

way out, and he yelped.

There were in fact several home-made eclairs in the ice box, and Harry munched on one while sat on the countertop, trying not to listen to any noises that might come from the hallway. Ceri popped into the room, scowling at him. “Master Harry should be sittings on chairs, not on Ceri’s nice clean counter,” she scolded lightly. Harry jumped down, pulling a chair out.

“Sorry, Ceri. These eclairs are great, though!” The elf’s scowl faded, and with a click her fingers there was a tray on the table with several more eclairs, and some mini chocolate tarts.

“I will be takings these up to the living room for masters,” she told him, then disappeared. Harry eyed the kitchen doorway warily.

“Are you two done yet?” he called dubiously. Remus’ laughter greeted him.

“Yes, it’s safe!” he assured. When Harry returned, the pair were stood close together and Remus’ hair was a little messier than it had been before, but other than that they looked unflustered.

“Ceri’s got eclairs and chocolate tarts in the living room,” he reported. Remus’ face lit up.

“It’s so good to be home!” He started up the stairs, Snape close behind.

“How was your trip? What are the werewolf pack like?” Harry asked as they walked, curious to hear about an actual proper werewolf pack. He’d only heard stories before, and he was pretty sure the stories in most textbooks were wildly inaccurate. He doubted they sacrificed a small muggle child every full moon. Someone would’ve noticed that.

“It was an eye-opener,” Remus declared. When they reached the living room, Ceri had the tea set ready as well. “I’ve been to werewolf packs before — Albus sent me in the first war, and I spent a bit of time with them in between when I was really desperate. I was never comfortable around them before. This time... Merlin, the difference in Moony now I’m no longer under that curse!” He ran a hand through his hair. “I don’t know how Albus ever expected me to be able to negotiate with them while still suffering its effects. They never quite accepted me in the past, and I think that’s why. They could tell my wolf and my self were disjointed, out of harmony. This time... it was much, much easier to fit in with the pack. I still wouldn’t call it comfortable,” he added ruefully. “But it was better. They could actually respect me, this time.”

“Maybe that was Dumbledore’s plan,” Harry suggested. “To have you fail to negotiate because you weren’t in touch with your wolf.”

“It certainly would make it easier for him,” Remus agreed. “Even with me getting along better with them, they aren’t exactly thrilled about the prospect of joining Dumbledore. He’s been promising to overhaul the werewolf legislations for decades, but never actually done anything. They thought it might change when they heard he’d let a werewolf — me — attend Hogwarts, but I think they realised that was a one-off rather than the start of a new trend.” He reached for an eclair, frowning faintly. “Luckily, they don’t really trust Voldemort either. I