

“He’s very interested in how often you write to me,” Sirius remarked. “I told him about Umbridge trying to steal your letters, though, said you’d decided not to risk it anymore. He wasn’t too pleased about that. Think he wants to know how you’re *feeling*.” He rolled his eyes.

“God forbid he just *ask me*,” Harry muttered derisively. Not that he would tell the truth if he did. “Feels like he’s forgotten I exist. It’s actually quite nice.” If the headmaster could keep ignoring Harry, that would be great. That felt like far too much to ask for, though.

Sirius told Harry about the most recent visit from Bill and Charlie, a grin on his face as he recounted their raucous game of exploding snap.

“I’m glad you’ve got more company,” Harry said, smiling. Sirius was a social creature; he needed people around him other than Remus and occasionally Snape. And the two eldest Weasleys were perfect for that. “You said Tonks has been around a fair bit, too?”

“Yeah, she tries to stop by a couple times a week. Asks for all the juicy stories of her mum as a teenager,” Sirius joked. Then, he grew a little more serious. “I think her and Kingsley would be willing to follow you over Dumbledore, y’know. Both of them are getting a bit fed up with Order meetings, and from what Tonks has said to me, Kingsley is still suspect of Dumbledore for not letting the guard interfere in you being locked in your room all summer.”

“You think we can trust them with the truth?” It would be good, having two aurors on his side, but it was a big risk to take.

“Maybe?” Sirius looked thoughtful. “Tonks certainly has the Black family loyalty. And Kingsley is the only one in the bloody Order who seems to accept that we aren’t getting through this war without a fight. Dumbledore’s got the rest thinking we can bring down Voldemort and his Death Eaters with the *power of love* or some shit, as if we’ve just got to *band together* and they’ll lay down their wands and come quietly.”

“That’s because Dumbledore’s hoping I’ll play sacrificial lamb and no one else will have to get hurt,” Harry pointed out, bitterness in his tone. Sirius’ gaze darkened.

“Over my dead body,” he growled. “Even if you do have to be the one to face Voldemort — when you’re ready, when his horcruxes are dealt with — everyone seems to forget that there’s a whole bunch of Death Eaters who will be happy to kill as many people as they can while your duel is going on.”

“We’ll deal with that when we get there,” Harry assured. “Hell, even if it’s only students on that battlefield, they’ll be the best damn battle-ready students this castle has seen.” He would make sure of that.

“Too right they will, with you in charge! That reminds me,” Sirius added, “Moony said he’s got a list of suggestions for you — some of his OWL and NEWT curriculum stuff, adapted a little bit. Y’know, a little less intense than the training you got.” The dog animagus’ lips twitched. “He’s handing it over to Severus, so it should find its way to you soon.”