

water once more, grateful for the charms Snape had added to his glasses so he could see underwater with them.

He sat in the shallow end for a bit, watching Sirius swim lazy lengths. Even after just a few weeks of freedom, he was looking years better from his time in Azkaban and on the run. You couldn't see all of his ribs anymore, and he actually had some muscle definition to his arms and shoulders, his olive-toned skin taking on a bit of colour from the sun. Nothing, he kept insisting, like he'd looked in 'the good old days', but he looked healthier.

Harry, too, was looking a lot better for his Dursley-free summer. Ceri's cooking combined with hours in the pool or on his broom — or duelling with Remus and Sirius, which was a workout in itself — was helping him pack on quite a bit of muscle. He hadn't grown much taller, only a couple of inches, but he was starting to look less like a starving runaway.

Joining his godfather in his swimming, trying halfheartedly to race the man, Harry didn't realise they had company until a body splashed into the pool. There was a beat, and then Remus' head popped up out of the water, his hair flat against his forehead and a grin on his face. Harry beamed at him. Remus hardly ever came swimming with them!

To his utter astonishment, Remus wasn't alone. Snape was walking towards the pool wearing a pair of black swimming shorts and a plain grey t-shirt, a book tucked under his arm, his Dark Mark a grey smudge on his left forearm. He cast a disparaging look at the trio frolicking in the pool, then stretched himself out on one of the deck chairs nearby. Harry couldn't look away from his pale, hairy calves. Snape, in *shorts*. Ron would never believe him.

Ron would never believe a lot about Harry's summer.

Harry swam towards Remus, who ducked underwater and tackled Harry around the waist, throwing him up and towards Sirius. He hit the water with a splash that almost reached Snape, who glared from behind his book. "Do you mind?"

"Not really," Sirius replied nonchalantly, splashing a little more water in his direction. Harry snickered before he could help himself.

"Where's that beach ball got to?" Remus asked, looking around for the brightly coloured inflatable they'd brought back from their trip to the seaside. Harry looked around, saw it wedged under a deck chair, and grinned to himself. He focused his magic, reaching a hand out towards the ball.

"Accio beach ball," he whispered. There was a brief tug, and the ball zoomed towards him.

"Look at you!" Sirius cheered, diving over to sprawl on Harry's shoulders, beaming delightedly. "A wandless Summoning charm, you little show-off!" Harry's cheeks glowed with pride. He'd been working on it for a while, using the book he'd bought to help him stay more aware of his magical core. After the extra spells Snape had found on him, he didn't ever want to be at the mercy of someone else's magic again.

The three of them tossed the beach ball between them, Sirius getting slowly more aggressive and daring as the game went on. At one point, he launched himself off Remus' shoulders to