

Remus stopped scratching his head, so Harry shook himself off and hopped between the men, showing off his fluffy tail and needle-sharp teeth. “You’ve done so well, Harry. I didn’t expect you to get it so quickly!”

“It took Jamie and I almost a whole year, and Peter nearly eighteen months.” Sirius was awed, stroking gently down Harry’s back. “Oh, he’s so *soft*, Moony!” A grin of childlike glee filled his face. “I always wanted a pet fox when I was little, y’know.” He swooped down to grab Harry in a cuddle, careful not to squish him. Harry yowled in mock-annoyance.

“Can you change back?” Remus asked. Harry screwed up his nose in concentration, and the next moment he was human-shaped once more, still in Sirius’ lap. If anything, Sirius just hugged him harder.

“So *proud*,” he declared, smacking a loud kiss to Harry’s cheek. “Our little prodigy, Moons!”

Harry blushed, unused to such blatant praise.

“Very impressive,” Remus agreed. “We’re incredibly proud.”

“Could I— this summer, if we’re back home...” Harry bit his lip, hesitant. “Could I run with you on the full moon? I’ll be really careful, I promise. I just... I want to be part of it.” It was something his father had done, something that felt like the greatest expression of family he could offer. Remus sucked in a quiet breath.

“We’ll take precautions,” he said eventually, and Harry’s heart soared. “If there’s even a *hint* of something going wrong, Sirius will get you out of there. But if, by summer, you still want to... we’ll try.” Then, he smiled, tears in his eyes. “I’d love to have you out there with us, Harry.”

Harry beamed at him.

“We’ll have to get you something really special for Christmas,” Sirius enthused. “Something to celebrate. Merlin, if Prongs could see you now!” There was a beat of heavy silence, and Harry swallowed thickly.

“I wish he was here. I wish they both were.” It still felt entirely selfish of Harry, to be pulling together his family when his parents could no longer be part of it. Especially in moments like now, something that was so wrought with echoes of the past. His father should have been the one teaching him his animagus transformation, the one bursting with pride at his success. He never got that chance.

“They are, pup,” Sirius insisted, squeezing him tight, one hand over Harry’s heart. “They’re right here. Always.”

A lump rose in Harry’s throat, and he swallowed past it thickly.

It wasn’t the same, but it would have to be enough.

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