

The dragon tamer grinned. “Hey, kid.” Then he turned to Sirius with raised eyebrows. “That time of year?”

“The time of year where Moony and I have to persuade Harry here that he can’t spend all summer turning himself into a duelling machine,” Sirius explained, ruffling Harry’s hair pointedly. “We aren’t letting Dumbledore turn you into a weapon, and we’re not letting you do that to yourself, either. Take breaks. Do fun things. Get some fucking sleep, Merlin knows you’ve not had enough this last year with all your after-curfew adventures,” he added, rolling his eyes.

Harry could do nothing but sigh and let himself be herded back to the sofa. “I slept,” he defended, though it was feeble. Admittedly, his sleep schedule had not been brilliant lately. “I just— things are getting worse out there. I need to be ready.”

“We both know damn well that your preparedness is not the thing holding us back,” Remus pointed out. “These things take time, Harry. Time you can’t control. It’s better for you to pace yourself while we wait than burn out before you get there.”

Harry huffed. “I hate it when you’re *reasonable*,” he muttered, making Sirius snicker.

“Moony’s always reasonable,” he teased. He and Charlie made themselves comfortable on the opposite sofa, and Harry eyed them curiously.

It was... strange, having Charlie around like this. Every other time Harry had interacted with him, it was as the second-oldest Weasley brother; now, with no other Weasleys around, he was definitely here in the capacity of Sirius’ boyfriend. He had an arm around Sirius’ shoulders, the animagus leaning against him slightly. He looked a bit bewildered, too, Harry realised.

“Is this Charlie’s first visit here?” he asked, and Sirius nodded. Harry smirked, unable to help himself. “So he’s *family*, is he?” he drawled. “He knows what this place means?”

While Charlie’s confusion grew, Sirius blushed brightly. “He’s got the gist of it,” Sirius insisted. “He also knows he’s got full permission to hex you if you’re being a little git,” he added in a playful growl. Harry’s green eyes turned wide and innocent.

“Me? Never.” Even he couldn’t hold that straight face for too long.

“I grew up with Fred and George, you know I won’t hold back,” Charlie joked with a wink. “But don’t worry, if Harry starts teasing me about you, I’ll just give him *all* the gory details about how we got together.” His eyebrows wiggled salaciously, and Harry made a face.

“Gross.” Once again, Sirius was blushing. Harry marvelled at the sight; his godfather hardly ever blushed before now! Merlin, he was smitten. “Well, the more the merrier, as far as I’m concerned. Even better if it means Sirius doesn’t have to pretend to live at Grimmauld anymore.”

“You having this place does explain a lot,” Charlie agreed. “I, uh, I know it’s a big deal for me to know where it is and everything. So... thanks.” His expression melted into a sappy grin