replied. He stepped forward, beckoning Harry with him. “Pup, I’d like to introduce you to someone. This is my cousin, Andromeda Tonks. Andi, this is Harry Potter, Heir Black.”

Andromeda Tonks smiled widely, her eyes glowing warmly. “It’s very good to meet you, Heir Black. Please, call me Andi.”

“I— it’s nice to meet you, Andi,” he stuttered, not used to adults giving him their first name so freely. “You can call me Harry.” He looked back to Sirius. “What’s this about, Padfoot?”

“I thought it was about time we start repairing family ties,” Sirius declared. “And we needed a place to speak freely. Come on in, everyone; Ceri’s got tea ready.”

“Oh, Ceri’s still here? Wonderful!” Andi enthused. She and Sirius led the way, chattering like long-lost family — which, Harry supposed, they were.

He fell into step beside Tonks, kicking at the snow as they walked. “This place is the best,” he declared happily. “It’s got everything.”

“How well do you know it?” Tonks asked, frowning. “You’ve hardly had time to come here, I mean.”

Harry looked at him, stomach twisting. If Sirius had brought them both here, that meant he intended to let them in on their secrets. And he did trust Tonks; he had written back and forth with the auror quite a bit over the term, and he seemed trustworthy. Bill and Charlie liked him, too.

“I spent most of the summer after my third year here,” he confessed. “And the first half of last summer. Before the dementor attack.”

Tonks gaped at him. “Really? Right under Dumbledore’s nose?”

They stepped inside the entrance hall, and Harry grinned. “We’ve got a whole lot to catch you up on,” he said, hearing Sirius bark with laughter.

“An understatement if I’ve ever heard one,” he agreed. “But it’ll all make sense in a bit.”

To Harry’s surprise, Remus was waiting for them in the kitchen, where the table was already set with tea for five. “Andi, lovely to see you,” he greeted, kissing the woman on the cheek. “It’s been far too long.”

“I should’ve known you’d be involved in whatever trouble this one’s up to, Remus Lupin,” she sighed exasperatedly, making Sirius grin.

“You know Moony, always the brains of the operation,” he joked. “Now, pup. I think you’d best start at the beginning.” His face turned serious. “Don’t worry about leaving anything out. You can trust them. And Tonks’ Occlumency is solid.”

“Okay, then.” Harry was happy to take Sirius’ word for it. “Well, it all started after I blew up my aunt...”