

“Tell me anyway,” Charlie pleaded, smiling against Sirius’ skin.

Sirius hesitated only for a moment. Charlie had seen him at his worst, he wouldn’t mock him for his fanciful dreams. “I want to open a wizarding primary school. A place for kids to go before Hogwarts. Bring the muggleborn kids earlier, but also... I was so lonely, back then. Just me and Reggie, and occasionally other kids my parents approved of. I never had a proper friend before I came to Hogwarts. And homeschooling in families like mine... well, let’s just say the indoctrination starts young.” He sneered at the memory, at all the dark curses he knew about before he’d even held his own wand — either through being taught about them, or being punished with them. “I just... I don’t want there to be any more lonely little kids like I was. And I don’t want kids with only their families to show them what the world is like.”

Prejudice wasn’t automatic. It was taught, even subconsciously. He’d been a prime example of that, even if it wasn’t the traditional way — in rebelling against his awful family, he’d decided everything Slytherin was just as bad, everything *pureblood* should rot.

Magical kids grew up sheltered, and deep down Sirius thought that maybe he could fix that.

Silence followed his declaration, long enough that Sirius would have started squirming if Charlie didn’t have him pinned so firmly.

“That’s not stupid at all,” Charlie said eventually, lifting up a little, folding his arm over Sirius’ chest and propping his chin on it. He stared up at Sirius with those adoring blue eyes and Sirius’ heart about stopped. “I think it’s a brilliant idea.”

“I— really?”

“Yeah! I mean, you and I had very different childhoods — I don’t think I spent a second alone until I got to Hogwarts,” Charlie admitted ruefully. “But we still only really played with the kids in the area. Mostly it was me and Bill and Percy playing together. A different kind of sheltered, but almost as bad, I think, sometimes. Same sorts of problems to it.” He grinned, cheeks dimpling. “A school before Hogwarts would be great. Level the playing field a bit, let everyone make friends before they’re split into houses.”

“Exactly,” Sirius agreed, enthusiasm growing like a tiny spark on a pile of kindling. “Basic lessons — how to hold a quill, how to prep different potions ingredients, basic magic theory and history and stuff. Kids’ quidditch,” he added, grinning fondly just at the idea of a bunch of little kids flying around at waist height, tossing squishy quaffles at each other and chasing a tennis-ball sized snitch.

“Well, then,” Charlie murmured, moving his arm, kissing the centre of Sirius’ sternum. “My plans mostly involved dragons and the kids, so I reckon that’ll line up nicely.” He winked, flashing white teeth and a boyish smile. “We’ll go with yours, yeah?”

Sirius almost laughed — he made it sound so simple, like that. So easy. Win the war, adopt some kids, start a school. Insert dragons as applicable.

It was nice to imagine, though.