

# Black Fortunes - Herald\_of\_Dreams - Harry Potter

## [Chapter 1](#)

Chapter Text

**Title: Black Fortunes**

**Genre: Drama/Family/Romance/Time-Travel/SLASH**

**Pairing: Orion Black/Harry Potter**

**Summary: Harry breaks the copy of Sirius' mirror in 7<sup>th</sup> year, after the horrific end of the war. He is sent back to 1975 and takes up the mantle of Lord Peverell. He hopes to turn around the tragic Black family story. How? By getting newly widowed Lord Orion Black to fall in love with him. SLASH, Mpreg, Time-Travel, mild Character Bashing.**

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**One**

Harry James Potter stared around himself with blank emerald eyes. Nothing had been worth *this*. Hogwarts was an empty shell, more than half of it was destroyed, the rest was uninhabitable ruins. Everybody

he knew was dead, practically. The only ones left beside himself were Charlie Weasley, locked in a coma after the death of his entire family, Kingsley Shacklebolt, blind and unable to hear in his left ear and Neville Longbottom, beside his parents in St. Mungo's thanks to the Lestrangle brothers, who had driven him insane after he slaughtered Bellatrix in the final battle.

In his hands he held a single object, a mirror. Twin to the one he had shattered after Sirius' death, it was once perhaps a beautiful object. Now, stained by blood and dirt from his hands it was something unrecognisable. He stared at the man in the mirror, unable to recognise himself, let alone the mirror. He had a scar across the left side of his face, courtesy of an exploding metal bar, his skin was pallid after spending nearly two years hiding underneath the school in the Chamber of Secrets and he was thin, more so than Sirius after 12 years unjustly imprisoned.

Now that he thought about, actually, the Black family had gotten quite the racket. Sirius was dead after being in Azkaban, Andromeda and her family had been murdered by Death Eaters since she had 'spoiled her purity' by marrying a Muggleborn, Bellatrix had been driven insane by her husband and the Dark Lord she had been pressed into serving so blindly. Regulus had been dragged underwater and drowned by Inferi, Narcissa and Draco had been killed for Lucius' second failure in the war, not that Harry grieved for Narcissa.

He had honestly grieved for Draco Malfoy, however. The young man hadn't known what he was getting himself into; all he wanted was to please his exacting and demanding Mother. Lucius hadn't been guilt-

free in raising his son either, but from what Harry knew most of it had been Narcissa's fault. Draco had lost everything, including his life, because he was afraid to stand up for himself and possibly disappoint his family.

Even Orion Black had suffered. Harry hadn't known Sirius' father, but he did know that the man had been forced into a betrothal contract with his own cousin, a cold shrew of a woman who couldn't have been easy to live with. Sirius hadn't spoken much of his father aside from a paranoia about Muggles, but that could have easily come from ignorance and family traditions. The fact that he hadn't spoken much about the man was in his favour, it meant that he hadn't been one to punish Sirius or his brother often.

Suddenly hit by the injustice of everything that had been dealt to the magical world and the Black family in general, Harry yelled in fury and threw the mirror away from him. It struck a tree, shattering into a few hundred fragments of glass and larger chunks of metal.

Struck by a dizzy spell he leaned forward, closing his eyes. As the world began to swirl around him in a haze of colour and he was slowly falling unconscious, the last thought that struck him was a humorous *I guess there is some truth to that adage about breaking mirrors.*

## [Chapter 2](#)

Summary:

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:D

Aldric: French for 'Old Power'

Chapter Text

## ***Two***

He felt as though he had been squeezed through a particularly long Apparition, or so was Harry's first thought when he woke. It was dark and he tasted dirt under his lips, which were against the ground. With a groan he rolled over, noting immediately the hard surface under his back, with grooves that dug into his sensitive spine and ribs. Opening his eyes he noted a dark alley of sorts, dingy back doors of shops on both sides.

Twenty years old and trained by Alastor Moody himself in Auror basics, he quickly scanned with his senses, noting a large amount of latent magic from witches, wizards and magical beings. His ears caught the low murmurs of conversations and the sharp *snick* of heels on something rough, perhaps stone. He inhaled deeply and noted the stale air that stank of alcohol, wizarding drugs and other unsavory things.

He sat up, looking at the ground. It was cobblestone, he noted, not pavement. Either a *very* old section of Muggle London or the magical world. He would guess the latter from what he had noted so far. He stood carefully, wiping his face on his sleeve and digging into his pocket. He pulled out his wand and his face fell into dismay. The wand

that had gotten him through school and the war was snapped cleanly into three pieces. There would be no repairing it.

He realised a few things in quick succession. The mirror he had broken had transported him here, somehow. He wasn't sure where he was, though getting out of this dingy back alley would clear things up somewhat. He had no money on him at the moment, which meant that he needed to get to Gringotts, which was an easy enough goal.

He left the alley, thanking Merlin for the removal of his scar through Muggle surgery and the potion that had fixed his eyes. He was unrecognizable to the populace of the magical world if he was careful enough and fighting a fierce and bloody war for the last 4 years had taught him that much.

He left the alley and was startled to realise that he was in Knockturn, just past Borgin and Burkes. He moved swiftly, not wanting to remain in this Alley for much longer. A few quick minutes of walking brought him out into Diagon, right next to the *Daily Prophet* office. There was a magical newsstand next to him, selling current issues of the *Prophet*. He stared in shock at the headline which screamed ***Massive Attack by He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named in Dover! 19 Fatalities, 12 Injured!***

*What?! He's dead!* Harry practically screamed. Then he noted the date of the paper and just about fell over in shock. Sunday 12 October, 1975. He was in the *past* by almost 25 years. His pa-

Harry frowned. J- *Why couldn't he remember? He had just known*

*their names a moment ago.*

He hesitated for a moment longer and then spotted the glossy white building of Gringotts. Right, that was his goal at the moment, his lapse in memory could be addressed later.

*Strange things can happen to those who mess with time, Harry. A voice warned, but for all his struggles he couldn't for the life of him remember who the voice belonged to.*

He moved swiftly now, needing to deal with his lack funds and a form of defense, though he was capable of higher than average wandless magic, it was draining to use for long amounts of time. He entered Gringotts slowly, a voice in his head admonishing, *Yea, that's a goblin Harry. Not a creature you want to mess with, goblins.*

Shaking his head slightly to get rid of the voices he couldn't place, he moved to one of the goblins and said quietly, "I need an inheritance test to see if I have vaults to claim."

The goblin nodded curtly and motioned another forward. "He will take you to one of our open managers, sir."

As they walked Harry frowned to himself. He hadn't meant to say those words; all he needed to do was access either the B- or Po-. *Really? What was going on?*

"Bloodclaw, this wizard needs an inheritance test and to claim any vaults in his name," his guide said after a moment and he realised that

they had entered a fairly small but private office with basic furnishings and another goblin sitting behind a desk.

Bloodclaw motioned for him to sit down and said, "Inheritance tests cost two galleons, sir. Will you be able to afford it if you don't have anything here at Gringotts for you?"

Thanking Merlin for his habit of carrying around spare change he nodded. "I will be able to pay, though I am fairly sure I have a vault waiting for me."

"Prick your finger on this blade and press the blood into this parchment," Bloodclaw handed him a wicked looking little dagger and a piece of pale gold parchment.

Harry pricked his finger carefully with the sharp blade and pressed it against the paper. There was a small zapping sensation at the point where he had cut his finger and then the parchment glowed. It began to write out information from the very top of the page, but the information shocked him.

*Name: Harrigan Aldric Peverell*

*Age: 20*

*Date of Birth: 31 July, 1955*

*Father: Lord Aldric Peverell*

*Mother: Lady Elpis Peverell*

*Title: Lord of the Most Noble and Ancient House of Peverell*

*Vaults: 520, 542, 564*

*Blood Status: Pureblood*

*What in the hell?* Harry thought. He opened his mouth to say that the information wasn't right and what came out was, "I believe this needs some explanation, my parents died when I was very young and I was privately educated by distant relatives."

Bloodclaw looked at the parchment and his eyes went wide. "What this means, Harrigan, is that you are heir and Lord to one of our oldest families. You are not the wealthiest, but you are going to be able to be comfortable for at least your own lifetime. There are a number of families that are descendants of the Peverells and they have claimed a few vaults over the years, ones set specifically aside for them. However, your name is very old; it carries a great deal of weight. There will be those interested in marrying you just for your name. I suggest you be very careful in the future."

"I will do so. For now, may I take control of my vaults, get a statement and a bank card and be on my way?"

"Certainly, Lord Peverell. Sign these documents while I retrieve a Gringotts bank card for you."

He signed them with a blood quill, wincing a little at the object for a reason that was quickly slipping away. A frown crossed his face for just a moment before he smoothed it away. Things had changed, obviously. He had come into control of a name that had been extinguished in the male line in his time, one that had been his ancestors. Apparently he had a purpose here; so far he wasn't sure what.

Bloodclaw came back to his desk with two objects, the first of which he placed on the table. "The Peverell Lordship ring," he explained.

Harrigan picked up the ring and examined it. It was heavy, made of yellow gold and white gold intertwined together to form an elaborate Celtic knot. The meaning of the knot was 'Loyalty', something Harrigan could respect. The stone onto which the main knot was embossed was an oval-cut red diamond, so deep a red it could have been blood.

Bloodclaw gave him a small golden card, not much larger than a galleon and certainly smaller than a Muggle debit card. "You will need to simply tap this on a receipt and the amount will be paid and a receipt sent to your vaults. We publish statements every month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the month; your first statement will be received in about 2 weeks by owl. No one can access your statements aside from yourself until you bring them in here and give them access to your accounts."

"Thank you Bloodclaw. I have one more question. Is there such a thing as a Permanent Aging Potion? I am a little young for such a title as this one and I wish to make an impact on the wizarding world. My voice will have more weight if I am even a few years older."

Bloodclaw looked at him with something akin to budding respect. "Certainly there is a permanent form, Lord Peverell. It can only age you a maximum of 10 years and can only be used once. Done here at Gringotts it cannot be traced in your blood by any scan, spell or historical potion. It costs 30 galleons, purely the cost of the ingredients and the labor of the Potions Master needed to brew it."

"I would like to use one then, Bloodclaw. Debit my account for the appropriate amount. I think the maximum of 10 years would be appropriate. People tend to respect 30 more than 20," he finished wryly.

The potion was brought to him and he drank it in a single go, wrinkling his nose at the unpleasant taste. It didn't change his height or physical features much, but he could tell it worked when Bloodclaw bowed and said, "Much more appropriate for your conduct and behaviour, my Lord. Have a good day."

"May your bank overflow with gold," Harry replied, startled by his slightly deeper voice.

He exited the bank, headed for Ollivander's. He needed a new wand since his own was broken. Somehow the broken wand made sense now, if he was coming back in time to replace someone who died too soon or wasn't born at all in *his* timeline then it wouldn't be good for the H- P-, *not again!* It wouldn't be good for *him* to come to Ollivander's and not have the wand waiting there.

He left Ollivander's not an hour later in possession of a brand new

wand, 12 inches, made of rowan and phoenix feather, fairly rigid. Armed he felt far more comfortable and set out to acquire a new wardrobe. According to the document at Gringotts, he had a seat on the Wizengamot and sessions began again in two weeks. He wanted to make an impact.

## [Chapter 3](#)

Summary:

I will keep canon for Orion's birth year. He was born in 1929, so he is 16 years older than Harrigan, making him 46. Sound about right? Since nobody is sure about James' parents canon-wise they will be Lord and Lady Harold and Eleanor Potter. This chapter is split into two parts, the first is Orion's side of things, the next update will be Harrigan's with a bit of background on how he spent the last 3 months.

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Chapter Text

### ***Three***

Lord Orion Arcturus Black leaned back in his seat of the Wizengamot and studied his peers. It was 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 1975 and this was the first session of the new quarter in the British Wizarding government. He studied his known opponents with narrow silvery eyes, clenching his firm lower jaw in an effort to push down his annoyance. He had rather

hoped that Lord Harold Potter wouldn't be recovered from his bout of wizarding flu. The male Potter with his trademark messy hair, his own a mousey brown was undeniably present.

Unofficially the Wizengamot chambers were already splitting into three sections, those of the 'Dark', the 'Light' and the fairly powerful Neutral section. The most well-known names in the Light section were the Potter, Abbott and Fawcett families. Their Dark equivalent were Orion's own family, the Malfoys, Lestranges and Flint. The only names of notice for the Neutrals were the Bones and Ogden families. No matter what went on in a war, everyone still bought Ogden's Firewhiskey so aged Lord Charles Ogden was in good shape.

Seated to his left was his good friend Abraxas Malfoy, a distinguished individual with deep cornflower blue eyes and long, pale blonde hair. The hair was a trademark of the Malfoy family but Orion was fond of teasing Abraxas that his hair was more white than blonde. The man always gave a dismissive sniff and said, "At least it's not as noticeable as your own, Orion."

Orion Black was a handsome individual and he knew it. Both of his sons took after him and his side of the Black family, something he was grateful for. He stood an imposing six foot four and possessed broad shoulders, very strong arms and a surprisingly narrow waist for one of 46 winters. Orion was proud of his figure and it helped that it was set off by a pair of misty blue eyes and deep black hair, though he had been amused at the white hairs that had shown already. They made him look even more distinguished than he usually did, confined to a small space at both temples. His hair was cut to fall just at earlobe

length with slightly longer fringe that he usually tucked behind his left ear out of habit.

Seated to his right was Lord Lucien Alexis Lestrangle who possessed a pair of astonishing silver eyes he shared with his distant relative and namesake, Lucius Malfoy. His twin sons Rodolphus and Rabastan were at Hogwarts along with both of Orion's sons, in the same year as his oldest, Sirius. Orion frowned slightly to himself, worried about his oldest. Even though he had sent word that Sirius was still welcome home for the holidays after Walburga's surprising but unlamented death he hadn't received word back.

A slight snort of amusement made it past firm, expressive lips as he considered the matter of his unexpected widow state. For such a proud and anti-Muggle woman, being brought down by *cancer* of all things had infuriated his late wife beyond measure. The wizarding world had no better research on the invasive disease than the Muggle one, and Walburga had refused to be treated by anything invented by 'common filth', thus she had passed away not even four months previous from Heart Cancer, bitter to the very end. Her foul, withered old heart had been her end, just as Orion had often thought it would be.

The death of that foul old harpy was *liberating*, to say the least. What? Had one really expected him to have cared about the woman? It had NOT been his choice to marry that old bitch, not in the least! No, his parents Arcturus and Lucretia had somehow come upon the knowledge that their son and heir was bisexual with a strong preference for his own gender, so the old, self-righteous and bigoted

pair had secured an 'acceptable' future and revenge upon their son's leanings in one fell swoop, betrothing him to his cousin of all people.

Just before the doors would seal, signaling the beginning of session, a series of murmurs caught his attention. "Now who is that, I wonder?" Lucien murmured in surprise.

Turning to the doors that offered the Lords and Ladies of the Wizengamot entrance (the reporters and such had a lower entrance toward the center of the circular room and had been seated before the Wizengamot began to arrive), Orion Black felt his eyes widen in surprise.

The man walking steadily toward the Speaker's platform was younger than Orion, though considerably past his teens. He was dressed in a striking combination of leather and silk, the leather pants and boots in a warm shade of bronze and the silk robe in evergreen with bronze tracery. He possessed raven-black hair that was slightly wavy bound back by a thin bronze tie and very pale jade green eyes. His complexion was flawless and while he was obviously male, the creamy skin and soft features of his face gave a certain androgynous nature to his appearance.

"Speaker of the Wizengamot, I wish to claim my seat and votes," His voice was a surprisingly low tenor, very mellow and smooth.

"Certainly, my Lord. Place your finger upon the black stone please; the magicks of the Chamber will do the rest."

Their newest companion placed a single long finger upon the black stone resting on the Speaker's platform, not even flinching at the small bite of blood the stone took. A moment later the magicks of the Chamber filled the room with a loud voice that stated, "The Wizengamot recognises Lord Harrigan of the Most Noble and Ancient House of Peverell."

Amid the absolute stunned silence of the chamber Abraxas hissed in his ear, "*Peverell?*"

As both Orion and his esteemed friends knew, the Peverell family was supposedly extinct in the male line. The Lordship hadn't been claimed in nearly 100 years, 99 to be precise. This was of significance only because of the fact that once a Lordship had gone unclaimed for 100 years it could be claimed by the closest descendants. From the growing scowl on Senior Mugwump Albus Dumbledore's face, he had been hoping the prestigious line would go to the Potters in another year. They had been able to take one of the smaller vaults as descendants but the title had been denied by Gringotts.

Better yet, nobody could accuse Lord Harrigan of doing something dishonest to gain the title. The Wizengamot Chambers had all manner of spells and wards laid in place, supposedly by Merlin himself, to stop just such a thing from happening. On top of that, the black stone that confirmed a Lord or Lady's place in the Wizengamot did so with a drop of blood, which no potion in the magical world could falsify. Even Polyjuice just changed the physical make-up, not the blood.

He watched the pale jade eyes scan the room, undoubtedly noting the

unofficial break up between factions. Those eyes narrowed a little in contemplation and then a very small smirk crossed his lips. With a deliberately slow turn, Lord Harrigan Peverell made his way carefully toward Orion and his companions, getting an indrawn gasp to cover the mutterings from before.

Orion was equally floored. A look at Abraxas showed that the blonde had tightened his grip on the elegant black cane he held, the only outward sign of his own shock. The Peverells were a firmly Light family in the past, some of the more recent members had been Neutral, certainly none had been Dark. And yet Harrigan Peverell made his way carefully up the stairs and took a seat two down from a slightly-stunned looking Lucien Lestrange.

A blustering Lord Fawcett spoke first. "Lord Peverell, I am not certain you realise where you are sitting. The men in your immediate vicinity are the Lords Black, Malfoy and Lestrange. You are more than welcome over here instead of such *dark* companionship."

That low warm voice filled the room again, though Lord Peverell didn't stand. "I am fully aware of where I sit, Lord Fawcett, thank you."

"Then why are you sitting with the Dark section? The Peverells are a *Light* family!" Lord Prewett sputtered.

"Need I remind you, Lord Prewett, that your family was considered *Dark* as well until the 1940's, when you thought it prudent to side with Albus Dumbledore when it became obvious Grindelwald was losing the war? Dark is a very general term, in my opinion. Nonetheless, it is

not your place to decide where I sit and how I vote and I suggest you be quiet before you make even more of a fool of yourself."

Lord Ogden gave a hearty chuckle from the Neutral section and Lord Prewett took his seat, face flaming in embarrassment.

*This, Orion mused, is going to be interesting.*

## [Chapter 4](#)

Summary:

A/N: Sorry about the long wait, I've been very busy helping my sister move to Alaska, a last-minute kind of thing. I even forgot to pay my bills. Oops. Glad you liked Orion's POV, we'll have to do other characters as well as things progress. Sorry about the short chappie too, I had to get over the gigantic road-bump called writer's block.

Chapter Text

### **Four**

Harrigan felt his lips twitch in mild amusement as a sputtering Lord Prewitt took his seat, turning red in embarrassment. Not only had he been caught out attempting to bring a fellow Lord over to the 'correct' seating, but he'd been chastised like an unruly child in front of the whole Wizengamot for the same thing. He wouldn't be recovering anytime soon.

Harrigan had spent the last few weeks buying a proper wardrobe, re-

educating himself in wizarding politics and etiquette (something he'd been slacking on rather badly) and familiarizing himself with the Lords and Ladies of the Wizengamot and wizarding nobility in general. It would not do to insult someone by accident this early; not knowing their name or title was a sure way to do so.

Considering his companions, he felt a very small smile cross his lips. It was obvious these very powerful and 'Dark' wizards were shocked at his choice of seating, but they maintained a poise and elegance far above most of the room. Lords Abraxas Malfoy, Orion Black and Lucien Lestrage were indeed a force to be reckoned with. He'd read about Lord Black's recent widowed state in the *Daily Prophet* (much to his surprise, though he wasn't sure why) and he had to admit that for 46 years old the man was indeed a sight.

He studied the Wizengamot as they slowly recovered from his sharp reply to Lord Prewitt, in particular studying Senior Mugwump and Headmaster of Hogwarts Albus Dumbledore. The man was staring at him with a very fixated interest even from across the chamber, something that had gained him a few odd looks from other Lords and Ladies. There was something of dislike and enmity from the man and he almost snorted.

He knew very well why the man was annoyed that he had taken his seat. It was very well known that the Potter family were direct descendants of the Peverells and undoubtedly would have gained the familial title in another 6 months. Now that he had claimed it however, the man had lost the chance to make an ally of his a very powerful man. Studying Lord Harold Potter with far more subtlety than the

Headmaster, all Harrigan saw was a weary man who appeared somewhat ill.

Leaning toward his closest companion, Lord Lestrangle, he murmured quietly, "Do you happen to know if the Lord Potter is ill?"

Lestrangle arched an eyebrow at him but answered in a smooth voice, "He just recovered from a bad bout of wizarding flu, my Lord Peverell. He has been particularly susceptible to disease since childhood."

Indicating his acknowledgement of the statement Harrigan sat back and waited, knowing that Dumbledore would not long be able to hold his tongue. It took a while, long enough for Harrigan to vote in favour of a bill that would require Veritaserum testimony at future trials, something that the man had *not* been in favour of, strangely enough.

"Madame Minister," Dumbledore began, eyes twinkling at Minister Bagnold, who frowned at him, "should we even be counting 'Lord' Peverell's votes? Honestly one has to wonder *why* it has taken him so long to claim his line, certainly the line belongs to the Potter family by right of succession."

"Minister, if I may answer Senior Mugwump Dumbledore myself, as it is my own reputation he is attacking so boldly?" Harrigan spoke up, warm tenor ringing clearly through the room. The Minister gave him a long, assessing glance and nodded.

Harrigan stood and stepped up to the barrier in front of the seats, making himself clearly visible to all of the Lords, Ladies and the gallery.

In a firm, surprisingly cold tone of voice he said, "I am beginning to tire of your glances and insinuations, Senior Mugwump. The Peverell family heritage is *mine*, claimed by birth and the stone when I entered this chamber. Do you think me a man strong enough to fool what has been enchanted by Merlin himself? The reason why I didn't claim my seat before now, not that it is any business of yours, is that I had no *idea* that it waited for me. My parents died when I was very young of a rather suspicious illness while we lived in France and I was raised by resentful distant relatives of my mother. I finally came back to England to see where I was from more than anything else. You can imagine my surprise when I turned out to be from a very influential family, if not the wealthiest."

"As for your allegations toward the Potter family, we all know that it is 100 years exactly or more, not 99 years and 6 months (as it is in my case) or for that matter 99 years and 364 days. The Potter family is merely that and should Lord Potter hold your same desires I shall remind him that I am head of his direct ancestral family line and it is never too late to disown those who deserve it or merit it."

Lord Harold Potter looked startled at his words and stated, "I have no intentions of trying to take the Peverell Lordship from you, Lord Harrigan. Indeed, I would be pleased to be able to speak with one of my ancestral family."

"But he is Dark!" protested Lord Prewitt, who apparently wasn't smart enough to keep his mouth shut.

"This again, Lord Prewitt," Harrigan said in exasperation. "The Peverell

family and their allegiance has been Dark for many centuries, it was only in recent years that a few Lords tried to change it over. Dark and Light are merely labels in any case, the major reason for the label of 'Dark' in the first place is that we still honour the Old Ways and Mother Magic, something that you 'Light' wizards seem to take for granted. And yet you still wonder why 'Light' families are losing the strength in their magic!"

"The Old Ways are nothing but pureblood supremacy, surely you can see that, Lord Peverell!" this was from an old red-headed male that Harrigan recognised as Lord Septimus Weasley. The words rang a bell for some reason, but Harrigan couldn't remember for the life of him *why*.

"I would rather be called a supremacist than a traitor to magic, Lord Weasley! By embracing the 'Christianity' of the Muggleborns you are turning your back on the very entity that makes us so special and unique in the first place! Your family has been losing magical strength for centuries and you have yet to wonder why. And by the Father of Storms and Gaia herself I cannot understand why you have blinded yourself so thoroughly!"

A sudden sharp noise made Harrigan jerk his head to his right, where he spotted Lord Ogden bringing his hands together in a firm, heavy clapping motion. "Very well put, Lord Peverell. To bring us back to the original argument, Minister, I believe it best for the Senior Mugwump to hold his tongue. There is nothing he can do to change the Lordship of the Peverell family; so much as he may want to."

Amongst the reddening face of Dumbledore and the chuckles of both the Dark section and the gallery Harrigan sat, resisting the urge to smirk. He had a feeling the old man wouldn't be recovering from that little jab anytime soon.

## [Chapter 5](#)

Summary:

A/N: I've been busy working and reading other people's works and lost track of my own. Oops. I'm sorry, that's really no excuse for how long this has taken. If you're interested in what I've been reading look up Invisible by DebtheSlytherinSnapeFan or the multiple works by WyrdSmith and slayerofdestiny. Contract by SnarryvsLarry and Enveloped by Darkness by Brigade are good choices as well. I must add that I neglected to mention WereBunny87's fics as well. :D In this fic Lucius was born on November 15, 1955. :D

Chapter Text

### **Five**

When Harrigan Peverell received the invitation, his eyebrows disappeared into his fringe. He hadn't thought that the elegant Dark trio he'd sat near had any interest in him, but then again they were pureblood Lords and held a certain sense of decorum and elegance, especially in the public eye. He'd most likely caught their attention with his sharp rejoinders to Lord Prewett and Dumbledore.

Still, he wasn't one to turn down an invitation to dinner with three of the most powerful men in wizarding England. He swiftly wrote an affirmative reply and sent it with his snowy owl Horus. A certain amount of amusement had been present when he named his snowy owl after the Egyptian god of the sun. Still, the owl's jewel-bright eyes were certainly gold enough to spark a comparison to sunlight.

He summoned his house-elf Toby and ordered that suitable robes be picked out of his wardrobe and a hot bath with oils to be started. Toby was a very eager house-elf, though Harrigan was beginning to think he needed to find a female for the very fun-loving male elf. Someone that could tame him and keep him in order.

Shaking his head at his odd thoughts, Harrigan made his way upstairs. His current residence was a small two-story building that he'd bought from the goblins and had appropriately warded, for a price of course. Still, it was an adequate home for a bachelor familial Lord and a single house-elf. More importantly, it wasn't above his funds. He'd spoken with the goblins and had given 1,000 galleons over to investments that the goblins thought suitable. Hopefully they would show a return fairly soon.

He carefully shucked off his robes and threw them across a chair in his bedroom, ignoring the mirror. Harrigan was 5' 11", with fairly slim shoulders and waist for a man. His skin however was flawless aside from a few pale silvery scars and his profile was striking. He would stop a crowded room if he so desired with just the right appearance and expression.

He sank into the hot water with a sigh of pleasure. It smelled of aloe, jasmine and sandalwood, with a thick, dense foam coating the surface. Groaning softly as it eased aches he hadn't realized he had in his back, Harrigan closed his eyes and thought quietly back on the past month.

He had expected a retaliation for his words in the Wizengamot, what he had *not* expected was the assassin to strike him practically outside the Wizengamot chambers. He had dispatched the idiot with a ruthless ease and left, nodding curtly to the Ministry security as they gaped at the body. All Harrigan had been attempting was defense until the fool had actually tried to use a spell to blow up a portion of the doorway over the departing gallery of reporters and common citizens. After that he'd simply blasted him into a wall and broken his neck.

After that he'd returned for the remainder of this particular Wizengamot session, if only to irritate his probable assailant with the fact that he remained alive and voting session after session. He had a good idea who had given the orders, if not hired the man himself. As Senior Mugwump Dumbledore wasn't going to risk his position and possible ascension of power by associating himself in any way with the assassin, but he knew who had paid the man.

He wondered how much his death had been worth the first time. 100 galleons? He snorted in amusement. With the article by the *Prophet* on just how deftly he'd handled his attacker Harrigan had a feeling Dumbledore would be spending quite a bit more than pocket change if he could convince someone else to take an attempt at killing him.

He finally regretfully left his bath, tying back his hair with a deep purple

cord that Toby had left in the bathroom for him. Entering the bedroom he eyed the robes on the bed and said appreciatively to Toby, "These are perfect Toby, thank you."

Toby beamed and squeaked, "Master Harrigan is too good to Toby!"

"Make sure an appropriate outer cloak is by the door and then you are free for the night, Toby."

Toby bowed and cracked away. The robes he'd left were tailored to hug Harrigan's frame all the way from neck to ankles, with a Mandarin collar. The ensemble consisted of black silk trousers under a deep sapphire robe with purple accents in the shape of Celtic knots.

Waiting for him at the door was a simple black cloak and he slipped it on, clipping it shut at his throat and throwing the hood over his head. Though it was early December he noted that the cloak chosen had warming charms and an insulation charm and he chuckled quietly at the intuition of house-elves.

Exiting his home he concentrated and disappeared with soft *pop*, appearing in front of a Diagon Alley restaurant called 'The Golden Spark'. Making his way inside he handed over his outer cloak to a young house-elf and moved to the hostess, stating in his firm, low voice, "I am with the Malfoy party."

She smiled flirtatiously and stated, "Follow me, my Lord."

She led him past the open tables and into a second, smaller room that

was composed of small tables that seated up to four with powerful silencing charms between each table. He recognized Lord Malfoy's distinctive hair all the way in the right-hand corner and followed the hostess deftly through the tables. "Thank you, ma'am."

She smiled brightly and disappeared, leaving him to greet his companions. "Greetings, my Lords. Thank you for the invitation, I was most surprised and gratified."

"No, thank you, Lord Peverell, for accepting. Please have a seat. And to keep from confusing yourself, please address us by our given names. Mine is Abraxas, my companions are Lucien and Orion."

"Then you must please call me Harrigan," he returned politely, sitting in the empty chair across from Abraxas. Orion was on his right and the dark-haired man smiled, stating, "We were most impressed by your entrance into the Wizengamot, not to mention how you handled yourself with Dumbledore and the Lords Prewett and Fawcett."

"With Dumbledore himself or his assassin," Harrigan mused lightly. "In any case whoever hired that sad excuse for a wizard will find that I am not so easily disposed of."

"I would hope not," Abraxas said with a tight smile. "It would deprive us of many interesting conversations."

Harrigan couldn't help it, he laughed outright. "I shall endeavor to remain alive then, Abraxas, if only to not deprive you of intellectual conversation during the sessions."

Orion's very warm smile and intense expression caught him off-guard and he looked away, after a moment he managed to look the trio in the eye and just caught the expressions of amusement on Lucien and Abraxas' faces and exasperation on Orion's. Curious about what that meant but content to leave it for now he instead asked, "Do the three of you have students coming home for the holidays then?"

Abraxas chuckled. "These two do but I do not. My heir Lucius is 21 now, he graduated with honors 4 years ago now. He still will be with me for Yule however; he lives at home while running the executive Muggle side of Malfoy Industries for me. He detests the Muggles, a fault of his mother's no doubt, but he is getting better."

Lucien smiled warmly and said, "You are lucky my friend, my two rascals are coming home and I have another term before they graduate! Honestly what those two get up to at Hogwarts. I've gotten more letters from Hogwarts than I get from my associates and lawyers!"

Abraxas snorted a rather undignified sound and said, "Lucien my dear friend, Rudolphus and Rabastan will be causing trouble for ages, I can assure you of that!"

Lucien groaned pitifully, earning a laugh from Harrigan and Orion. Turning to the intense blue eyes he asked, "And you, Orion?"

Orion gave him a slightly depreciating smile and said, "Well my youngest is coming home at any rate. Regulus is in his 5th year and sometimes I wonder how he avoided Ravenclaw. He is often buried in

his books, especially since this is the year of the dreaded O.W.L.s."

Harrigan frowned. "What of your oldest?"

Now the expression couldn't be described as anything but sad. "My Sirius refuses to come anywhere near home, despite the loss of his late, unlamented mother. I assume he burns my letters, the owls come home with empty claws so he at least takes them."

"Where does he go during the summers and holidays?" Harrigan asked, startled.

"Potter Manor, most likely. He is good friends with the Potter Heir, James. He was sorted into Gryffindor you see and my wife tried to remove him from our family tree. I think he believes she succeeded, despite the fact that the title is mine and not through Walburga's side."

"Her side?" Harrigan asked, confused.

"My late wife was also my first cousin," Orion explained with a grim smile. "Not my choice, I can assure you."

"I would think not!" Harrigan replied, startled. "Why on the name of magic would you have wed your own cousin?"

"My parents arranged the marriage because it was *suitable*," Orion's scorn as he said the last word said what he thought of it.

"My marriage was also arranged," Abraxas inserted, looking pleased

for some reason when Harrigan jumped a little. "The only one of us who's had any luck with an arranged marriage is Lucien, his wife Cynthia is a dear. Belladonna however," he trailed off with a grimace, "It's no surprise she was named for a poisonous plant."

"Enough of our sorry stories, Harrigan, eat!" Lucien said with a warm laugh.

Harrigan dug into his meal and the rest of the night passed in a whirlwind of conversation, good food and good company. Not to mention an excellent wine. It was, he reflected later, an evening that he could easily repeat.

## [Chapter 6](#)

Summary:

A/N: I'm sorry; there is really no excuse for how long this has taken. Sorry it's so short, I've had some major bumps in motivation to write and outside influences. The next chapter is going to have the Marauder Trio, would you like to see it in James, Sirius or Remus' point of view? (3rd person still, I can't write 1st without getting irritated.) J.K. Rowling owns everything you recognize.

Chapter Text

### **Six**

The lofty manor rose from the surrounding grounds with a gradual pace that still did little to make it seem less like a sore thumb, sticking

up three levels from the ground on a flat grassy meadow. It was made of a reddish-black stone that picked up little light, something of a metaphor for a family that had done very little to leave behind a Dark-aligned background despite persuasive efforts.

Harrigan Peverell stared up at the lofty stone griffons guarding the gate, arching an eyebrow at the smug, superior look in the stone faces. Reaching the door he took hold of a gold ring held in a silver lion's mouth and rapped it sharply thrice upon the solid-looking wood door. Hardly did his hand leave the knocker than the door opened, a small house-elf bowing low and squeaking, "Welcome to Potter Manor, Lord wizard. May I be asking for name?"

"Lord Harrigan Peverell," he stated as he entered the elegant hall, removing his sable fur-lined cloak with matching gloves and handing it over.

To say he had been surprised to receive the invitation to have lunch with the Lord Potter and his Lady would be an understatement. They may be descendants of his family; however he had thought Lord Potter rather taken aback with his choice to align with the Dark families in the Wizengamot. Something of a hypocrite since his own family was hardly Light.

"Missy was told to wait for you," the elf squeaked, breaking his thoughts. "Follow me, Lord Peverell."

He followed the elf quietly, amused at her slightly bossy demeanor. She was much more outspoken than house-elves he'd met before.

*'Could say that his family is bad wizards'* squeaked a voice in his head. He shook his head slightly, annoyed at the little bits and pieces that he was hearing.

They were passing a spacious room that apparently held some occupants by the murmur of voices when one particularly loud one said, "Missy! I was just about to call you but since you are here, pop down into the kitchens and bring us a snack."

Missy answered, "I will be doing so in a moment, young sir. I-"

"Missy! What you are doing is hardly important! It will take you two seconds to do what I ordered."

"I is escorting someone to meet your fa-"

"My father's buddies can wait, Missy!"

This was when Harrigan chose to intrude, to keep what appeared to be the Potter heir by the 'my father' from making the mistake of offending him.

"I am not one of your father's 'buddies' Heir Potter," he said calmly, moving to stand just behind Missy.

There were three young men in the sitting room, one of which was obviously the Potter heir, having inherited the messy hair and need for glasses. Another was striking and definitely related to Orion Black, so he was able to surmise that this was the errant Sirius Orion, eldest of

the family. The last was entirely unremarkable aside from a pair of arresting amber eyes.

Heir Potter's eyes travelled to his hand and the Lordship ring and widened before he stuttered, "Sorry, My Lord. I didn't realise you were following Missy. It can wait."

"Tell me, Heir Potter, is your kitchens very far from here?"

"No sir, just a few doors down."

"Then why not fetch your snack with your own two hands?" he continued with a mild bite, "I live on my own in a flat with a single elf and even I do not call him for every whim. Helps me keep a reasonable figure and waistline, as well as exercising a bit of self-reliance and patience."

The Potter heir's face flushed and he said, "We shall do so then, My Lord. Sorry for the near-loss of your guide."

As they were walking away he called, "Black heir, you may find it interesting to actually read your father's missives rather than burn or toss them. He has missed you greatly and times have changed, especially with the death of Lady Black."

Sirius stiffened, turned back to look at Harrigan and said, "And how would you know anything of my family, my Lord Peverell?"

Harrigan arched an eyebrow, so at least one of the boys had

recognized his ring. "I am a political ally and a friend of your father. Why are you punishing him and your younger brother who loves and admires you so?"

"That, my *Lord*, is none of your business. Good day," Sirius nodded curtly, turned on his heel and walked away. After a slightly wary look the Potter heir and their third friend followed.

Harrigan couldn't help but smile a little, pleased with the outcome of the short conversation. He had guessed that Sirius would respond so, or something of that vein. His conversation with Orion on the subject had proved that Sirius was prickly to the point he could be a little rude. However, the whole point of his conversation had been to make the Black heir think and in that he had succeeded.

It had been difficult, especially with the formal overtones of the conversation. If just one of the boys had asked his name he could have asked for theirs, but they had stuck with his title, demanding the same from him as a common courtesy. Pureblood etiquette was so rigid in places.

He continued to follow Missy with a small smile, his entire goal for the visit accomplished in one short conversation.

## [Chapter 7](#)

Summary:

A/N: New computer, had to get used to a different operating system.

Yay. Actually it's not that bad. Anyone else out there use Windows 8.1? So the overwhelming choice was for Sirius' point of view (sort of) so here it is.

## Chapter Text

Sirius Orion Black was used to opulence. The oldest child of Orion and Walburga Black, he had been born to a family that prided purity over everything else, including common sense and a tad bit of insanity. However, no matter what their mental faculties or lack thereof, every Black had an eye for the elegant, expensive things in life. Most couldn't afford them, though they pretended as though they could.

Thus as he stared around the Potter Manor, home sweet home since he was about 13, Sirius could see that even though the Potters preached a 'simpler' lifestyle they were not above a few expensive things. *Hypocrites*, he thought idly, without any venom. Currently the Marauders were holding court in James' private sitting room. Remus was reading a book, while James was chatting rapidly to Sirius, trying to plan some sort of prank.

Sirius found that his mind wasn't on pranks, however. It was preoccupied by the man who had been here almost a week ago. No matter the fact that he was a Lord, who did Harrigan Peverell think he was? Sirius had reasons for his estrangement from his family, ones that didn't need to be explained to a strange Lord, no matter his association with Orion Black and the Potter family.

He did have to admit that he had burned or thrown away a few letters

from his father after the first one, which told him about his late mother's unlamented death. For a while he'd wondered if Orion had something to do with it, at least until his father had explained that she'd died of cancer. Sirius had found no end of amusement at the fact that his mother had been brought so low by a Muggle disease of all things.

However, that wasn't the source of his anger with his family, nor the deeper hurts that lingered below. Until some things changed or some people were removed from the Black family he would continue to refuse acknowledging where he came from.

He locked eyes with Peter, who gave him a nervous smile before quickly looking away. It made him frown, remembering Peter's shifty (or more shifty than usual) behaviour. It all couldn't be explained by the fact that he was a rat animagus, though a great deal of it may come from the rodent bleeding into his personality. Sirius well knew that his own laugh had become a great deal more bark-like.

Such was the downfall of becoming unregistered Animagi. While there were great benefits to being able to transform, it tended to affect the witch/wizard's personality and mentality after a while. More so if one spent extensive time in their form, but Sirius had no plans for doing so. It wasn't as if he was on the run or anything, after all.

Lord Peverell hadn't spent very long here in the Manor after scolding the Marauders and commenting on Sirius' lack of conversation with his father. The man was considered a rising player in the politics of Wizarding Britain, not to mention the *Daily Prophet* considered him a

hot topic whenever they reported on the doings of the Wizengamot. It had shocked many when the new Lord had chosen to sit and ally himself with the Dark families, James had ranted long on the subject at first.

Strangely enough Lord Potter had put a quick halt to his son's behaviour and tolerated nothing of the sort from James' friends. He had proceeded to shock his son with the knowledge that the Potter family was traditionally Dark or Grey, having only recently become Light. Sirius already had known this, based on his classes as a young child when his late mother had lamented on the loss of the Potter family to 'the old coot's influences'.

Sirius himself was considered a Dark wizard. It wasn't at all based on one's actions, though it could be influenced with one's actions. No, the initial base for a wizard's standing was in the family genes and the exposure to magicks in the air around a family's home. Sirius' behaviour throughout his life had continued to influence his standing, it couldn't be considered Light by any stretch when he'd caused Severus Snape to almost be killed.

Remus was dark as well, no doubt about it. The influence of the wolf in his head and heart made him Dark, but he'd noticed that Remus himself, though very kind most of the time, had quite a streak of maliciousness hiding deep down. Plus he had a very innocent air about him, one that made him a master at planning pranks and getting away with them. He was a very good liar.

James was on the Darker side of Grey in Sirius' opinion. He was

extremely loyal and fairly gentle most of the time, but he had an aggressive streak a mile long and a possessive one just about as long. It had caused the boy to break up with Lily Evans after chasing her for five years. They had been going together for a few months and then Lily had discovered his darker edges, dropping him faster than a letter filled with bubotuber pus.

Sirius scowled privately to himself and turned away from his mental conversations to what his best friend was saying.

"I think we should play a prank on the new Defense teacher when we go back after this summer," James was saying enthusiastically. "We'd have all summer to plan it, just think! It would be perfect since we'd be able to plan out every aspect ahead of time. We could even make sure that we weren't even thought of as the culprits, lay it on the Slytherins or something."

"Sounds good to me," Sirius said absently, looking over to where Remus was sitting.

"Are you going to help us, Remus, or do we have to do without your oh-so-knowledgeable self?"

"I should make you do it yourselves, but since you are such a flatterer Sirius I think I can help out," Remus replied dryly.

"I'll help too!" Peter squeaked.

*Oh joy*, Sirius thought sarcastically, though all he said out loud was,

"Sure Wormy, we may be able to think of something suited to your talents," *few though they may be*, Sirius added to himself.

He put the subject of his family and politics behind him, concentrating on planning the best prank ever. It was what he was good at, after all.

## Chapter 8

Summary:

So this is more than a month later... Hope 2000+ words helps? I have, according to the books and HP Lexicon, placed the Marauders in their 6th year at the moment. They were all born in 1960, so their Hogwarts years are 1971-1977. This story started in 1975, they were entering their 6th year. They are currently in the 2nd part of 6th.

A nice Orion/Harry moment here...:D

Chapter Text

### **Eight- January 1976**

To say that Harrigan had been blindsided by his Yule gift from Orion Black was a severe understatement. He had received a rather lovely and warm white winter cloak with black fur trim from Abraxas Malfoy, merely running his hands over the thick, soft material made him appreciative of the gift in such a bitterly cold winter. From Lucien Lestrangle he had an intriguing and complex book on Dark Arts and spell creation, he was almost halfway through it and sometimes he wondered if it carried a *compulsion charm*, as he seemed unable to

put it down for at least 2 hours after beginning to read.

From Lord Orion Arcturus Black however, he had received not one but three items. The first was a bouquet of three flowers, a white rose, a red one and a shockingly beautiful and pale *clear* one that turned out on close inspection to be made of pure crystal. It was exquisitely detailed and obviously crafted by someone of great skill in both Transfiguration and conjuring. The spell signature on it was Orion's own.

The second was rather plain next to the flowers, comprised of a simple letter written on gold parchment, closed with the Black family crest, imprinted in black on white wax. Closer study revealed the parchment to be woven of pure gold threads however, which undoubtedly made the parchment *very* expensive.

The last had been a slim bracelet made of platinum with clear crystal-embossed runes etched all the way around the surface.

On their own each of these spectacular objects could be an elegant gift, all together however they represented something of utmost respect and dedication: a Courting Request. After reading the well-written and sincere letter which outlined Orion's intentions and reasons for the amazing request Harrigan had not hesitated to place the bracelet on his left wrist. The metal had heated up for a moment before the clear runes had turned golden, indicating an honest and pure request. Should either individual break the Courting with such a thing as infidelity the runes would turn black on the perpetrator's bracelet, a most shameful thing. Especially since the bracelet couldn't

be removed for at least another five days.

Now Harrigan was dressing carefully in an elegant set of bronze and black dress robes with three-quarter sleeves that exposed the bracelet. Swiftly retrieving his lovely cloak from beside the door he walked outside and apparated to the Leaky Cauldron, where he was meeting Orion. The pair were going to dinner at the *Golden Spark* but they had agreed to meet at the beginning of the Alley so they could enjoy a stroll through the Wizarding market together.

When he arrived in the pub he noted many glances thrown his way, though he ignored all but one. The appreciative gaze and warm, sensual smile that the current Lord Black pointed his way made a slight flush crawl across his cheeks and he took the opportunity of removing his matching fur-lined gloves to look down, though a slight chuckle gave evidence to the fact that his tactic hadn't gone unnoticed.

Still, he had composed himself enough to remain unembarrassed as he raised his head, turned a wry smile in Orion's direction and said, "What you do to my composure, hmm?"

Orion merely smiled and extended his right arm, which Harrigan looped his left arm through, thus elegantly exposing the pair of matching Courting bracelets. The sudden whispers that sprang through the pub sounded nothing more than a very tetchy fire hissing at them, or a temperamental serpent. They exited the pub through the back door, Orion reaching out to tap the correct bricks before re-sheathing his wand.

Turning to Orion he asked, "Did you enjoy your time with your youngest, Regulus?"

"I did," Orion agreed in his rich baritone. "He told me he wishes to become a spell creator or archivist/researcher at the Ministry. Either one would suit him well, he's very clever and finds both history and spell creation fascinating. Luckily both Spell-Crafting and Research have many of the same pre-requisites, he chose his other classes to suit either one."

"I shall hope he has the good luck necessary in his OWLs then, those are both very high-demand and opportunistic careers," Harrigan replied.

To anyone listening in on their conversation it would seem very stilted or formal, however both Orion and Harrigan were being formal/casual, that is, more formal than casual while in a situation that catered to eavesdroppers and gossiping reporters.

The bracelets glinted brightly in the setting sun, drawing much attention as they made their way through Diagon Alley to the more upscale end, closest to Gringotts. A slight left just past Twilfit & Tattling's left them outside the *Golden Spark* and both men entered, temporarily dropping their conversation.

"Reservation for two under Black," Orion ordered casually, earning a glance from the hostess who then noted the bracelets with wide eyes. However, she said nothing, turning to a waiter and nodding for him to escort the two men to their seats.

The *Golden Spark* was a wizarding restaurant that catered to the wealthier, more well-known members of Wizarding Great Britain. It was expensive, even most members of the Wizengamot would hesitate before recommending the restaurant for a casual gathering. However Orion Black was not your average Lord, he shelled out 100 Galleons like it was pocket change.

Chandeliers and marble pillars filled the main room with round tables meant for parties up to four. At the front of the restaurant however was the high-end seating, where Orion and Harrigan were headed. Four pillars separated this from the main room, with walls of mahogany wood between three of the pillars, leaving a sheer gold curtain as the only entryway. The floor here was lush Persian rugs instead of wood, which kept the room warmer and muted conversations. Each two-person table had silencers around it as well and a small personal candle chandelier with white and gold sconces. Those next to the floor-to-ceiling windows needn't worry about prying pedestrians as they were conveniently spelled with one-way glass.

Their escort led Orion and Harrigan to one of the window tables, where Orion held out one of the mahogany chairs for a slightly-flushed Harrigan. Only once he was seated did Orion move to the other side and sit as well, ordering a bottle of a crisp white wine. That it happened to be one of Harrigan's favourite wines was of no importance, not at all.

This was their first private outing since the Courting began, they had been to one small gathering with Abraxas and Lucien about a week ago, where both Abraxas and Lucien had ribbed Orion for taking so

long when they knew that Harrigan had intrigued him from the beginning.

"I took the liberty of pre-ordering for both of us, I hope you don't mind," Orion began. "Some of their best dishes take some time to prepare and I wanted you to enjoy them. I didn't pre-order our dessert, I thought we'd rather like a small break in-between. You wouldn't be able to guess from here, but the *Spark* contains a gorgeous indoor conservatory in the back with a walking path."

"I am continually amazed by this place, and really by what we are capable of as wizards. Such as that crystal rose you conjured, it is absolutely magnificent, Orion."

Orion's lips twitched at the compliment and he said, "Traditionally you are supposed to select three roses. One white for purity of the request, one red for the depth of love and passion you hold for that individual and one of your choice that best represents the person in your mind. None fit my purpose, so I created that one. I see you as both as strong and fragile as crystal, Harrigan. Some of the things you say are beyond your years, while others remind me that I am talking to and interested in someone 16 years younger than myself. It was one of the things that gave me pause at first, you know."

"In the wizarding world that really doesn't hold much power however," Harrigan pointed out. "We are not like Muggles, who are lucky to live into their 90's. You are just considered in your prime and will be for at least another 50 years."

"Then perhaps it was the fact that you are roughly 14 years older than my eldest son," Orion pointed out.

Harrigan paused and said, "That does seem a little awkward, doesn't it? I would hope you do not feel for me the same that you do your son, however," he added teasingly.

"Merlin, no!" Orion almost yelped, before taking in Harrigan's expression properly. Fixing the younger man with an intense stare he grumbled, "You are incorrigible, Harrigan."

Harrigan snickered slightly and said, "Forgive me, your expression was absolutely perfect."

Orion huffed slightly and said, "You aren't sorry and you know that I know it."

Harrigan's lips twitched in confirmation and Orion shook his head in exasperated amusement.

Their first course arrived just then, saving Harrigan from further scolding, composed of a fresh salad with a tangy dressing that left Harrigan's lips tingling. "I don't know what that dressing is composed of," he began after setting the empty glass bowl to the side, "but that is the most satisfying stuff I've tasted in some time."

"I don't know what it is either," Orion admitted, "and it's a *Golden Spark* trade secret, so I doubt we'll find out anytime soon."

Their main course arrived a few moments later along with a bottle of a rich red wine. The lid of the tray was lifted, displaying a pair of plates with a bed of wild rice tossed with sage and lemongrass and a medium-rare filet mignon. The meat was so easy to cut Harrigan almost didn't require a knife and his mouth watered a little in anticipation. It was as good as it promised to be, seasoned and cooked to perfection.

They discussed the next Wizengamot session in-between bites of their dinner, more specifically a certain vote that would authorise the Ministry to abstain from holding proper trials for war criminals. Both Orion and Harrigan were against it, as Harrigan pointed out how would you know an individual truly was guilty for their crimes if you simply tossed them to the Dementors?

After they ordered dessert (tiramisu with a side of cappuccino), Orion stood up and gracefully pulled back Harrigan's chair, walking side-by-side the pair passed the main dining area and entered the conservatory. Harrigan felt just full enough that a stroll was appreciated before such an indulgent dessert.

They talked easily, nothing of great importance, more enjoying the other's company than anything else. After two circuits of the small dirt path they returned to their table just as their waiter approached, holding two squares of tiramisu and a cup of steaming cappuccino with cream and chocolate shavings each. Harrigan appreciated the walk more after indulging in the decadent treat.

Orion paid, and the pair left, arms again entwined in the night air as

they headed down the Alley to the apparition point. With a pop they appeared in front of Harrigan's home, both lingering where they were.

"I find myself reluctant to let go of you," Orion said at last. "I hope you enjoyed the evening as much as I did."

"I don't think so," when Orion tensed he continued with a small smile, "I enjoyed it far more, I think I will never forget this night."

"Hmm," Orion replied, visible relief in his broad shoulders. Quite abruptly he used the arm still around Harrigan's waist to drag him closer and brought their lips together. He'd moved slowly enough to give Harrigan the chance to pull away, but he didn't feel like it. The kiss was perfect, he loved the taste of the slightly bitter cappuccino mixed with the spicy tang that was all Orion.

Finally however Orion let him go, moved back to the sidewalk and gave him an elegant dipping bow. "Sleep well, Harrigan."

Only once the man was gone did Harrigan let the slightly stupid grin cross his face, humming softly in pleasure as he moved to enter his home.

## [Chapter 9](#): February 1976

Summary:

A new chapter! Black Fortunes has been nominated to the Non-Canon Awards for Best Harry Slash! If you like this story please vote for it :D I

don't own Harry Potter, everything you recognize belongs to J.K.

Rowling, a lovely lady with a 'wicked' imagination.

EDIT: Someone very kindly pointed out that we lost three years in the dates. Oops :D

Chapter Text

### ***Nine- February 1976***

The Wizengamot was back in session today. There had been a nice break through the holidays and now they were back here in this hallowed hall, making decisions that affected all of wizard-kind and magical creatures. Harrigan sat directly next to Orion, ignoring the speculative looks sent his way. The pair had been photographed leaving the restaurant on their first date as well as their outing to France for Valentine's. That had been Harrigan's planning, he knew that day was also the birthday of the oldest and still estranged Black child, Sirius. Harrigan hoped that his little comment to Sirius was at least making the heir think, he hated seeing the composed disappointment and sadness when Orion's gift was returned unopened.

The almost hatred on Dumbledore's face was somewhat expected, but Harrigan was surprised by just how openly the man was showing his attitude toward Harrigan. He was Lord Peverell after all, while Dumbledore was a senior member of the Wizengamot his position was by election, the man had no family title or great monetary status. It was why he relied so heavily on his supporters, those that had actual titles and some status (excluding the Weasleys by default). Honestly the

man acted as if he was impossible to have removed, it was an attitude that was quickly becoming wearisome and annoying.

He ignored Dumbledore, which became something of a necessity as Lucien leaned in his direction and said teasingly, "France, really? Isn't that a bit of a cliché for a Valentine location?"

"It was something last-minute," Harrigan protested with a smile playing on his lips. "If I'd have thought about it better and planned it out, I wouldn't have used such a common destination. We enjoyed it however, took a boat trip down the river and had dinner at a lovely little cafe on *la voie des roses*."

"Rose Way? That's the magical street of France, correct? It was recently rebuilt, they made it wider and added more plants according to the *Prophet*."

"Rose plants," Harrigan nodded in agreement. "It's a lovely road, far better than Diagon in my opinion. Even *la voie du soir* is far better made and high-quality. I must remember to show you the pair of mirrors we picked up in a little shop there."

"Night Way is the equivalent of Knockturn Alley, so why would a 'Dark' shop be selling a pair of mirrors?" Lucien asked, sounding slightly confused.

"Because these mirrors use blood magic," Harrigan answered in a low voice. "They're communication mirrors, solid silver gilt frames, absolutely gorgeous craftsmanship and a *very* talented use of Runes."

"You found communication mirrors?" Lucien breathed in astonishment. "They are so rare nowadays, they were outlawed in Great Britain about the same time that magic was split into Light, Grey and Dark."

Harrigan chuckled, "It was funny, Orion was absolutely stunned and almost excited when he found them, I had no idea what they were. I just thought it was that inherited Black vanity popping up because they have such a clear image."

Lucien burst into rich chuckles, which were echoed by Abraxas and accompanied by a slight glare from Orion, whose mouth was twitching slightly. Apparently he wasn't too annoyed at the jab to his 'peacock tendencies', as Harrigan referred to them. Harrigan gave his companion an innocent smile and a slight shrug.

"You are incorrigible," Orion huffed, unable to keep up his pretence of annoyance. He linked an arm around Harrigan's shoulders and tugged him slightly closer, to an accompanying glare from Dumbledore. The man just about flinched when Orion blasted him with an icy glare in return.

"I do not know why he takes such an interest and intense dislike in you, aside from the Lord Peverell matter. If his behaviour continues I'm going to do something about it however, perhaps I will bring it up to the Madame Minister one of these days," he growled, obviously agitated.

"Calm down, Orion," Harrigan soothed. "There is nothing he can do that wouldn't be totally obvious here in the Wizengamot chambers. He

is just losing his place on a high horse and he doesn't like it. There are men like him the world over. They get a little bit of power and it goes to their heads. When they begin to learn their true place they resent it and the one who shows them."

"Harrigan is right," Abraxas nodded. "He thinks he is infallible and Harrigan is showing him differently. He is just a man, even if he did defeat Grindelwald. If we truly wanted to do so at the moment it would be all too easy to force him out of the Wizengamot permanently. His judgment is skewed and he should be giving more of his attention to the students and leaving government to those who actually care about our world."

"Perhaps we *should* force him out," Harrigan mused aloud, earning startled glances from his companions. "He is influencing others in the Wizengamot and forcing through laws that have no place here. Look at the one that gives him total control of orphans once they come of age to attend Hogwarts, for example. He can decide where they are placed at holidays and can even approve or veto marriage contracts. He could make a child's life miserable with that kind of power and yet his supporters backed it without even really thinking about the law at all."

"He could," Orion agreed slowly. "It would be better off if the wizarding world created a center for them to go to on holidays, or placed some with agreeable wizarding parents. Marriage contracts don't matter if they aren't at least a half-blood with some family monies and those that fit that category most likely have *some* living family."

"And there you hit it on the head," Abraxas stated. "They most likely do

have living family, but that family could very well be Dark or Grey. And the all-but acknowledged 'Lord of the Light' would hardly let money go to those he has deemed unworthy."

Heavy sarcasm laced his voice through the entire remark, laced even more heavily on the 'title' Dumbledore had given himself all but publicly. For him to do so without acknowledgement from the Light families was a big no-no for social and political careers, so he kept it unofficial for now.

"How would we go about doing this?" Lucien asked, getting them back on topic.

"We would have to get a majority to agree," Harrigan thought aloud, words slow as if testing them on his tongue. "We would need to approach the Grey families and those of the Light who are disillusioned or never supported him to begin with. We can begin by watching him tonight, noticing who supports him and who needs more cajoling to do so, or refuses outright."

"Then let's begin this grand game called politics, shall we?" Orion stated, just as the doors closed with the usual ringing note that signaled a start of session.

Harrigan leaned into Orion and turned to pay attention as well, concealing a smirk with great effort. It appeared that Dumbledore was soon going to be in for a shock. Maybe he could get a word in to be the one to inform the old man of the loss of his position... His three companions *should* agree, maybe for the price of a bottle of wine and

what would be no doubt a treasured memory.

*Let it begin.*

## [Chapter 10](#): April 1976

Summary:

A/N: No excuses. Updates should come faster for a while however as I am on vacation from work. Sorry for my bad French in the last chapter, I was working with a free online translator and it does make errors. Also, I have a feeling the reason why my updates are so slow is because I am bored of working on just two stories, so look for another one from me sometime soon. Perhaps from Notebook \*grins\*

Information about the Blacks comes from the Black Family Tree which you can find on HP Lexicon. Date for Black Manor is random, Phineas Nigellus was born in 1837 and died in 1925 so I dated the commissioning of Black Manor for when he was 40. His eldest son was born in 1877 so I figured it a good year for such things :D

Chapter Text

### ***Ten- April 1976***

Sirius Orion Black glowered at the *Daily Prophet*, more accurately the 'social' section. The photograph of his father escorting Lord Peverell to a fancy private restaurant in Austria stared back up at him. Both men were dressed with the casual, dismissive elegance that seemed to be a pureblood's right and heritage and there was a small smile on his

father's face.

That smile. He had never seen such an expression on his father's face around their mother, only rarely directed at him. True he had hardly been around his father by choice when he was old enough to notice and when he had he acted out, loathing his family's 'proper Dark heritage'. It was for this Dark heritage and another private reason that he had sent back his father's birthday gift unopened.

Nobody in his family knew the main reason *why* he loathed almost everything that came with the name Black. Only one person knew and since he was one of the main causes for Sirius' hurt and anger he highly doubted that the man in question would bother asking about it. All anyone knew was that he loathed the name Black and the Slytherins that carried that name to a fervor that startled all of his friends and acquaintances.

He glared at the photo again, angrily staring at the man who had caught his father's attentions. When his father undoubtedly bonded with Lord Peverell he would be well and truly replaced in his father's affections and any chance of reconciliation with his family would be gone. After all, male pregnancy wasn't that uncommon amongst pureblood families and his father was far from being past the age where he could still sire sons.

He flung the paper from him with a rage that startled even his fellow Gryffindors and stalked out of the Great Hall, seeking the distraction of his first class. *Potions with Slytherin, wonderful*, he thought with a sarcastic snarl.

Since he hardly paid any attention to the table of green and silver now, he didn't notice the concerned frown on a face that almost mirrored his own, nor the piece of parchment that his observer removed from a book bag and began to write a letter upon.

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Harrigan laughed at something his companion had said and looked around in the ensuing silence. He had been invited to Malfoy Manor and was stunned at the simple elegance of the home. For some reason his mind had conjured dark woods, heavy drapes and black tile floors with an abundance of snakes. The truth couldn't be farther from that image if Harry had mentioned it aloud for someone to take down.

Huge open floor-to-ceiling windows dominated the wall facing a remarkably beautiful sunset. The pinks, gold and reds filtered through crystal panes and shattered a mosaic of light onto the pure white carpet, deep enough that Harrigan was visited by a strange desire to remove his shoes and wiggle his toes in it. The furniture in this gorgeous 'visiting room' was all cherry, polished to a high gloss and varying from light to a rich dark reddish-purple. The cushions on the multitude of soft chairs and the two couches was silver with rich purple accent pillows, the Malfoy family crest in fine gold stitchery that could hardly be felt, let alone seen.

Orion, who had escorted him to this gathering, informed him that the family's official colours were silver and purple, fitting in well with the Black family whose official colours were black and silver. His own colours were emerald green and bronze, hence the colour of his robes on the day he had claimed his seat on the Wizengamot.

The soft murmur of many conversations filled the room along with the slight *chink* of fine crystal flutes as a lovely champagne from the family cellars was passed around, to appreciation from the guests. Abraxas was a very good host, though he had informed Harrigan wryly that these occasions had become much more pleasant with the death of his private shrew Belladonna. In his own words she had made these occasions very uncomfortable with her malignant, oppressive presence lingering in the air like a foul odor.

Quite contrary to his deceased mother's appearance, the young Heir Malfoy moved easily through their guests, conversing with each with an easy, confident air and a tidbit about nearly everyone he met, meaning that those he spoke with felt a closer kinship with one that remembered such a small fact from an insignificant conversation. Harrigan took a moment to study the young man, he had just turned 21 in November.

Lucius Abraxas Malfoy was everything that a pureblood Lord could hope his heir to be. Graceful, handsome, clever and powerful. Liquid silver eyes were so close to Lucien Lestranger's that it was easy to see how the man was not only his godfather but namesake as well. Spiteful individuals had tried to claim that he was Lucien's bastard son as well, but Abraxas had taken measures to discount his distant cousin's claims.

He possessed a river of white blonde hair and skin that appeared to have a natural golden sheen to it, he practically glowed in the light from the windows and the crystal chandelier that hung over their heads. Dressed in silver-trimmed deep amethyst open robes over

beige slacks and a crisp white shirt he was an impressive and handsome image. According to Abraxas, he had been betrothed two summers before to Narcissa Black, daughter of Orion's late wife's brother Cygnus and the man's relative with or without his incestuous marriage. The agreement had been made between Belladonna and Walburga and for now it stood.

It was a good match and as neither child had said anything to the contrary so far it stood. Narcissa would be going into her final year of Hogwarts this fall just as Orion's oldest son was, the girl's wedding was set for the summer after she graduated, so little over a year from now. He had yet to meet either Orion's youngest son nor their cousins, though just the thought brought up his chance meeting with Orion's eldest and he controlled a frown, bidding a pleasant goodbye to his current companion and seeking out one of the others.

This little party was far more than a social gathering. It had been Abraxas' idea to host a selection of neutral and more neutrally-Light families at one of their homes for a bit of wine and fine appetizers, trying to subtly bring their guests around to the idea that Albus Dumbledore needed to be removed from either Hogwarts, the Ministry or both. Harrigan tended to believe that it was mostly a success so far, that was why he sought out one of his more experienced companions, to get another opinion on the evening's gather.

He found Orion on the far left edge of the room in pleasant conversation with Lord Ogden. Ogden was currently neutral and was something of a political powerhouse despite his advanced age. His opinion was still highly regarded in the Ministry and the Wizengamot

and he had openly made a few comments that Dumbledore was unsuited to Ministry offices, let alone the important position as magical Great Britain's representative on the International Confederation of Wizards.

Abraxas Malfoy would indeed be ideally suited to the position and he had admitted to Harrigan and his companions he would enjoy it. He knew a number of languages and had studied magical cultures from around the world, he would know far better than a man who only concentrated on politics part-time how to interact with important dignitaries from foreign countries without offending them or their cultures.

Harrigan listened from a short distance away as Orion was drawing his conversation with Ogden to a close. The night was late now, the sun was setting in the distance and sending more shades of purple than anything else. His attention was caught by Orion's last comment and he listened in surprised delight as Orion stated to Ogden, "Charles, would you mind spreading about the word that the next of these little gathers will be at Black Manor? It is long since time to open up my family's main estate again and what better occasion, hmm? Make sure and let others know that they are more than welcome to bring company and like-minded individuals."

A genial smile widened Lord Charles Ogden's face and he said, "I shall happily do so, lad. I remember Black Manor but only the vaguest, I believe it was your father that closed it down in favor of Grimmauld. Might I add that you have come a long way? I still remember you when you first joined the Wizengamot just after your marriage. You do the

name Black proud, Orion."

A genuine smile crossed Orion's lips at the compliment and he responded lightly, "High praise indeed from one of the oldest Lords still active in our government. Thank you for your kind words and you are correct about the timing for the closure of Black Manor. My father was obsessed with privacy and defensibility, a 9 room townhouse was much easier for him to live in than a 90-plus room Manor."

"He was paranoid, lad, put it plainly. Arcturus was a good man up until about forty and then he turned into a paranoid, uptight, bigoted bastard. I thanked the gods and Magic for a return to sanity and wisdom when we finished the first sessions with you as the new Lord Black."

All Orion did was chuckle in response to Ogden's blunt summary of his father's faults, moving away from the older man and easily slipping an arm through Harrigan's, startling the younger male. He had not thought that Orion noticed him listening to the conversation. "He's right you know," Orion commented, "about my father. They call it the Black family madness and it seems to affect some more than others. My niece Bellatrix for example, she's Regulus' age and I wouldn't trust her with my life if she was sworn to it with an Unbreakable Vow."

"Strange how some can be so awful and others redeem it," Harrigan commented. "We can't chose our families, I believe all of us have a few relatives we'd rather do without if we could. You were lucky, your sons appear to inheirited your sanity over your wife and cousin's madness. Even though he is separated from you, Sirius does display a sane mind

most of the time."

Orion grimaced at the mention of his eldest son and said, "It is most obvious when he is angry. There is a certain edge to his eyes that I have tried to keep away as much as possible. I am glad he ran away when he did, I have a feeling Walburga would have driven him farther over the edge than Bellatrix had he stayed and that is a scary thought indeed."

He gave a light, slightly forced smile and said, "But enough on my family, I am surprised that you haven't mentioned my agreement to host the next of these little gathers. Ogden is good about spreading the word, he will make sure that even more come next time. I have a feeling I will have to have the ballroom ready to hold all of us comfortably."

"I am very curious, you Blacks are secretive at best about your residences," Harrigan admitted playfully.

"Not much to say about Black Manor aside from the fact that it has been in the family since the beginning of the line. It was commissioned by Phineas Nigellus in 1877 and has been in the family ever since. I add Nigellus by the way simply because there are not so many different stars and constellations in the skies to name all of my family. There are two Phineas, two Arcturus, my son Regulus is the second of that name and Sirius is the third. Only middle names differentiate between all of us. I am luckily the first and only Orion, Cygnus is also the first."

Harrigan suppressed his laughter with difficulty. "Hopefully if you have more you will be able to give them names that haven't been used as much."

"*When*, not if. And perhaps when that time comes you will be able to give the children more individual, creative names? Somehow still honoring my family's tradition?" The look Orion gave him was both shrewd and subtly nervous.

Harrigan gave him a long look in return, weighing the comment fully. Orion expected to have more children in his lifetime and from both the comments afterward and their Courting indicated that the elder Lord hoped that *he* would be the one to bear these future heirs of the Black family magicks and blood. Harrigan couldn't honestly see turning this remarkable and addicting male down when he finally did ask so all he responded was a coy, "Perhaps."

From the private, loving smile Orion bestowed upon him, the man had chosen to take it positively.

Harrigan stayed with Orion for the rest of the evening and well into the morning, unable to keep his mind on politics. Instead it wandered to his possible and most probable future, wondering what children of the Black and Peverell lines would be like. A faint smile remained on his lips, they would always be remarkable to him, after all they would be *his*.

[Chapter 11](#): Mid-April 1976

Summary:

A/N: No excuses. Dark Roses is two chapters away from being finished though, so these should come a lot faster. Hopefully I catch you by surprise with this little development in one of the side pairings. :D And I fixed the little problem where we somehow lost 3 years in the story. Whoops.

I don't own Harry Potter.

WARNING: Two swear words from those naughty Blacks.

Chapter Text

### **Eleven- *Mid-April 1976***

Harrigan was wandering the upper levels of 12 Grimmauld Place. He had been invited to the residence that Arcturus had opened after closing Black Manor, which had been the home of Orion since he was born. It was warded beyond belief and closed up tighter than an insane asylum, these being the words of Orion himself. He frowned to himself as he looked around, remembering exactly *why* he had chosen to wander these dark halls.

Orion had received a letter from Regulus just this afternoon detailing Sirius' current moods, which were swinging towards the very instability that Orion had been trying to keep his eldest from. The reaction that his eldest had shown to just a picture in the social section of the *Daily Prophet* was worrying to the Lord, who was trying to think of how to reply to Regulus without making his youngest more worried than he was.

Hesitantly Harrigan opened another door, smiling at the room inside. This obviously belonged to Regulus, he had Slytherin's green and silver everywhere, in banners, small flags, old uniforms hung proudly in the wardrobe for memories' sake and pictures of him and his friends on the walls. Studying the photos he noted one group off to the side, almost lost in the multitude of images belonging to Regulus' friends.

These were candid shots taken from some ways away of a boy that looked more like Orion than Regulus did, sharply angled and handsome features crowned by slightly wavy black hair and glittering gray-blue eyes. In some he was alone, studying or staring off into the distance, most showed him with three other boys or two of them, hanging out under a tree by a lake or walking down the halls of the great castle that was Hogwarts.

Having met the boy pictured once before, Harrigan quickly realised these were of Sirius, elder son and heir of Orion. The pictures taken by his year younger brother were both sweet and wistful as well as heart-breaking and slightly uncomfortable to look at. Their very distance conveyed Regulus' desire to be closer to his brother and his friends, a longing for a presence that must have been very familiar at one time and now was more distant than ever.

He left the room a few moments later, wandering down the hall toward yet another door, the images Regulus had taken still prominent in his mind. Thus, when he opened the next door, he was rather unprepared for what he was going to see. He blinked, stared and shook his head, resisting a laugh. *This* was obviously Sirius' room and the boy had probably done a very good job of driving his mother insane.

Pictures of pretty Muggle girls and motorcycles were stuck to the wall, their vapid stares and stillness a very obvious contrast to the moving photos of Sirius and his friends goofing off in the other photos. A large poster of a roaring gold Gryffindor lion emblazoned on a bright scarlet shield shimmered from the wall opposite, while a child's toy version of a dragon skeleton hung from the ceiling, as if it were about to lazily fly around the room. Old textbooks and clothing were scattered everywhere as well as some very *unusual* magazines.

The wardrobe looked to have been shoved against the wall at some point and there were a few pieces of parchment visible from underneath. The layers of dust on the floor spoke of just how long the wardrobe had been in its old spot. Curious, Harrigan walked through the errant child's room and picked them up. Turning the whole pile over he noted that they were a series of letters between Sirius and someone else. Hoping his indiscretion wouldn't be pushing his luck with Orion and his sons he started to read the top letter.

*Dear Sirius,*

*I think of you every day, you know. Corny, isn't it? It is still true. Though I have just graduated I feel lost knowing that on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September I won't be seeing you on the platform. I will wish you luck with your 5<sup>th</sup> year now, not knowing when I will be able to write or speak to you again.*

*Perhaps if your family comes over this summer I will finally be able to show you my favorite spot in the gardens, my love. I am there now, writing this letter to you and wishing you were here so that I could*

*hold you and watch your expression as you look around this place... no doubt you would think it beautiful and I would without question say that you are far more beautiful than any garden.*

*Are you blushing? I would hope so, I fear I am becoming very sappy, a very unusual trait in the house of snakes. I suppose it no longer matters for I am through with school. As much as I will miss you my star, I will not miss the political games and maneuvering of my house, though Father tells me it is good practise for the real world.*

*Now I wait only until you are going to graduate and then I will approach your father and ask for a betrothal contract between our families. Do not worry about him saying no, beloved star, who would turn down a union with the Noble and Ancient House of Malfoy?*

*Always,*

*Lucius*

Stunned, Harrigan looked to the next letter, dated a year and a half ago. It was by Sirius and was so blotched and stained in places it was hardly legible, several lines were viciously crossed out as well.

*Heir Malfoy,*

*Are you feeling good right now, you smug bastard? I hope so, my mother just announced the WONDERFUL news about my cousin Narcissa's engagement to the MALFOY heir. Considering there is only one, I know she means you. I bet you are laughing at me right now.*

*I hate you. No, that doesn't convey the depth of my feelings. I doubt there is a word that can but for now I will say that I absolutely LOATHE you. Did you enjoy playing with me, did it make you feel pleasure to see the purest love and devotion in my eyes and know that it was nothing but empty feelings for you?*

*I will NEVER forgive you for any of this, the very least of all the gardens this summer. Do you know how important that was to me? DO YOU! No, I hardly think so, after all you are the 'Heir of the Most Noble and Ancient House of Malfoy'.*

*You got what you wanted, you sick asshole, a marriage to the House of Black. I hope my cousin makes your life miserable, she's so shallow it's a surprise she hasn't followed her mythological namesake yet and wasted away staring at her reflection.*

*Suffice to say, HEIR MALFOY, that if I see you again I don't know what I will do, so I never want to. Stay out of my life, stay out of my sight and rot in whatever dark corner you can find, I can think of several.*

*Regards,*

*Sirius Orion Black*

*Heir of the Most Noble and Ancient House of Black*

Unable to believe what he had just read, Harrigan immediately left Sirius' room, both letters in hand and headed to Orion's office. Unless he had severely misunderstood, he now knew exactly why Sirius Orion

Black wanted nothing to do with his father and brother, not to mention the purebloods in general.

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When Lucius was summoned to his Father's office he was very curious. Their lessons on business and politics were over for the week and he knew of no other reason to get such an official summons. Regardless, he bound his loose hair back with a simple tie and made sure he looked presentable before heading for his Father's private office.

When he reached the door he gave a single brisk knock and was rewarded with a warm, "Come in."

Lucius pushed open the door and was more than relieved for his precautions when he was met with the sight of not only his father but Lord Orion Black himself as well as Lord Harrigan Peverell. He had spoken to both men at his father's little gathering a few weeks prior and had been impressed with both men, as well as relieved that they treated him like his opinions mattered instead of simply talking over his head or ignoring him all together.

"Take a seat, Lucius. Don't worry, you're not in trouble or anything of the like."

He took a seat, greatly relieved by the reassurance. But why did these three powerful individuals want to talk with him? He was flattered of course, anyone would be, but he held no illusions about his influence

or input. He was not necessary in their goals.

"Heir Malfoy, I am here on something of a sensitive subject. I know it may be difficult to talk about but it concerns your engagement to my niece Narcissa," Lord Black began.

For a moment Lucius' silvery eyes flashed with annoyance before he carefully cleared his expression. For what made-up reason had the girl contacted her uncle?! If this was another ploy trying to get him to pay more attention to her...

"Heir Malfoy, I must ask you, did you *want* this engagement to Narcissa?"

The question caught him totally off-guard. He sat still for a long moment, blinking. When he finally registered it he said, "Of course I did, Lord Black. An alliance with the House of Black is an honour."

"That is not what he asked," Lord Peverell put in shrewdly, staring at him with more insight than Lucius quite frankly liked at the moment. "He asked whether you wanted the engagement to *Narcissa*, not the House of Black."

Wondering what the man was getting at he said, "I knew what Lord Black meant and my answer still stands."

"Would it, if you saw these?" Harrigan waved a couple old pieces of parchment and handed them to Lucius, who stared at him in a somewhat bewildered manner.

"You are meant to read them, Lucius," Harrigan said somewhat primly.

Lucius looked down and his heart leapt into his throat when he saw at the top of the first page the words, *Dear Sirius*. He didn't need to read any further. His throat tightened and his eyes burned as he stared at the second page, obviously the first draft of the venomous and hurt letter he had received just a week after his betrothal to Narcissa. He didn't need to read it, the words were burned into his memory.

Setting them down he stared firmly at Lord Black and said, "Obviously you have read these, my Lord Black. The question now is, what is the real reason for your presence here today?"

Staring shrewdly at him through a face that reminded him painfully of his beloveds', Orion stated, "The reason for my presence, as you so put it, is to ask *why?* Why you didn't decline the betrothal to Narcissa? Why you haven't approached me about my eldest, or why did you hurt my eldest, my beloved Dog Star, in this manner?"

Hearing the familiar nickname from father to son, so similar to what he called Sirius himself made Lucius break eye contact and stare at the marble floor for a moment. Gathering his courage he looked up and began to speak.

"As you know, my mother Belladonna was a vicious and self-centered woman who cared nothing about her families' happiness and everything about her status and influence. I do not know how, but she must have managed to catch sight of me and Sirius at one point that summer. She hated homosexuals, despite the fact that they can still

produce children."

"One day about a month into the summer, she requested my presence. In the sunroom with her were the Ladies Walburga Black and Druella Rosier-Black. She confronted me about Sirius and I told her bluntly that I wanted him and him only, that I had fallen for him when I was in my 5<sup>th</sup> year. She was disgusted and told me in no uncertain terms that she refuse to have a Consort Malfoy over a Lady Malfoy while she still lived. She told me that in two days Cygnus Black would approach my father with a contract between myself and Narcissa and I was to agree to it."

"I would have told my mother exactly what she could do with her narrow-minded demands if Lady Walburga had not added that unless I did this it would be *very* easy for Sirius to have a sudden accident and either die tragically young or be rendered barren for the rest of his life. I may have fought with my own life, but I love Sirius more than anything in this world and I know that Walburga would have found a way to hurt or kill him. I couldn't risk it, so I agreed. One of the 'terms' to our little agreement was that I couldn't even tell Sirius *why* I had done this, so I ended up hurting him very badly, which I wish with all my heart I could have taken back."

There was silence after he finished his little tale and it was a few minutes at most before Orion Black hissed in anger and snarled, "That bitch couldn't have died soon enough! I know she hated Sirius for some reason but *this?! No wonder he won't come home, he thought I knew about it!*"

Seeing Lord Black's very emotional reaction to the story made Lucius slightly uncomfortable but also very hopeful. Making a quick decision he stood up and moved to stand in front of the formidable wizard.

"Lord Orion Black, may I make a request of you as Head of House Black?"

The formal terms made Orion calm down and stand as well, staring down a few inches at Lucius' face with an imposing mask upon his features. "And what would this request be, Heir of House Malfoy?"

"I formally request your aid as Head of House Black in dissolving the betrothal contract between myself and Narcissa Druella Black, daughter of Cygnus Black. She is unsuitable to me as a wife and bonded. There is another I wish to have as partner for House Malfoy."

The beginnings of a smile twitched upon the elder Lord's face and he turned to Abraxas. His old friend's eyes were sparking with pleasure as he stated, "Lord Malfoy, would you happen to have the betrothal contract in question available?"

Equally pleased, Abraxas responded, "I do, Lord Black."

He opened a drawer and retrieved a piece of gold-coloured parchment.

"Would you have any objections to this dissolution, Lord Malfoy?"

"No, Lord Black, I would not. I agree with my Heir on the suitability of Miss Narcissa Black."

A warm, genuine smile crossed Orion's features as he stated firmly, "Then upon my power as Head of the Most Noble and Ancient House of Black, I declare the betrothal contract between Lucius Abraxas Malfoy, Heir of the Most Noble and Ancient House of Malfoy and Miss Narcissa Black, daughter of Cygnus Black and Druella Black nee Rosier to be null and void, so mote it be!"

The parchment on the desk dissolved into bright red and orange flames that scorched neither desk nor the papers Abraxas had been working on when they had Flooed in.

Turning to Lucius the Lord Black smiled warmly and said, "Hopefully with this removed you may fix the situation between yourself and my eldest and perhaps cause the rift between myself and my precious Dog Star to heal as well. I must warn you, the House of Black is famous for it's temper and you may find it difficult to talk to him."

"If I can get him alone I can convince him," Lucius replied firmly, mind awl with details. "The hardest bit will be getting him alone. I may know of one of his Gryffindor compatriots that will help, however."

"Good luck, Heir Malfoy. You will need it."

As Lords Black and Peverell made their goodbyes and Flooed back to where they had previously been, Lucius wryly thought to himself, *Good luck indeed. I remember my beloved's skill with hexes and curses.*

If he could fix this however, it would be more than worth it.

## Chapter 12: Late April 1977

Summary:

New Chapter, hope it lives up to expectations :D

I don't own Harry Potter.

Chapter Text

### **Twelve-Late April 1977**

*To Remus Lupin with highest regards,*

*I believe I should be grateful you chose to even open this letter, let alone read it. First of all, I must ask how your classes are going? I know you desire to teach, which is an admirable choice of career for anyone. You, I believe, would have the patience necessary to teach young witches and wizards what they need to know, or even young Muggles should you chose to do so. However, I did not send this letter just for a chat.*

*I know you may not want to have anything to do with me after the disastrous start to what was your 5<sup>th</sup> year. You have no reason to trust me or believe in me, but I did not want that to happen. I do not play with another's feelings, certainly not ones like Sirius felt for me. Hopefully he still does feel that way for me, we shall certainly know soon enough.*

*You see, Remus, Lord Orion Black was generous enough to dissolve the betrothal contract between myself and the vapid creature known*

*as Narcissa Druella Black. It was not my choice to enter the betrothal, there were several other factors that you do deserve to know, but my beloved star deserves to know them first. He was the one I hurt the greatest, after all. I know you have no reason to trust me, Remus, but I do believe we were getting along well enough there towards the fatal end. This is why I appeal to you now instead of the Potter Heir.*

*I need to speak with Sirius, but I need to do so without him knowing it is me at first. You know as well as I do that he would rather spit on his late mother's grave (may she get what she deserved) than speak to me at the moment. To that end I need your help, Remus. In two days I will be in that wondrous room we discovered, the one that was impossible to place on your Map. I will be there from quarter past noon to one in the afternoon. Please ensure that Sirius comes, if you can.*

*I know this means I am asking you to lie to your friend, but he will forgive you. And I will always be in your debt for being a facilitator to fixing this Merlin be damned mess that I have gotten the one I love above all others into.*

*Hopeful Regards,*

*Lucius A. Malfoy*

Remus had no idea how many times he had read and re-read this letter. His first instinct had been to burn the damn thing, but something always stopped his hand. He kept remembering the broken and hurting imitation of his best friend from a year and some months ago,

more recently the almost unstable aggression towards all things pureblood or Slytherin. Sirius had not gotten over Lucius, no matter how much he declared it so.

The relationship had been a shock to both houses. It had been a mostly secret affair, but Remus and James had discovered the couple up on the Astronomy tower when James had forgotten his star chart after a particularly dull lesson. They had back-tracked up the tower and come upon their best friend being expertly kissed to a breathless daze and for the next few weeks it seemed things would remain sour.

Instead James and Sirius had given Remus another reason to marvel at the tightness of their friendship. After an intense questioning session and about a week of awkward interactions things had gone back to just the same as they had been. They had even begun to get to know some of the Slytherins, namely Bellatrix Black and Regulus. Regulus had never seen his brother and the Malfoy heir together, Sirius had been afraid to bring the subject up before he knew how far it was going to go.

And then in the second week of their fifth year the social section of the *Prophet* had blatantly advertised the betrothal agreement between Heir Malfoy and Miss Narcissa Black, gushing over the suitability of the match and the blending of two powerful old bloodlines. Sirius' copy of the paper had burned to ash in a spectacular bit of accidental magic and it had taken him three days and countless copies to finally write out the scathing, furiously hurt letter he had written Lucius.

Three days of which two were spent in an almost catatonic state of

mingled grief, betrayal and anger. They had done their best to support their friend, but what could be done to correct that kind of hurt? What words could they have said that would not seem insufficient and cumbersome? Their silence served better, their shoulder a convenient pillow to rest an exhausted and fuzzy head upon.

If only they could have done something similar for his heart, perhaps Sirius would not have devolved into the bitter, angry individual he had become over the last year. Perhaps he would not have taken his anger out on an unknowing Severus Snape, nearly killing the older boy. Perhaps he would not have become so vindictive and foul toward anything and everything of his old life. But did he dare take this step?

Staring at Sirius, who was joking with James about something, he attempted to consider both sides of this story. He knew Sirius' side very well, but what about Lucius? From the tone of the letter he was desperate to speak with Sirius, even if the Marauder simply screamed at him and said it was all over and he wanted nothing to do with the other pureblood. In the end, even if that was what happened, even if he lost his friend, it was the right thing to do. Both sides needed closure to this old hurt.

Bracing himself, Remus prepared to lie to one of his two best friends. In the end, it was much easier to do than he would have initially thought.

"Hey Pads?"

Sirius turned to look at him with a cocky grin on his face, one that

didn't quite cover lingering emotions far deeper than what Sirius' rivals here at school would have thought him capable of.

"Yeah, Moony?"

"You know that Ravenclaw girl you've been chasing for the past week? The one who was actually smart enough to turn you down?"

Sirius grumbled good-naturedly at his friend but nodded.

"She changed her mind. Said she'd meet you in 30 minutes up in that room we found, the one that we can't get on the Map for some reason."

"Why'd she get a hold of you, I wonder?" Sirius asked.

"Are you kidding, my friend? Are we not in each other's company more often than not?"

"True," Sirius replied with a grin. "Suppose I'd better move it then, I'm not surprised she changed her mind. I'm irresistible, after all!"

James snorted and replied, "Only in your dreams, Paddy."

Sirius stuck out his tongue rather than come up with a verbal retort and headed out the portrait hole without a backward glance. Remus released a soft sigh and hoped to whatever deities existed that he hadn't lost one of his best friends.

^^^

Sirius hummed quietly to himself as he traversed one of the back passages, heading for the hidden room. He was in an exceptionally good mood, his 6<sup>th</sup> year was almost over. One more term and he'd be a Hogwarts graduate. At this point in time he had no idea what he wanted to do with himself after graduating, he wasn't too worried about it at the moment. His great-uncle Alphard had left him enough to be comfortable on for a while.

He would miss this school, however. Here he could ignore the changing world outside the gates, here he could be nothing more than a mischievous schoolboy who exasperated his teachers to no end with his flying colours and lack of studying. He considered his detentions record to be something of note and was determined to leave behind a legacy worthy of future generations of pranksters.

The heck with pureblood values and reputation anyway. He scowled, shaking himself lightly not unlike his animagus form to rid himself of those thoughts. They were a rather dark road, one he had been traversing more often of late. Instead he smoothed his features of any and all sign of internal conflict and let one of his cocky smiles fall into place. The mask was one tradition and piece of Slytherin education that he had taken away from his lessons. It was useful, letting him hide his hurt and anger at his family and *others* and appear to be his happy-go-lucky self.

Reaching the blank wall he thought hard about what he was here for and paced back in front of it three times. The door appeared on the

last pass and he smiled triumphantly, clicking he handle and letting himself into the room.

The very first thing he noticed were the muted colours and spacious floor plan. Then he noted who was standing in the room and his face paled rapidly in anger and his grey eyes flashed. He most certainly did *not* want to see the tall, elegant and ever-graceful form of Lucius Malfoy. After a moment anger overwhelmed his desire to leave and give the traitorous Lupin a piece of his mind and his wand smacked firmly into his palm as he swiftly threw the first hex he thought of in the other male's direction.

To his irritation Lucius dodged the Tongue-Tying jinx easily, making no move to retaliate with a spell of his own. He merely weaved out of the way, watching Sirius carefully.

A succession of spells left his wand swiftly after that and Lucius dodged every single one, moving more like a dancer than a combatant. Sirius was so focused on his use of spells that he failed to notice one important fact. Lucius was not only dodging his spells, but advancing slowly and surely in his direction.

Thus, he was caught entirely off-guard when the other simply launched in his direction, grabbing his wand arm by the wrist and snatching his wand, throwing it halfway across the room. Letting out a yell of outraged fury Sirius brought his left arm around and punched the other squarely in the shoulder, forcing him back.

"What the *hell* are you doing here?!"

"I wanted to speak with you," Lucius replied calmly, rubbing his shoulder slightly.

"And what makes you think I want to hear anything you have to say? Or for that matter, why should I believe anything you say to be honest?" Sirius replied coldly.

Lucius winced, so his barb had cut deep had it? Good.

"Considering your wand is lost somewhere in this room, will you at least listen? I will swear it on my magic if that is what it takes."

This stopped Sirius from his immediate reply of 'no'. For someone to even consider swearing on their magic meant they had nothing to lose. It also generally meant they were saying the truth, not many purebloods especially would swear on their magic and then lie.

"I will listen, but that doesn't mean I'm going to believe you straight away."

"I would not expect it," he answered softly. He waved at a chair.

Sirius sneered, "Just because I'm willing to listen doesn't mean I want to be anywhere near you."

Lucius sighed and dropped onto a settee. "First of all, you should know that the betrothal contract between myself and Narcissa is now voided."

"And let me guess, I'm your backup plan?" Sirius asked harshly. "No thanks, you can go without a spouse from the Black family for all I care. Did Narcissa get a laugh out of how easily you led me around? Did you tell her what I so *willingly* gave you because a silly little Gryffindor believed a Slytherin was capable of *love*?"

"Sirius," Lucius interrupted harshly, "do *not* mock my feelings for you! Your own mother threatened your life, what was I supposed to do?!"

Sirius froze and said hoarsely, "*What? What did you say?*"

"Walburga threatened to have you killed or in an 'accident' that would render you incapable of having children at any time in you life if I refused to take the betrothal contract," Lucius said wearily. He was also watching Sirius warily and appeared startled when an expression of fury crossed Sirius' face.

"I knew my family hated me, but this? To actually go so far as to ruin what little happiness I had gained away from *them*?"

"It was not your entire family, Sirius." Lucius corrected, "Just your mother. Your father was impressively furious when he heard what she'd done."

Sirius snorted. "Yeah right. He doesn't give a care what happens to me, he's got his perfect little Reggie and his stuffy beau, Lord Peverell."

"You're wrong," Lucius said softly.

"You *dare* to come in here on top of everything that you have done to me and feel you have the right to correct me? I lived with them, I know how they are."

"Then you know that Regulus has been watching you carefully and very wistfully for the last two years, that he wrote your father feeling very concerned after your reaction to seeing your father and Lord Peverell on the social pages? You know that your father was very worried about you and trying to reassure his younger son about his eldest's stability? You know that Lord Peverell found the first draft of the letter you sent me in your room and it led to your father and mine dissolving the contract? I'm very impressed and surprised, you must be one hell of a Seer."

Sirius glared at the coffee table in front of the settee, refusing to look Lucius in the eyes. He could not even begin to explain the effect the other's words had on him. His father and brother had been worried about him? Suddenly one part of that registered in his brain and he snatched onto the new reason to be angry.

"What the hell was Lord Peverell doing in my private room, anyway? He had to have been snooping to find those letters!"

"Lord Peverell had never been to Grimmauld Place before then, he was curious. And apparently your room was quite torn apart, the wardrobe had been shoved almost completely over against the other wall and the letters were covered in quite a bit of dust."

"What do you want?" he spat, still looking at the coffee table. "Things

can't go back to the way they were."

Lucius' voice was much closer when he replied, "I never wanted them to. I know I hurt you quite badly, but I couldn't risk your life, my beloved star. I'd rather you were mad at me for the rest of your life and alive than dead in my arms."

He took an instinctive step back and looked up, startled to find Lucius most certainly in his personal space. His breath caught sharply, pulse racing in spite of his firm belief that he was over this man. Apparently he wasn't.

When Lucius' lips brushed his he froze in place at first, standing rigidly still. However, against the warmth and lean build of the one he had loved more than anyone else he couldn't hold his fierce anger and hurt for long and he collapsed against the taller boy, opening his mouth hesitantly in response to a questioning tongue. He honestly thought he was going to pass out by the time Lucius pulled back, and when had the other man's arm wrapped around his waist?

Reaching up with his free hand Lucius brushed his thumb across Sirius' kiss-bruised mouth and whispered softly, "You were always the only one for me, my beloved star. Can we attempt to try this again?"

Sirius registered the use of the private name this time, a soft sob of reaction leaving his lips without permission. He had been hurting for far too long and though he was still furious about the whole situation he couldn't keep this up. He wasn't very good at being alone, after all. He nodded, just once.

The smile that lit Lucius' face couldn't have been any brighter at his tentative response, however.

"I'm still angry with Moony for setting this up though," he muttered.

"You may be right now," Lucius agreed softly, "but don't let it linger. After all, he did it out of concern for you, just like your family."

For now, Sirius was content to ignore the particulars.

[Chapter 13](#): May 21st, 1977

Summary:

A/N: \*pokes head inside\* Sorry! I have no excuses aside from a lack of motivation. In good news however, this is now my primary fic, followed by Liberation. \*ducks back out\*

Chapter Text

Harrigan Peverell shook his head, once again stunned by the opulent magnificence of Black Manor. It suited the moniker, covered inside in mostly dark hues of rich brocades and silks and richly-hued wood, some were black, others dark brown, certain pieces were a deep shade of reddish-brown that was disconcertingly similar to the colour of dried blood. The floor beneath his feet was black marble swirled with deep gray, fading to hardwood covered with thick Persian rugs in the actual living spaces.

Black Manor had been built quite some time ago, the art of such

construction now mostly lost. Two levels but massive in length, the pride of Black Manor was the oratory on the far right side of the Manor, used for celebrations of the Old Ways (bondings, naming ceremonies, that sort of thing). Meant to provide a more intimate setting, the room inside the half-bubble of pure, clear crystal had a deep amethyst runner on a pure white carpet, wall sconces with crystal covers that had the Black Family Crest embossed on the surface and a beautiful old table built in a long, slender crescent with seating for 15, both the table and chairs were made of a pure white wood and the cushions on the chairs were white with the crest in pale silver.

It was an absolutely awe-inspiring sight, as Harrigan had seen himself when Orion had shown it to him for the first time. The timing had been obviously planned out, there was a certain mischievous expression on Orion's face when he had grandly gestured Harrigan through a white door into the beautiful room, a particularly magnificent sunset shattering radiant colour onto the carpet and table. Orion had told him, with a somewhat grimly humorous expression on his face, that the last event the room had seen was in fact his official betrothal to Walburga.

Thoughts of Orion's thankfully deceased wife reminded Harrigan of Sirius. The young man had agreed to meet his father in a café in Hogsmeade a week after Lucius had finally explained the truth of things. Orion admitted that it had been very awkward at first, but he had been too relieved to finally see his eldest again to care.

The relationship between father and eldest son had been improving, slowly. Harrigan had accompanied Orion the next time, on Sirius' own

invitation surprisingly enough. The young man had explained when they arrived that it only seemed fair, considering the fact that he always had Lucius around for these little gatherings. Watching the interactions of the younger couple had made an amused smile cross Harrigan's face, they were obviously very besotted with each other.

Harrigan strolled through the Manor, taking in the paintings and the wealth of antiques. A wizarding museum would faint in stunned shock if they ever obtained some of these pieces. Harrigan didn't know much about these pieces or their time periods, but even his untrained eye could see that they were rare and most likely priceless objects.

He had ended up in the front parlour somehow and was just contemplating heading to his quarters (Orion had insisted that Harrigan stay with him, insisting that it was 'too damn quiet' here without company.) He and his house elf Toby had been ensconced in a private suite within hours of the original conversation, Orion didn't take no for an answer and could be *very* persuasive. He flushed a little in memory of said persuasion, he was certain that most didn't win arguments by giving very passionate kisses to their opponent.

However, as he passed by the front doors on his way back he paused. There was someone there, standing just inside. He frowned, wondering why Orion's elf Dilly hadn't come to escort him to Orion yet. The little female was very proper and somewhat controlling for a house-elf, she seemed to have been 'mothering' Orion since the passing of his late, unlamented wife.

The man standing just a few metres away from Harrigan was tall,

almost Orion's height, with blonde hair that was perfectly straight and just brushed his shoulders. He was dressed to impress in the latest fashions, posture ram-rod straight and stiff. His eyes were a pale, cold blue colour and appeared to lack any sort of life.

Spotting Harrigan just around a corner he barked, "You, take me to Lord Black this moment!"

Harrigan raised an eyebrow, realising that the man thought him some sort of servant. He stepped fully into the man's line of sight, revealing his elegant, expensive tailored rust-coloured silk tunic and black cotton slacks. And of course, his Lordship ring.

"I would certainly be willing to escort you to *Orion's* study, should you first give me your name, sir. For future reference, my own is *Lord Harrigan Peverell*."

Pale eyes narrowed in sudden contemplation and after a moment he said in the same cold tone as before, "I am Cygnus Black."

"Ah," Harrigan said in recognition. "You would be the father of Andromeda, Narcissa and Bellatrix, correct?"

The man's eyes narrowed even further and he stated, "Yes," in such a tone that conveyed both a warning as to the topic at hand and his own irritation at only having sired daughters. Apparently he was one of those of the mind that daughters were useless aside from their importance as bribery objects for other men's sons.

"Come with me," Harry said, turning away. He did not wait for Cygnus, nor did he slow his long, elegant strides. As such he reached the office a few paces in front of Cygnus and when he opened the door he was able to convey a slight wordless warning to Orion. The current Lord of the Black family stood gracefully and moved around the desk, presenting a solid, impressive image to his cousin.

"Good afternoon, Cygnus," he stated in a quiet, warm tone.

"Skip with the pleasantries, cousin!" Cygnus barked. "I want to know why the contract between my second eldest and Heir Malfoy burned on top of my desk the other day, and I have a feeling you know *exactly* why."

Orion arched a sculpted brow and in a much colder tone said, "Your cousin I may be, Cygnus, but I am Lord of our family house and you would do well to keep a more civil tongue in your head, no matter your distress."

Cygnus froze and appeared to take in what he'd said. Realising the truth of it he said in a grudging tone, "I apologise cousin. Please do explain this if you can."

"Certainly," Orion replied, voice still containing a cold and now slightly sarcastic tone. "Have a seat. Would you like a drink?"

"No, thank you," he replied. He stared somewhat askance at Harrigan and said after a moment, "Is it necessary for your *friend* to be here?"

Orion fixed a frigid stare on his cousin and said, "I know you may be behind the times, Cygnus, but it is public knowledge that Harrigan and I are in a *courting* contract and if the Goddess chooses to continue bestowing her good nature upon, it will be a *betrothal* contract soon. So yes, it is 'necessary' for Harrigan to be here, after all, this will become his family."

Harrigan didn't know quite how to react to Orion's statement about their relationship, not to mention his hopes for. He eventually settled for a warm gaze to Orion and then a cool stare at Cygnus for the insinuation in his statement. To his amused surprise, the man actually flushed a little and looked away.

"Please explain, cousin," he repeated.

"Did you ever ask your wife Druella about the contract when she first brought it up, Cygnus? Specifically her conviction that it would be agreed upon by Heir Malfoy?"

"I can't say that I did, cousin. You know how women are, they say they have a 'feeling' about something," he snorted. "It's not very logical or solid, but I was surprised to realise that for once she was right."

"She was *right*, it turned out, because Belladonna Malfoy turned out to be homophobic, as well as my late wife. They found out about Heir Malfoy's relationship with my eldest Sirius and *threatened his life* in order to get him to agree to the contract. Quite frankly, I'm not sure how much longer I would have let it stand had Heir Malfoy not formally asked me to dissolve it as Lord of House Black."

"What?!" Cygnus bellowed, turning red with rage. "That little upstart! My daughter should be good enough for anyone, let alone a stuffy poppycock Malfoy. And you're letting this insult stand! I knew you should never have been given the title of Lord Black, you didn't deserve it!"

"Sit down, Cygnus," If Orion's voice had been cold before it was frigid now. Cygnus sat before he could think about it and once he had he actually took in his cousin's appearance. Whatever he saw made him change his mind about speaking again and instead he sat absolutely still.

"I knew you were enraged about not becoming Lord Black, but get over it! My father was the elder son and it passes to the eldest son of his, of which I happened to be the *only* son. The title was mine by default and you are whining over it like a small spoilt brat that hasn't gotten their way. I am Lord Black, so *deal with it*. Otherwise I may look into removing a spoiled branch of the family tree," Orion hissed.

"Your daughter will *not* become Lady Malfoy. Nor will Bellatrix become Lady Lestrage, I saw fit to end that contract as well. I am not about to let the Black Family be dragged into a private war by a man who may or not be who he claims he is. I have been doing my own research into him and his claims are less than supportable. As you have not seen fit to care first for your family I am taking controlling custody of your two daughters, Bellatrix and Narcissa. They may stay with you until they graduate, but their further education and marriage contracts are now *my* concern, not yours. Be glad you and your wife are being left with your own vault, I am not pleased with your behaviour as of late."

When Cygnus started to open his mouth, most likely to complain, Orion snapped, "Be careful. You are only my second cousin and I am not that fond of you, certainly not as of late."

"I see there is no changing your mind," Cygnus said stiffly, rising slowly. His shoulders were tense and his hand twitched as though he dearly wanted to draw his wand. "You will regret it, when the Dark Lord rises."

"I highly doubt it," Orion replied off-handedly. "Campaigns of any type require funds and supporters. There are many that follow this family, without it your 'Dark Lord' won't get far."

A hint of red rose in Cygnus' cheeks and he stared at Orion for a long moment. "Good day, cousin," he finally said curtly. "I will show myself out."

"No, I don't think so," Orion replied in a smooth tone. "Dilly will show you out. One can easily get lost in the Manor, after all."

Once Cygnus left the office Orion stood, walked around the front of his desk and leaned against it, placing his thumb and finger against the bridge of his nose in clear exasperation. After a long moment he walked over to a cabinet and retrieved a bottle of Ogden's Finest, pouring a generous finger into two glasses. Offering one to Harrigan he took a long gulp of his own and sighed in relief.

"Cygnus is my second cousin. He is my late wife's brother and we were born the same year. I had to endure his spiteful comments about

what he was going to do when he became Lord Black all through our childhood years and schooling. When my father announced he was following tradition and made me his official Heir in our 6<sup>th</sup> year he went into a towering rage that lasted all of Yule break. As you saw, he has never gotten over it, nor has he learned to control his emotions and his considerable greed. Probably the only thing he saw in his daughter's contracts was the considerable bride-price for both of them."

"My sympathies for handling a man like him all your life," Harrigan offered, making the older man chuckle.

"Thank you. Now, I have had enough of paperwork. Shall we head out onto the grounds and I will show you the walking path through the orchards?"

"Sounds delightful. I shall go retrieve my cloak and meet you at the front doors."

Orion snagged his hand and dragged him closer, pressing a warm, chaste kiss on his mouth before letting him go.

"Agreed," was all he said.

Harrigan smiled and left the office. Brushing his fingers over his mouth he wondered to himself, *will Orion's kisses ever stop knocking me for a loop? Oh, I certainly hope not.*

[Chapter 14](#): July 1977

## Summary:

A/N: No apologies for this. Only 1700 words and I am ashamed it took two months for me to post an update here. My life has been \*insane\* recently and sometimes I wonder if I've become Fate's scratching post...

Thanks to the reviewer who pointed out the oddity about the Lestrage brothers. I originally didn't have them as decent individuals and I forgot about the change. Also, kudos to the one who gave me the idea of 'fixing' Bellatrix before she became a problem.

## Chapter Text

As Harrigan stared down at the parchment in his hands, the corner of his mouth twitched despite his best attempts. Once the incredulity of it sank in, his reaction was a foregone conclusion and he gave in to the inevitable, laying his head back on the armchair he sat in and descending into what he would later try and convince himself was *manly laughter*, not an insane rather feminine-sounding cackle.

Ever since beginning their little attack against Dumbledore, Harrigan, Orion and their companions had been trying to figure out a way into the school. It was commonly believed by the four Lords that Dumbledore's little preaches of 'equality' and his magnamously manner were a front and the school was his domain where he shaped students into what he *wanted* them to be. A few random comments from Sirius over the summer seemed to confirm some of it at least, and it was a big one. Prejudice apparently ran rampant at the school, 'bullies' under the name of pranksters ran unchecked and when caught out were able

to get away with a small slap on the wrist.

A quietly ashamed Sirius had admitted to his own wrongdoing, listing a few incidents that he had been a part of with his friends, including one incident with a Slytherin in their own year that should have resulted in expulsion. Orion had been very angry at his eldest son and demanded that he prepare a proper apology for when he next saw one Severus Tobias Snape. Though it was unacceptable even against a student of no history, Sirius had been even more ashamed and horrified at his actions when a frowning Lucius revealed that Severus was Heir to the line of Prince. He would technically be Lord Prince when Sirius next spoke with him.

While the Prince family didn't soar quite as high as their falcon emblem would have liked over the past few decades, the family was still old blood, producing some of the finest individuals in the fields of Potions, Spell Crafting and Herbology that were seen in Wizarding Great Britain. Severus was well on his way to becoming one of the youngest Potions Masters in the field, if not the youngest. According to Sirius' rueful comments, that could end up being a double Mastery with Spell-Crafting.

On the subject of bullying and favoritism, however, Sirius easily admitted that the very worst offenses had been against Slytherin and he agreed that more than three-quarters of these incidents had been by Gryffindor students. The four friends had agreed, they needed a way into the school, pronto.

And here the solution to their problem had literally soared into his lap,

delivered by a very grumpy screech owl. After dismissing the foul bird Harrigan had read through it swiftly the first time. Unable to comprehend what he had read, a second and even *third* reading had been taken far more slowly.

Apparently the school governors (of which Abraxas was a member) had decided that a closer eye needed to be kept on this year's crop of graduating students. To this end they had declined the Headmaster's appointing of a truly dismal choice for the teacher's post of Defense Against The Dark Arts for a term of one year. They had informed a likely infuriated Dumbledore that *they* would be choosing the replacement instructor. To this end they had sent an inquiry to Harrigan asking if he would so kindly consider taking the post of Defense for one term starting August 25<sup>th</sup>. Apparently teachers started preparing for the arrival of the students a bit ahead of time.

Harrigan didn't truly know how much influence Abraxas had over his fellow governors, but the timing of this little gem was absolutely superb. If it was *not* his doing, then Harrigan would be giving the Mother some well-deserved thanks.

Picking up the missive he stood, stretched luxuriously and headed for Orion's office, a smug little grin creeping onto his lips at the thought of the other man's reaction. The thought of Orion brought Harrigan to their Courting and he was thankful the hallway was empty as he was unable to repress a slight blush. He was quickly coming to think of Orion as his beloved, and even thinking the name in his head brought a small smile to his lips.

They had only been Courting for 6 full months but Harrigan was beginning to wonder if they would last a whole *year* before Orion proposed. The older man seemed determined to have Harrigan as his life-time companion, something which both delighted and confused the younger man. Orion could have anyone he wanted, after all. He was wealthy, good-looking and incredibly influential. But for some reason he seemed to want Harrigan, and he was reasonably convinced by now that it wasn't because of his name.

They certainly hadn't moved as quickly as Sirius and Lucius, but the young were far more impatient. Having only settled their past in April, the pair had been officially betrothed as of late June. Sirius was ecstatic and the Malfoy heir only a little less so. Orion was in his office actually working on certain things involved in the pair's betrothal, or rather to do with Lucius' ex-fiancée Narcissa Black and her sisters.

Between visits with his betrothed, Sirius was bonding once again with his year-younger brother Regulus, who was very happy to be with his older brother again. They had been close once before Sirius had become so bitter after Lucius' betrothal to Narcissa and both young men were hopeful about regaining that closeness. They shared many common interests and Harrigan was happy to observe them growing closer day by day.

Cygnus had been outraged when Orion had taken control of the man's daughters from him and his truly awful wife, Druella Black nee Rosier. Harrigan imagined that the man had been near apocalyptic when he found out that Orion had met with the disinherited eldest, Andromeda and her Muggleborn husband Ted Tonks.

Orion had been impressed with the younger man's courage at meeting him face to face and the already apparent talents of their young daughter Nymphadora, who showed a powerful Metamorphagus talent from birth. This had resulted in the oldest daughter being welcomed back into the official family and the release of her dowry, in the form of some of Walburga's own. Orion had admitted later that he took great amusement at giving part of Walburga's dowry to a 'shame' and her half-blood daughter.

Narcissa had been firmly warned away from interfering in Sirius and Lucius' betrothal at the cost of her graduation from Hogwarts. Orion also held a betrothal contract for both her and her sister Bellatrix, to be filled in at his discretion and approval should Narcissa not come to agreement by legal, approved means with an appropriate young man. Furious but afraid of being removed from Hogwarts in her final year, Narcissa had agreed.

Now Orion was setting up appointments with a mind-Healer to meet with Bellatrix, the middle daughter. She had been severely tortured by both Orion's dead wife and her own mother's family, much to Orion's disgust. The girl was partially unstable but there were high hopes that she could return to the normal young witch of incredible talents and sharp wit that she had been before. Orion was hopeful about the situation.

Having finally reached Orion's office, Harrigan rapped on the door in warning and opened it. Orion was inside sitting at his desk looking relieved at his appearance and frustrated with the piles of paperwork strewn about his desk in messy, random piles. Harrigan took one look

at Orion's expression and crossed the spacious office to a small cabinet. Opening one of the glass-fronted doors he retrieved a bottle of Ogden's Finest and poured a generous finger into a small shot-glass and placed it in front of the older wizard.

Orion looked incredibly relieved and smiled at him, downing the small glass in a single go. Standing up, he crossed around the desk and wrapped his arms around Harrigan's waist, drawing him into a warm embrace. "Thank you," he rumbled quietly in his ear.

"You are very welcome," Harrigan said warmly, "it looked as if you needed something to help you relax."

"I did, this paperwork seems endless. But on the plus side I have arranged meetings with a mind-Healer for Bellatrix and she has agreed to meet the woman this weekend at St. Mungo's. She has her license to Apparate so there is no way for Cygnus and Druella to refuse. I always knew that the Rosiers were bastards, but I never imagined them capable of this. Now the only thing I was wishing for is a way to keep an eye on the two girls and my sons at the school."

"I may be able to help with that," Harrigan said slyly, offering Orion the parchment with their golden opportunity.

He watched the man's expressive eyes and he knew when Orion had read to the right point because they widened slowly and his mouth parted in surprise. Once he had finished reading the parchment he looked at Harrigan and murmured quietly, "Is this real?"

"Very. Either we owe Abraxas a *very* big favor or the Mother is smiling at us, for this exactly what we needed on two fronts. I can keep an eye on the assorted Blacks, Lestranges and various others and we can see how genteel Albus Dumbledore acts on his own turf. On the downside however, I will have to put up with the man for a year," Harrigan grumbled the last part.

Orion threw back his head and laughed. "Then we shall make sure that you are ready to deal with him for the next few months, hmm? What a perfect opportunity. I feel like things have just started to fall into place since we met you, my love. Shall we head out to dinner after giving our friends the news?"

"Why not make it a group dinner?" Harrigan suggested.

"Perfect, just like you," Orion murmured, leaning in and catching his lips in a hard, passionate claim. Harrigan shuddered and returned it, savouring the taste of Orion and a slight hint of Firewhiskey.

*If I am perfect to you, Harrigan thought, than you are beyond so to me, Orion.*

[Chapter 15](#): August 20th 1977

Chapter Text

Harrigan had not told Sirius and Regulus he would be at the school. He would take great amusement in their reactions. Equally amusing had been the reactions of their group, the two other Lords had been shell-

shocked behind their pureblood masks. Abraxas has admitted that he *had* in fact suggested that the Board of Governors keep an eye on the school this year, but he had no idea they would ask Harrigan to take the post. An inquiry as to why had brought an answer that had both pleased and humbled Harrigan. Apparently though he was new to his title, Harrigan was a respected member of the Wizengamot despite his official stance as Dark. He was trusted to be impartial and a good influence on the students as well as keeping an eye on his fellow staff members.

He was to leave in five days, so Orion had arranged for the pair of them to travel overseas for a few days. They were in Venice at the moment and Harrigan was awed by the beautiful city on the water. They had made several side-trips the last few days to famous wine regions within Apparition distance (including the magical Zabini vineyards, which were quite magnificent) and to a few smaller cities, notably Verona where they had stopped at the location Muggles believed to be the location where Juliet from Shakespeare's famous play had resided. Though a Muggle himself, Shakespeare was accounted special status in the magical world due to his 'surreal talent' in poems, plays and sonnets. It was considered part of the well-educated pureblood child to learn a few of each.

Tonight however they were headed to Rome for dinner in the 'Eternal City's' magical district. Apparently it was one of the best restaurants in all of mainland magical Europe and Orion wanted to indulge him before he had to spend the next 4 months with students and more taxing, Albus Dumbledore.

Harrigan was wearing a simple yet extravagant robe in deep forest green silk with elaborate Celtic knots in silver, standing out richly on the fabric due to a thin black border that made them almost appear like actual metal had been woven into the fabric. His wavy black hair was pulled back and tied with a small silver chain on which hung a clasp of an actual emerald about the size of his thumbnail.

Orion had not been able to take his eyes off of him since he had entered the mutual sitting room of their hotel suite. The older man looked equally fetching in an ensemble of deep violet, gold and black. The pair had been drawing appreciative looks from both sexes the entire time they had been walking down the ancient cobblestones of *Eternus Animus*, which was 'Eternal Souls' in Latin. It was a fitting name for what happened to be one of the oldest magical alleys in existence.

Once they stepped inside the restaurant Harrigan's eyes widened. It was simply stunning. It had once been a Roman spa and none of the original architecture had been altered, nor the stunning paintings of the Roman gods and goddesses on the walls. They had been braced and preserved in their current state and would remain so for hundreds of years more at a minimum. The colours were deep and rich and the figures amazingly accurate for work that was more than two thousand years old.

The lighting was all the original scones on the walls plus a few magnificent torches that had been made to mimic the original style. None of the tables had room for more than two people and were strategically arranged so that an elaborate floor mosaic's most

amazing designs were never covered up.

They were led to one of the tables near a window which overlooked a powerfully breathtaking scene of the city. Once they ordered Harrigan was unable to resist the power of the window and stood, making his way to the glass so that he could gaze at the bustling activity that still filled this ancient city. It was humbling, certainly, to stand in building that was this old and gaze at a city that had been here for so long. Certainly nothing the modern Muggles were building would last this long. Their own work could hardly stand up to nature, let alone time.

"I am glad you have liked our time away so much, Harrigan," Orion said quietly from his side, also looking out at the city. "I have wanted to bring you somewhere special for a while now and I have always wanted to visit this country."

"I have a feeling," Harrigan stated mischievously, "that this will not be our only visit."

"I certainly hope not," Orion agreed, before motioning to their table, where a waiter was just beginning to set out their appetizers and wine.

The meal was as delightful as promised and Harrigan sighed softly in enjoyment as he sat back after his last bite of dessert, a decadent, rich slice of marbled cheesecake flavoured with dark, milk and white chocolate.

Orion signaled their waiter to approach and paid their bill, giving a generous tip for the swift service and exceptional food. Then he stood

and offered Harrigan his arm, steering him out onto the alley. Harrigan had a feeling the night was not over and he was right, their next stop was at a nighttime amphitheatre where they were showing a Muggle-produced version of an (ironically) Shakespearean play, 'Antony & Cleopatra'.

Both men agreed afterwards that it had been well produced and the actors well-selected, but some things could have used a magical touch to be just a little bit more convincing and dramatic. It had certainly been enjoyable however and the pair thought it time well-spent. They agreed that the next time they came to Italy, they would have to try out the opera and the famous Italian singing voices.

Orion wrapped his arm around Harrigan's waist and drew him close, Apparating them without warning. Harrigan was surprised but trusted his judgment and was rewarded with what felt like stone under his feet. He looked around and blinked, stunned. They were standing in one of the top rows of a gigantic stadium.

"Is this the Colosseum?" he breathed.

Orion nodded. "It is one of those things I have seen in pictures but they simply cannot catch the magnificence of the real thing. I thought we could watch the sunrise from here, it has passed late and gone into early some time ago."

Harrigan beamed at the older man and said, "A fine suggestion. Shall we take a seat?"

So the pair sat there, Orion's arm wrapped around Harrigan's waist with the younger man's head on his shoulder, watching as the dark sky was slowly and dramatically lit with purples, pinks, oranges and yellows, both agreeing quietly that even man's greatest plays had nothing on nature itself for stunning performances and absolute beauty.

Once the sun had fully risen, Orion placed a small box on Harrigan's knee with slightly shaking fingers. Shooting the older man a questioning look Harrigan picked up the box and cracked it open. He stared in shocked realisation at the small band of pure crystal set with a solitaire diamond. When he lifted his eyes to gaze at Orion the man was on one knee on the stair below him and gazed steadily into his eyes.

"When Walburga died, all I felt was a sense of relief. I had been forced into the marriage and I could never have described myself as anything but unhappy. The day you walked into the Wizengamot chambers I was intrigued and attracted. Here this stunning stranger had come waltzing into the room with the biggest stunner to reach Britain in many years. I was almost forced into admitting my desire to know and learn about you by my friends after our meeting and I was beyond relieved when you agreed to the courting contract."

"After spending the past seven months with you I cannot possibly contemplate living alone and the speed at which you have entered my life stuns me and fills me with simultaneous joy and nerves. Joy at having found someone to be with the rest of my life, someone who is *my* choice and not any other. Nerves because I cannot even begin to

imagine life without you and your presence. I ask of you, Harrigan Peverell, will you bond with me?"

"I could hardly see myself without you, Orion," Harrigan whispered, overwhelmed. "I will be yours, I already am."

With unmuted joy in his eyes, Orion placed the band on Harrigan's finger and banished the box. He stood, as did Harrigan. Moving to stand on the same step they stared into each other's eyes for a long moment before their mouths came together. There was no fierceness, no urgency in this kiss. Instead it simply was, as they were, an affirmation of mutual love and an unvoiced hope for a future of happiness together.

[Chapter 16](#): September 1st, 1977

Summary:

Lord Harrigan Peverell is now at Hogwarts :D What you recognize belongs to J.K. Rowling, alternate situation and other characters are mine, hehe.

Chapter Text

**Sixteen- *September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1977***

Harrigan was sitting at the Head Table in the Great Hall, waiting for the students to arrive. He had been here for a few days and already he wanted to strangle the old man who called himself 'Headmaster'. The man's barely-concealed shock and irritation at seeing him there had

been his only amusement, that and the fact that the old coot couldn't get him removed. Harrigan had no doubt the man had already tried, perhaps mentioning a conflict of interest since he was engaged to the father of two students. Whatever he had done or said it hadn't mattered much, for here he was, sitting at the table with the staff and trying to ignore the urge to roll his eyes as he listened to the old man's 'grave' conversation a few chairs down about the new threat posed by this 'Voldemort' character.

Honestly it was behaviour like this that was enflaming the wannabe's importance in wizarding Britain more than anything. He wasn't going to get anywhere, not without the Lestranges, Blacks or Malfoy families at his back. They were three of the most well-respected and regarded old names in the so-called 'Dark' families and there weren't many that were willing to go against their decisions. As Orion had made it clear to his cousin Cygnus a few weeks ago, they were not going to be supporting this upstart. Without them, he had no chance.

Investigation into this 'Lord Voldemort' had revealed that while he was the Heir of Slytherin, he was also a half-blood, product of a near-Squib and a Muggle. None of the self-respecting pureblood families would ever bow to a half-blood and call him their Lord, no matter his bloodline. If he hadn't wanted to be discovered, he really shouldn't have made an anagram of his real name...

He was distracted from his thoughts by the appearance of the students, at least those who had taken the carriages. The first years would be traveling over the Black Lake and Harrigan didn't envy them the slightest, staring up at the enchanted ceiling with its ominous

thunderclouds and the pouring rain. He was glad that he was not a Head of House, there were probably a number of terrified new students who hated something about the stormy weather, either the sound or the sudden flashes of light.

He smiled when he saw Regulus approaching the Slytherin table with a few of his friends and his older cousin Bellatrix. He had genuinely liked the younger brother from the start and thought he had a good head on his shoulders. He wanted to be a Healer and Harrigan thought it suited him perfectly. He was calm and reassuring and had a steady hand and mind, all of which would be essential as a Healer. He was also talented in Potions, Charms and Herbology, three of the most important classes for an aspiring Healer.

Bellatrix meanwhile was beginning to come to terms with the fact that she *did* have a choice on her future. Druella Rosier and her family had damaged the young woman incredibly, not to mention her sire Cygnus and his sneering comments on the lack of importance that women had in their society. All of which were antiquated views, which when talking about wizards who still used quills and parchment was *really* sayingsomething.

With Orion's steadying presence and the help of a mind-Healer Bellatrix Black was well on her way to a full recovery and the young, sharp-witted woman had a promising career awaiting her in Arithmancy. Her brain was ideally suited to the logical puzzles and numbers that made up the archaic study of magical numbers and their use in calculations. If not for her parent's interference and threats the young woman would have been a shoo-in for Ravenclaw.

Regulus idly flicked his eyes up to the Head Table, studying the faces there with little interest, at least until steadily widening pale blue eyes landed on *him*. Regulus looked stunned, amused and a little ruefully shaking his head at the nice stunt his future stepfather had pulled. He made a quiet comment to Bellatrix who looked, saw him and gave a surprised laugh. They both sat down, highly amused and no doubt looking forward to their Defense classes for once.

Slytherin had proceeded in first as a whole, sitting down without the slightest of arguments at what were obviously pre-arranged places. Their hierarchy determined each and every student's place in the House from the moment of their Sorting. While there was always a bit of infighting and social maneuvering they always presented a united front outside of Slytherin, Orion had explained to him a few days ago. So few stood on the side of the green and silver that they had to do it for themselves.

Hufflepuff followed along with Ravenclaw, the more patient of the two Houses all the way across the room from Slytherin, while the intelligent ones who could value the Slytherin's cunning were directly next to them, a buffer between the two major rivals of Slytherin and Gryffindor. The lions were last, a rowdy bunch of laughing, smiling students who playfully shoved other students out of 'their' places and exchanged jokes and news in a mild cacophony of noise.

Harrigan spotted Sirius easily, the elder boy was looking happier than he had in a long time, it was such a difference from the almost sullen child he had met in Potter manor the previous year that he could only marvel at the change. Sirius was well-suited for Gryffindor, his easy

smile, quicksilver temper that matched his grey eyes and love of pranks wouldn't have let him go anywhere else, even if he had wanted to. His friends all smiled and laughed with him, the Potter heir giving a playful shove in retaliation to an obviously friendly jibe.

Gryffindors were also far more open with their reactions, Harrigan reflected in distinct amusement as he watched Sirius scan the Head Table and notice him sitting in the chair for the Defense instructor. Grey eyes widened in shock and his jaw literally dropped in surprise. Harrigan concealed his desire to laugh and simply smirked back at his obviously stunned future stepson. It was really a priceless reaction and he would have to share it with Orion when he next saw his fiancée.

Sirius obviously knew how to take a joke and burst out into low chuckles, poking James Potter in the side and making a comment to both him and Remus Lupin, seated across the way from Sirius. Sitting in front of James was a smaller boy with mousy hair and a slightly jumpy, skittish personality.

His name was Peter Pettigrew, according to Harrigan. The boy left him on his guard for some reason and he stared at him for a long moment, taking in his slightly skittish behaviour and the way his slightly reedy laugh had an unexplainable edge to it. He resolved to keep a closer eye on the boy this year and see if he couldn't figure out what was going on with him.

He took his attention away from Gryffindor as Deputy Headmistress McGonagall led in a group of tiny students who looked a mix of excited, nervous and downright terrified. His lip twitched a little, they