

“I’m sorry, I assumed someone must’ve— if they ever told you about your parents at school, well— I thought you just didn’t want to know.” Lupin truly looked apologetic, and Harry let out a long breath, his temper beginning to cool.

“I’ve been trying to figure it out since the train,” he said softly. “Why you seem so familiar. I knew you, didn’t I? Before?”

“Yes,” Lupin confirmed, heartbreak clear on his face. “Your parents... your father was one of the best friends I ever had. Your mother, too. I miss them every day — today more than most. I’m sure you know what I mean.”

Harry knew all too well. Every Halloween, he woke up with a swirling hole in his gut that he didn’t know how to soothe. The aching, gaping chasm where his parents had been. “Tell me about them. Please,” he begged, voice cracking. Lupin stared at him for a long moment.

“Sit down,” he said eventually. “I’ll make some tea.”

Harry did as bid, sitting in the chair opposite the desk. Instead of sitting behind the desk, Lupin chose the chair next to Harry, setting the tea tray down on the small table between them. “So what do you want to know, Harry?”

“Everything,” Harry said instantly. “Aunt Petunia never says a word; I didn’t even know about magic ’til I got my Hogwarts letter.” He scowled for a minute, adding under his breath, “she didn’t even tell me my name ’til I was five.”

Lupin’s eyebrows rose a fraction. “Petunia? Lily’s sister?”

“Yeah, she won’t ever talk about Mum,” Harry replied, shaking his head. “What were they like? The yearbook said they were Head Boy and Girl. And Mum was really good at Charms?”

“Beat me to the top spot every year running,” Lupin confirmed with a quiet chuckle. “Lily... I’ve never met a kinder person than Lily Evans, in all my life. Always willing to go out of her way to help people. The only time I ever saw her truly angry was when your father was involved.”

Harry looked at him, puzzled, and Lupin laughed. “Oh, it was far from love at first sight, Harry. For the first six years of school, Lily thought James was an arrogant tosspot, and honestly she wasn’t entirely wrong. James, of course, thought the sun rose and set with Lily Evans and had done since the very second he set eyes on her at the sorting. But she didn’t give him the time of day until seventh year.”

“What changed?” Harry asked, teacup clutched tightly in his hands.

“James grew up. Stopped trying so hard to impress her. Stopped hexing Slytherins for fun.” From the look on Lupin’s face, Harry had a good idea of which particular Slytherin he would hex. “Drove Sirius mad at first — all his fun being spoilt because James was trying to woo a girl.” Lupin didn’t seem to realise what he’d said at first, but when he did the anguish that crossed his face made Harry wince.