

“Half-pitch,” Sirius corrected. “Not quite enough room for a full one. I know you’re not a chaser, so the goals aren’t as important to you, but they’re there if you ever fancy your hand with a quaffle. There’s a full set of equipment in the broom shed — the snitch hasn’t been used in a while, so it might be a bit wonky, but we can always have Remus or Snape pick up another one.”

“Sirius, this place is *incredible*.” Not only was he away from the Dursleys, but he was away from them at a house that had a swimming pool *and* a quidditch pitch. Unbelievable.

“It’s pretty great, isn’t it?” Sirius agreed wistfully. “It brings back old memories. I stopped going after my parents kicked me out; spent every summer at James’ instead. Mr and Mrs Potter were brilliant, don’t get me wrong, and The Pottery is a dream house, but... I’ve missed this place.”

“Your parents kicked you out?” Harry asked, surprised.

“Oh, yeah. First I sullied the family name by being sorted into Gryffindor, then I made friends with halfbloods and muggleborns and light wizards, and there was no going back. Blasted my name off the family tree, but never officially disinherited me. There’s a ritual, it’s a bit complicated, I s’pose Mum never got around to it. Or she hoped I’d see sense... either way, I’m the head of the family, now. At least, I would be if I weren’t a convict.”

“So who’s head at the moment?”

“No one, technically,” Sirius said with a shrug. “The family magic went a bit dormant in me while I was in Azkaban, but it’s still there; since I never had a trial, it was never officially stripped from me. I just can’t fully access it until I can step into the Wizengamot and claim my seat again, which obviously I can’t do until I’m a free man. Until then, Dumbledore’s my proxy.” His sour expression showed exactly what he thought of that. “Once you come of age, you can take it back, though.”

“Unless we can get your name cleared before then,” Harry pointed out. “Don’t give up hope, Sirius.”

Sirius shrugged again. “Doesn’t really bother me either way. I’ve got you, and Moony, and I’m out of that blasted prison cell. S’all I need for the minute.” Both of them looked up when they heard a bell ring out across the grounds. Sirius grinned. “Lunch is ready.”

Remus and Snape were already at the table when Sirius and Harry joined them, talking quietly to each other. “I still think it’s too early, Severus,” Remus was saying, before he looked up at their arrival. “Hello, boys. Been keeping out of trouble?”

“For the most part,” Sirius replied easily, sprawling lazily in his chair and reaching for a plate. Ceri had made a quiche that was packed with vegetables and ham. Harry’s stomach growled. “Eat up, pup. You’re a growing boy. With plenty more growing to do, by the looks of you; even Lily wasn’t that short at your age.”

Harry ducked his head. He’d resigned himself to his short stature; kids who grew up in cupboards and barely got fed didn’t end up six feet tall.