

gone home without saying goodbye.”

“Whoops,” Charlie giggled, leaning back against the edge of Harry’s bed. “We probably shouldn’t stay long, anyway. Work in the morning and all that.”

“And you kids have a train to catch,” Tonks said, sticking her tongue out at the Gryffindor teens. “Which means I’ve got to make sure you get to that train.”

“Ugh, we’ve got a guard?”

“*You*’ve got a guard,” Bill corrected. Harry rolled his eyes.

“Lucky me.”

Someone downstairs made some sort of loud noise, which set off Mrs Black’s portrait. Sirius groaned, dragging himself to his feet. “I’d better deal with that,” he muttered, squeezing past Charlie and between the twins, eventually reaching the door. He swayed a little as he walked, and Harry and Remus both sighed.

“We knew this day would be difficult for him,” Remus said, meeting Harry’s gaze sadly. “I’ll go make sure he doesn’t drink himself to death. Get to bed, kids, it’s getting late.”

“Yes, Professor,” Tonks sing-songed, before bursting into giggles. The werewolf rolled his eyes.

“I wasn’t talking to you, but good to know where your mental age is at,” he joked, shaking his head. “Goodnight, everyone.”

That seemed to be the unspoken end of the party; Ginny snuck away before her mum or Hermione could find her and say anything about her being in Harry’s room. The twins apparated back to their own bedroom. Tonks assured Harry she’d see him in the morning and slipped out; before the two eldest Weasleys could do the same, Harry reached out to grab Charlie’s arm. “Hey, Charlie; y’know how you owe me a favour? From the seeker’s match last summer?”

“What do you need?” the redhead asked without hesitation. Harry bit his lip.

“I... would you keep an eye on Sirius, while I’m at school? Just drop in here every now and then, make sure he’s doing alright. Make sure your mum isn’t bothering him too much. I just — I worry about him, cooped up here.” Sure, Sirius might be able to get to Seren Du sometimes, but it wouldn’t be often enough for Harry’s liking.

Charlie’s face softened, and he patted Harry’s shoulder. “I’d do that even if I didn’t owe you one,” he assured. “Don’t you worry, kid. Sirius is a good bloke; we’ll keep him from getting too lonely.”

Bill muttered something that Harry didn’t quite catch, but whatever it was had Charlie blushing as red as his hair, glaring at his brother. “Shut up,” he hissed, turning back to Harry. “You just worry about your own stuff, let us take care of Sirius, yeah?”