

Through the Looking Glass

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/53792596) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/53792596>.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Harry Potter - J. K. Rowling
Relationships:	Regulus Black/Sirius Black , Sirius Black/James Potter , Sirius Black/Remus Lupin , Remus Lupin/James Potter , Regulus Black/James Potter , Regulus Black/Sirius Black/Remus Lupin/James Potter , Barty Crouch Jr./Evan Rosier
Additional Tags:	Pranks and Practical Jokes , Bets & Wagers , Starts out innocent quickly becomes not that innocent , Dead Dove: Do Not Eat , Incest , Sibling Incest , doppelganger , Dopplebanger , Fellas is it gay to wanna fuck your brother? , Fellas is it gay to give your brother a slow once over and memorize what he looks like? , slowburn , The noncannibalistic urge to taste your brother , “Brotherly” dates are sus as fuck , Weaving flower crowns as you mend your brotherhood , Daisy chaining is the new snowballing , Dubcon Kissing , and frottage , Shakespearean Comedy , Comedy of Errors , Sirius may be the brightest star but he’s not the brightest boy
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2024-02-14 Updated: 2024-08-26 Words: 31,839 Chapters: 11/?

Through the Looking Glass

by [BlackStarGazer](#)

Summary

Sirius and Regulus make a bet and prank their friends. What starts out as an innocent breather from their friend's drama and a chance to get to know reunite by walking in each other's shoes turns wild as they get to know more about each other than they planned.

P.S. I'm terrible at summaries.

Notes

To my beloved Frog:

I am blessed every day to have you in my life. You are such a brilliant, hilarious, beautiful soul and I am so grateful to have met you. Thank you for bringing such joy to my life. I adore you.

P.S. I'm sorry this is late. I hope you can forgive me. And this chapter isn't very long but it's the set up for the coming week. I hope you like it.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Doppelgängers

Chapter Notes

Very special thank you to Heated_Mausoleum who came up with all the tags you see. They are the cleverest of birds and I could only *dream* to be as hilarious as they are.

The vibes between the brothers had been—tense, to say the least, since Regulus was sorted into Slytherin. Before Hogwarts and houses, Sirius and Regulus would play games—play pranks. Sirius always took the fall if they were caught—but Regulus would slip into his room in the night and hold him through the tremors and the tears. That ended when Regulus' name was called out by a dusty, crumpled hat followed by the blasphemous word *Slytherin*.

Their days of games and tricks came to an end, and the brothers hardly spoke to each other. Even the night Sirius left, hardly a word was passed between them. But the words that *were* said carried a hefty weight.

“You’re leaving,” Regulus said from the doorway as he watched Sirius hastily pack his belongings. His brother froze at the fact—and it was *a fact*. Sirius had been burned one too many times by the electric shock of the cruciatus curse, and he knew if he had to endure the pain one more time by the hand of his *mother*, he would crack like the bust that used to sit at the end of the hall before a wild game got out of hand and it shattered on the floor into hundreds of tiny shards.

“I am,” Sirius said as he stood up straight—challenging him. Daring him to run and tell his parents of his plans to vacate this haunted dwelling and never come back.

But he didn’t—Regulus leaned against the frame of the door with his arms crossed and nodded once, “Good.”

Sirius blinked back—baffled at first, then his bewilderment turned to a white-hot rage, “*Good*—that’s—that’s all you have to say to me? *Good*?”

Regulus gave his brother a once over—slowly tracing his form as if he wanted to memorize him—to imprint Sirius in his mind and let him live there—as if he would never see him again. Which was preposterous, of course, as they would still see each other in school—but he did so just the same. Then he kicked himself off the frame and lowered his arms to his side. “Yes, Siri.” Regulus whispered as he turned to leave the room, “You never belonged in a cage.” Regulus slowly slid his fingers down the frame of the door and looked back at his brother one last time, “I hope you find your freedom—and truly—I hope you enjoy it.” Regulus said somberly—but with no hint of falsehood in his shaky voice.

“Co—“ Sirius cleared his throat as his eyes began to swell with unshed tears. “Come with me. You don’t—you don’t belong here either, Reggie.”

Regulus shook his head, “No, I don’t. But I’m not ready to go just yet.”

Sirius took quick steps over to his brother and wrapped his arms around the boy as he gripped him tightly and whispered in his ear, “When you’re ready—whenever you’re ready—you know where to find me.”

He felt Regulus nod against his cheek, “I’ll be waiting for you, Reggie. I’ll always wait for you.” Sirius pressed a chaste kiss to the back of his brother's head and let go and watched as his brother left his room, then he turned back and continued to pack his meager life into a trunk, walked down the stairs in the dead of night, and never looked back.

Sirius spent a blissful summer with James—he hadn’t known a happy summer in five years--but the Potter manor wouldn’t allow anything less. Days by the lake, thrashing about like the wild thing he was—rather than the well-trained animal he was forced to mask as. But at night, when the sun went down, and the stars shone brightly in the country darkness—Sirius would fix his eyes on the stars and wish. And one night—three days before they were to return to Hogwarts, his 66 wishes were heard and answered as a stiff three-knock rapping echoed in the foyer against the wooden door.

Sirius looked at Monty—fearful that his parents had finally come to collect him. But Effie gave him a quick wink and a soothing hand on his that rubbed lightly and squeezed tightly as Monty went to answer the door. When he returned, he was not alone. In the doorway of the kitchen stood his doppelgänger with unsure eyes and a pinched face.

“Does the offer still stand, Siri?” Regulus quirked a brow, feigning nonchalance, but the nails digging into his fleshy palm betrayed him. Slowly, Sirius rose from the table and watched Regulus take in a sharp breath and hold it. His brother was here. His brother was *here*. Sirius rounded the table with a quickness, flying into his brother's arms that clung to his sides. He wrapped his arms around his brother, and even through the awkward stiffness of Regulus’ body, he found the thought of letting go unbearable. Sirius felt as if this was a dream, and if he lost physical contact for a moment, Regulus would slip through his fingers and dissipate like mist in the cool night air.

Yourehereyourhereyourhere echoed in his mind, and suddenly, he felt the tentative touch of his brother's hands on his back squeezing lightly, and the petal soft voice whispered in his ear, “I’m here, Siri.”

Sirius sobbed into his brother's hair as he coiled himself further into his brother's embrace. He lifted his hand to cup the back of Regulus’ head, feeling the soft curls against his palm and between his fingers. The urge to feel every sensation of his brother overwhelmed him. To see him—he looked through bleary eyes and saw his brother trapped in his crushing embrace. To hear him—Regulus' shaky breathing and affirming words that he was *real*. To smell him—Sirius buried his nose and smelt the familiar scent of cinnamon and lilies. To touch him—

velvet softness in one hand and a rigid spine against his other. To taste him—Sirius began peppering soft, affectionate kisses against his neck and shoulder as he cried—“You’re *here* .”

Finally, Sirius was able to muster the strength to let go. Once he was sure that his brother would not fade away, he looked at Regulus in a way he hadn’t for years. They were so similar in their looks—but so different in their demeanor and the way they held themselves.

But this night—Sirius found himself creeping out of James’ bed and into Regulus’ room, where he found a wide-eyed boy sitting on the window sill gazing at the stars. He took his place on the opposite side of the window and stared at the only star he ever longed to see. Even when they weren’t speaking during their time at Hogwarts—Sirius always found himself looking for his mirror.

“I know,” Sirius began hesitantly, “I know—we haven’t been the best brothers we could be to each other the last few years.”

Regulus snorted as he looked away from Sirius and toward—well— *Sirius* .

“But I’d like to try again.” That drew his younger brother’s attention, and with starlight eyes twinkling back at him, he continued, “I want to get to know you again—if you’ll let me.”

Regulus clenched his jaw, and Sirius expected the worst, the *how dare you*’s and the *fuck off and die*’s. But they never came. All that arrived was a light shake of ruffled curls and a slight smirk, “whatever you like, Siri.”

They had a pact. An agreement. An accord. To meet every day for one hour. Almost like a date—a brotherly date. They would sit alone on the grass and talk about whatever their hearts desired. And lately—their hearts desired to *complain* .

“He’s driving me crazy—Lily this and Lily that. Doesn’t ever shut up about her. And it’s just nothingness—just the same—“ Sirius pinched his nose, “she’s so pretty, and she’s so brilliant, and she’s so funny. He never goes into detail about *why* he thinks she’s pretty or brilliant or funny—just that she *is* .”

“I’d take that any day over the nauseating display that is Barty and Evan’s odd mating ritual.” Regulus laughed as he tugged at the weed beneath him and pulled it from the ground. It was brilliant to see Regulus laugh again. His eyes crinkled, and his plump pink lips curved slightly upward, and Sirius could not stop melting at how liberated his brother looked. It was refreshing to see in comparison to the droll, blank stare generally occupying his face.

Regulus continued as he looped the stem of the weed and threaded the previously picked stem through the hole, “They already act like an old married couple but refuse to acknowledge their feelings for each other. It’s sickening. It’s *exhausting* ,” Regulus sighed dramatically as he threw himself against the grass. Sirius picked up the unfinished crown and continued to work on shaping it as he plucked the yellow flower from the ground.

"I'd take that any day. At least they have a shot with each other. James doesn't stand a chance."

Regulus pulled one arm over his eyes to shield them from the harsh rays of the midday sun and waved apathetically toward Sirius with the other, "You can have them."

Sirius paused as he worked the stem through the eye of the loop he had created. "I could."

Regulus lifted himself to lean on his elbows and forearms while his long legs stretched along the untamed grass. He arched an intrigued brow and launched a smirk at Sirius' feral grin.

"I've got an idea," Sirius said, and instantly, all humor drained from his brother's face.

"No," Regulus said sternly and began to stand up.

Sirius scrambled to follow him--he snatched the flower crown from his lap and ran to chase after his brother. "Hear me out, Reggie,"

Regulus shook his head, "Nope. Absolutely not." He turned to face his brother and pointed his finger into Sirius' chest. "I know that look, Siri. That look spells nothing but trouble. How many times?" Regulus took a step forward, and Sirius followed his lead, stepping back and found himself fixed between Regulus and the cold stone pillar. "How many times did we get in trouble because of *that look*?"

"Well, technically, I was the one who got punished." Sirius jibbed, but the joke did not land; instead, it crashed as Regulus' eyes burned with anger.

"If you think you're the only one who got punished, you are *sorely* mistaken. I had to watch you *cry*, *plead*, *bleed*. And if you don't think that broke a piece of me--" Regulus removed his pointed finger from Sirius' chest and straightened himself, "well, maybe you don't know me at all."

Sirius saw molten silver in the eyes that pierced him--melted him. Regulus twisted his body to get away, but Sirius' hand grasped his wrist and pulled him in a hug, which his brother naturally resisted, but after a few moments of the unrelenting hold, Regulus sank into the embrace. "I'm trying, Reggie. I know things can't go back to the way they were, but *this*? We can have this. No one is going to hurt me for this—it's harmless fun, and I'd really like to—fuck—I'd really like to do this with you. Honestly, I think it could be good for us if you're willing to hear me out."

Sirius let Regulus go so he could see his face, muddled with worry as his younger brother trapped his bottom lip between his teeth. But he nodded and mirrored the smile that had blossomed on Sirius' face. "Yeah, alright, tell me what that devious brain has cooked up."

Sirius took the flower crown he had finished crafting and placed it on Regulus' head. He wrapped one arm around his brother's shoulder and swept his hand through the air, "Picture it with me: a prank on our friends and a bet for us. We pretend to be each other for a week. We tell no one. The first person to either get caught or tap out loses."

Regulus furrowed his brow, “Polyjuice?” Sirius eyed his brother up and down. Regulus’ eyes were slightly lighter than his own, his hair was curly where Sirius’ fell in waves, and his brother’s cheek bones were sharper but other than that—they could have passed for twins. He knew Regulus was clever enough to cast a few simple charms to mimic the discrepancies so, he shook his head, and his wavy locks swayed with the movement, “nah. We’re similar enough—you’re just as tall as I am, which, by the way—when the fuck did that happen?”

Regulus smirked, “I grew about two inches over the summer—kind of you to just notice *now*.”

Sirius frowned, then shook his head again, “Anyway—I think a couple of glamours would do the trick.” Sirius watched as Regulus’ starlight eyes swept over his frame and nodded, “All right. What are the terms?”

“Every day we meet, we’ll switch back. So we’ll only be the other person every other day. If you’re caught—you lose. If you tap out—you lose.”

“What happens if we lose?”

Sirius thought for a moment, then fixed his brother with an impish grin, “Veritaserum. The loser has to take Veritaserum, and the winner can ask any questions they want—no limit.” Sirius stared at his brother while he processed thinking of the pros and cons of the deal before Regulus’ eyes mirrored his own, riddled with mischief. “I’ll do you one better. I’ve been working on a Veritaserum that will last 12 hours rather than the normal 30 minutes. Loser has to drink that—and resume their day as they normally would.”

Sirius frowned at the thought of revealing all his secrets to anyone but his brother, but he always loved a *challenge*, so he nodded his head and held out his hand.

“When do we begin?” He asked as he waited for his brother to accept the deal. Regulus stretched out his hand and muttered, “No time like the present.”

Curiouser and Curiouser

Regulus hiked up the stairs toward the tower, feeling more and more insecure about his decision to agree to this stupid bet. He could feel the magic on his skin hiding his sharper features from the passersby. The faces that were usually sour toward the younger black brother were jovial and inviting and made him feel more at ease to grace them with a practiced winning smile he had seen so often on Sirius' face. The password provided by his brother left his lips with a loud crow, as his brother was known to do, and he entered uncharted territory with awe. The tower seemed so warm in its bright red and gold decor, with a fire roaring, keeping the cool October air at bay. On the couch, he saw James looking particularly frustrated at a piece of parchment in front of him, Peter with an assortment of cards on the coffee table—his ass on a cushy pillow and his back facing the fire, and Remus lounging in a chair with a book in his lap as he twirled a lock of hair around his finger. He breathed in deeply, grounding himself as he set out to give the performance of a lifetime. The bag on his shoulder was dropped unceremoniously onto the floor as he plopped next to James and wrapped his arm around the older boy's shoulder, "Hiya Prongs."

All concentration and harsh lines drained from James Potter's face as he looked over to see his best friend beaming at him. Regulus had never before gained such a reaction from the boy, and the gesture caused Regulus to flounder for a moment before he caught himself and flashed the object of his disdain with a grin. James leaned into Regulus' embrace and placed a warm hand on the younger boy's leg. "How was your date with Regulus?"

Date? Is that what he called their time together? The word made Regulus flush, and he tried to play it off as he gave James a good-hearted shove. "It was fine."

James hummed and looked back to the problem he was working on. Regulus transferred his attention to Peter, "What are you working on, Wormtail?"

"Divination," Peter mumbled, his focus fixed on the cards.

Recalling Sirius' need for attention, Regulus gave Peter a rueful smile and said as he gestured wildly, "All right, Petey, give it a go—tell me my future."

Peter looked up, insecurity stuck to his face, but the boy nodded and gathered the cards to shuffle them. He placed them in three neat piles of different sizes and picked up each one, fanning them out for Regulus to pick one card from each pile. Regulus chose his cards and placed them on the table in front of them. The first card was death, at which Peter squeaked and searched through his guide to aid him in his reading.

"Oh, that's a relief," Peter said as he read.

"What is it, Petey?" James asked, abandoning his ongoing project in favor of the game of chance and fate.

"Well—it says here, 'The card of Death doesn't necessarily mean *actual* death, but is likely the end of something, more specifically,'" Peter went on to read, "The end of a significant

phase of your life that is no longer serving you.”

“And good riddance to that—” James said, likely interpreting the meaning to be the end of Sirius’ life under the tyrannical oppression of Walburga and Orion Black.

Regulus hummed as he flipped over the second card, which held three men in front of a building that sported three pentacles. “This one represents success—or rather the beginning of success—the three men are working together to achieve a goal. Individually—they would not succeed, but together, they find that they can work harmoniously and accomplish their desired goal. It encourages collaboration, specifically with others who might see things differently than you, and not to ignore other people’s talents or perspectives but rather embrace them.”

“Well—that’s great! You’ve got your three men here, Padfoot—Moony, Wormtail, and me.”

Peter shook his head, “No—I think it means for Sirius to branch out to people who are not necessarily as like-minded as him.”

They were both right in a sense—Regulus thought. While James was focused on the face before him—that was not who had pulled the card. But he stifled down his introspection to save it for another day and pulled the next card. Two children were playing in the center, and surrounded by them were six cups filled with soil and flowers. “This one represents homecoming—nostalgia—it encourages you to reconnect with someone in your past and return to the familiarity of happier times. It also—“

The room grew quiet, and only the sound of the crackling fire could be heard beyond the stilled breaths.

Regulus swallowed thickly, “Go on, Pete.”

Peter breathed in sharply, “It also says it’s a card of healing old wounds—specifically in regard to a strained relationship.”

Regulus already knew this—of course, he did—with Pandora’s guidance, he learned the art of divination at a young age. But it didn’t quell the feeling that sunk in the pit of his stomach—the worry that he would not be able to achieve this goal and move past the heartbreak and loss between him and his brother. He nodded once and stiffly rose from the couch, “Thanks for the reading, Pete—” he said as he walked out of the common room and toward his brother’s dorm. Under the scrutiny of fate, he found the sense of joviality had left him, and the mask of magic weighed heavily on his face.

As soon as he reached the room, he found his brother’s bed and sank into it—breathing in the smell of smoke and cedar wood threaded into the linen. Only a few moments later, he heard the click of the door and felt a warm body lay next to him, rubbing small circles into his lower back. “Pads—talk to me,” James whispered against his ear as he faced away from the last boy Regulus wanted to talk to. He looked over to see Remus sitting on his bed, which was directly across from him. Remus took in a deep breath, and Regulus watched as his eyes drew together in confusion.

Regulus exhaled slowly, putting his mask as Sirius in place as he tried to convey what he was feeling. “What if—what if he doesn’t—what if my brother doesn’t—what if we can’t move past it.”

James entwined his body with Regulus’ slotting knee between his legs in an innocent effort to be closer to his friend. He played on Regulus’ back and whispered in his ear, “He’s trying. You know that he’s trying. He has these dates with you—“

“Don’t call it that.” Regulus said as he buried his face into the pillows with a groan and felt James chuckle against his back and puffs of breath against his neck, “All right—he has these rendez-vous with you in an effort to get to know you—for you to get to know him. Which sounds an awful lot like a date if you ask me—ow” Regulus sat up and hit James with a pillow before climbing on top of him—an action that was so familiar to him as Barty taunted him constantly, causing him to resort to violence—but this face beaming up at him with mirth as he conceded was *unfamiliar* but not altogether as unpleasant as he thought it would be.

James caught his wrist and yanked out the feathered weapon from his grip, then caught his other wrist before flipping the younger boy onto his back and slotting himself between Regulus’ thighs. “The point is—before I was so rudely interrupted,” James’ playful grin softened, “is that he’s trying, and these things take time. And I know patience isn’t your forte, Pads. But you’re gonna have to learn. Rome wasn’t built in a day—and your relationship with Regulus isn’t going to just magically be as it was. It might never be as it was again—but it can be transfigured into something newer—something stronger. And the both of you will be better off for it if you both keep at it.”

Regulus regarded James with a quizzical brow. Warmth radiated off of him and seared Regulus’ skin, charring his flesh and melting his bones. He fixed the sunkissed boy with a soft smile, “When did you get to be so wise, James Potter?”

“Fuck you, tosser, I am the sagest of the sage,” James said as he held both wrists high above Regulus’ head and used the other hand to tickle him—which was honestly one of the younger boy’s biggest weaknesses—and Regulus began to thrash about under him. After a bout of laughter, James finally ceased his torture, and both boys were panting heavily from the childish activity. James pressed his forehead to the boy beneath him and laughed out, “All right?”

Regulus nodded, feeling the brush of James’ nose against his, “Good, now give us a kiss, and let’s make up.” Regulus stilled—did he? Did his brother kiss James? Was this part of their relationship? What *else* did he do with James? The boy on top of him leaned his lips down and placed a chaste kiss against Regulus’ lips. His heart was beating—fluttering—out of control like a flag on top of the mast of a ship caught in a storm. James’ lips against his own were so soft, and all too soon, the warm, wet feeling of James’ mouth was just a phantom sensation. Regulus darted out his tongue to lick his lips, and they tasted the strawberries James had had with his lunch.

James’ eyes traced the movement with confusion sculpted into his features—his eyes drawn together, mouth slightly open before he bit his bottom lip, tugging at it in thought. Whatever battle James was fighting in his head must have reached a conclusion because the boy leaned in again. This kiss lasted longer, lips and eyes still closed as the pair savored the unfamiliar

feeling. Regulus' heart raced, and he could feel a tightness just below his naval. James' hands smoothed over the linen and reached up to cup Regulus' face. The elder boy instinctively rolled his hips once, and as Regulus gasped, James took the opportunity to bite his lower lip. It was just a nip—the tiniest pressure of teeth against his plush lip, but—*o h*, it felt fucking heavenly. As James pulled on that lip, Regulus carded both hands through the boy's impossibly messy hair, and he pulled him closer.

Tongues waltzed together to the sound of their moans as they kept kissing, longer, harsher. The click of the door being closed wasn't heard by either boy as they continued seeking pleasure in each other's mouths—in each other's hips. James controlled the movements of his hips, oscillating them into Regulus'.

Unexpectedly and unskillfully, hips started taking a life of their own as he rocked into James, and he swallowed the vibrations of James' groan travel through him and settled in his cock, which he thrusts up against James' to help relieve his swelling ache.

Regulus was—limited—in his sexual experience. He had only ever had a few kisses from Barty, and those were always given on a dare. He'd never had the desire to touch himself, but he found himself wet and sticky on occasional mornings when he had woken up from a dream he couldn't remember—only the faded image of the black wavy hair of the mystery dream lover remained on the lids of his eyes.

“Fuck, Sirius—mmmmffh—you smell so fucking good—you ahh—you *feel* so fucking good.” The mention of his brother's name, for some reason, spurred him on, and a pathetic sound—akin to a mewling kitten—escaped him.

“James—I—James—please.”

He didn't know what he was begging for, but he *beg* he did, and James got that confused look again in his eye as he thrust up against Regulus and slowed. His eyes began to leak down the side of Regulus' face, and he'd lost the ability to mutter anything but *James* and *please*. James' thrusts stopped completely when he saw the tears dripping down Regulus' cheeks. He put both hands on either side of Regulus' head and brushed away the salty wetness from his face, “Hey, Pads, look at me.” James whispered with a softness that pulled at Regulus' heartstrings, but he shook his head. “*Sirius*,” the broken whisper forced Regulus to open his eyes, and he was met with deep blue concern. “We don't—we don't have to do—this—anything—you don't want to—”

Regulus clutched onto James' shirt and pulled him forward. Their noses brushed, and their mouths hung open as their lips ghosted each other. Regulus didn't trust his words—couldn't make himself sound like his brother when all his blood was trapped in his cock—so he thrust up once, twice, thrice, until James got the hint that Regulus very much *wanted* this.

James groaned, and the pair looked down at their clothed groins rubbing up against each other. The friction of the clothing burned against Regulus' sensitive cock, but he didn't dare complain when the feel of James' hardened length felt so *good*. Their eyes drifted back up toward each other, and a drop of sweat fell into Regulus' open mouth, and he tried to stifle the moan bubbling up from his core. With low-lidded eyes, Regulus watched as James' face contorted from concentration to a relieving pleasure as he reached his climax. The sights and

sounds and feel of pleasure as wetness seeped through James' and Regulus' trousers sent Regulus over the edge, and he came with a stuttered cry. James gave Regulus a hazy look and a dopey grin that drew a laugh out of the younger boy.

Regulus could see the transformation in the way James' eyes softened, the way his lips parted, the way his face erased all lines, and he became uncomfortable under the gaze of the boy.

“What?” Regulus huffed out a laugh.

James shook his head, and with it, the tangled, messy hair swept back and forth, “Nothing—you're just—I never no—I never noticed how beautiful you are.”

Regulus gasped softly. He had never been called beautiful before. *Regal?* Yes. *Elegant?* Yes. But never *beautiful*. And then it dawned on him—of course—James wasn't actually seeing *him*. He was seeing *Sirius*. And Regulus let out an honest scoff at the idea that anyone could *not* notice Sirius Black's beauty. Despite the gnawing pain in his heart that the compliment wasn't *actually* directed toward *him*. He found it easy to slip into that role of his brother and play it off, “Honestly, Prongs, maybe you need to get your prescription changed.” He said as he took off the boy's glasses and examined the strength as he held them up to his face, pretending to look through them. James chuckled and collapsed on top of him. The boy fell asleep rather quickly, and Regulus found that he didn't mind the weight of James Potter on top of him as he carded his hands through the hair of the sleeping boy. It helped to quell the cavity in his heart—that gnawing feeling that no one had ever truly loved him and no one ever truly would. But at this moment, with a boy he loathed snuggled up so languidly on top of him, he was willing to pretend even for a moment, and he soaked up the love that rightly belonged to his brother.

If You Don't Know Where You're Going, Any Road Can Take You There

Chapter Summary

Sirius explores the dungeons.

Chapter Notes

Little bird,

I hope you like this chapter. Thank you for all that you do and for being such a wonderful friend.



As Sirius trotted down the stairs, he could feel the atmosphere grow colder—not only the air but the stone faces that passed him, greeting him only with a curt nod. The faces of the Slytherins were expressionless—emotionless—and Sirius couldn't help but wonder how anything or anyone could thrive under such dark, cold conditions. He whispered the password to the unwelcoming portrait and watched as it swung open, revealing a green and black-decorated common room. The only signs of vivacity were beyond the glass window, revealing the Black Lake and the creatures that dwelled there. Drawn to the comfort of liveliness, Sirius walked toward the glass and watched as the aquatic inhabitants danced in the murky water illuminated by bioluminescence; the fish seemed almost like stars floating around in the night sky.

“Black,” a familiar voice called in an unfamiliar tone, and Sirius turned his head while his hands remained firmly placed behind his back. He masked the distaste with practiced ease as he and Regulus had done so often in their youth while they playfully imitated their father. Sirius had grown tired of the game, but Regulus had always found value in not letting others know what he was thinking or feeling, and since he was wearing the face of his brother, he once more found purpose in the game of masks.

“Snape,” Sirius said coolly in an uncharacteristically calm voice.

Severus Snape was the bane of his existence—and the hatred he felt for the boy was entirely mutual. But for some odd reason, Regulus had found some sort of understanding with him, and for as annoying as he found the ponce, he knew the boy was clever—observant. So, he

held his cards close to his chest as Snape glided over to him. He began to speak to him about the properties of a magical ingredient, and as they exchanged theories on the quantities in a particular potion and how it could enhance its effectiveness, Sirius noted two things in his mind. Firstly, this was the longest conversation he had ever had with the greasy-haired git without hexing him, and secondly, while his face remained stoic, Snape's beady onyx eyes seemed to have a wistful animation to them as they exchanged academic speculations. Once the conversation had come to a natural close, Sirius bid Snape farewell and headed toward his dorms, where he had hoped he could take the burdensome mask off for a moment. Unfortunately, his wishes yielded no fruit as he walked in to see an irritated Evan Rosier frowning and a manic Barty Crouch, Jr. smiling victoriously.

As Evan spotted Regulus, Sirius could see the relief wash over the younger boy, and suddenly, Sirius felt the full weight of the elder Rosier twin on his shoulders.

"I swear to god, Regulus, if you don't save me from this torment, I will either kill Barty or myself—" Evan's breath ghosted Sirius' neck, and his body stiffened at the unexpected affection. His brother's dorm mate pulled back to look at him with a curious expression, but it was quickly interrupted by Crouch's sing-song voice.

"I told youuu. You're just mad because you lost the bet."

On the inside, Sirius was caught between a mixture of shock and pride at the idea of Regulus potentially partaking in a bet, especially since he had been so reluctant to take part in Sirius' challenge, but he feigned indifference to Regulus' friends when he asked, "Oh? And which bet was this?"

A familiar misplaced drawl came from the wall behind him, "I just had the pleasure of witnessing your brother making out with his best friend."

Slowly, Sirius turned and looked down to see a face he knew better than his own. Remus Lupin was sitting on the floor with his back against the wall, one leg stretched out and the other bent at the knee. His arm rested on his raised leg, and in his hand was a little cigarette that he had brought to his lips. With wide eyes, he watched as his friend sucked at the filter and breathed in deeply while a smirk played along his lips. Then he parted them and exhaled, letting the white smoke billow and rise into the air.

"Re—Sirius was making out with Potter?" Sirius stammered with a true flash of horror that crossed across his face. He fixed his frame to maintain a nonchalance on the outside, which he definitely did not feel on the inside.

"Yep." Remus confirmed, "Didn't know you had a bet going though, I would have cashed in on that."

"You—" Sirius furrowed, his brows mildly hurt at the level of indifference Remus was displaying at the idea of James and *himself* making out.

"Speaking of cashing out—" Barty interrupted, "Pay up, Black."

Sirius turned back to Crouch to see an open palm waiting for his reward, and Sirius dug through his pockets to pull out a few gold coins and dropped them into Barty's waiting hand.

Evan's face held a secret knitted in his smile as he watched Sirius pay the debt. He cast a look at Remus, who sent him a wink, and suddenly, a wonderfully awful idea walked across his brain and made a home in the front corner.

"Wait a minute, Barty." He called out as his hands clutched his own gold in his pocket, "What if they were just kissing? Friends do that. Perhaps they're just very good friends, you know like Remus and Regulus are."

It was so quick Barty missed it, but Evan Rosier had his eyes firmly fixed on Regulus' face as he hunted for clues to prove his hypothesis, and he found confirmation in the brief look of shock that flashed across Regulus' face like a bolt of lightning in hidden by familiar stormy eyes.

"What do you mean, 'like Remus and Regulus are?'" Crouch asked perplexedly, having not caught on to the game that was being played on the pair.

"You remember that one party we went to where Remus and Regulus made out?" Evan could practically see the fire behind Regulus' eyes, threatening to reveal the identity of the body snatcher, but his body remained stoically still. He had to give it to the elder Black brother; he was doing a marvelous job in his attempts to deceive the three boys. Clearly, he underestimated Evan Rosier's cleverness. Barty was also exceptionally bright and quite brilliant at riddles and secrets, but he was easily distracted by his victory. Honestly, sometimes Evan thought about how the hat got it wrong and how his best friend should have been sorted in Ravenclaw. He'd catch on soon enough when the high of his triumph had dissipated. In the meantime, Evan planned to have enough fun for the pair of them while he taunted the lion in the snake's den.

"I don't remember Regulus and Remus ever making out," Barty contradicted, much to the annoyance of Evan, who wanted his friend to play with him—but social cues were lost on the boy.

"That's probably because you were piss drunk. But I remember. And I know Remus certainly does." Evan sent Remus a coded wink, which, thankfully—the boy returned with a mischievous smile.

"Oh, how could I forget," Remus let out a hearty laugh, "it's not every day you find yourself snogging Regulus Black."

Sirius couldn't tell which made him more offended—the fact that *Remus* had kissed *Regulus* or the idea that *Regulus* had kissed *Remus*. Neither were an option Sirius was willing to unpack at the moment, but he found himself drawn to the beautifully textured boy, and he saddled up next to him and sank to the ground. He thought for a moment as he stared into grainy amber eyes and whispered truthfully, "I'm with Barty. I don't seem to recall ever having kissed you, Remus."

Sirius watched as Remus' hand lifted up to take hold of a stray curl and twirl it around his finger. He leaned in, and with whiskey eyes and a soft, rumbling voice, he asked, "Would you like a reminder, Starlight?"

The pet name rolled off the werewolf's tongue like he had said it a million times—and maybe he had. After all, it wasn't Sirius' silver eyes he was staring at but Regulus' slate eyes. Sirius Black had witnessed the many faces of Remus Lupin. He'd seen Remus ignoring everything around him and trading his reality for a world of knowledge as he held the pages of a book between his fingers. He had witnessed angry Remus when someone came after any of his close friends or Sirius was a little too pushy during the wrong time of the month. He had seen prankster Remus, who had a devilish look in his eye when he was plotting something ingenious. But he had never seen the Remus who was looking at him now—no. Not him. *Regulus* .

This Remus had low-lidded eyes, a soft, knowing smirk, and an almost vulnerable openness that made Sirius jealous. Why did Regulus get to see this side of Remus? Why did he never look at Sirius that way? Of course, he knew the answer before he even thought of the questions. Regulus was *different* . He was *special* . Sirius could hardly blame Remus for admiring the graceful beauty before him or for forming a bond over novels or academics. Sirius, himself, never had the patience to sit—stay still long enough to focus on the words on a page. He was always more of a practical learner. He thrived on trial and error rather than studying techniques and *then* applying them.

So no—he couldn't blame Remus for his obvious attraction to Regulus and maybe it was wrong to lead Remus on by accepting the proposal on Regulus' behalf but he couldn't help but think this might be the only chance he got to feel what it would be like to kiss Remus Lupin, so with an uncharacteristically tentativeness, Sirius leaned forward and pressed his lips against the smirking devil he called *friend* .

Remus Lupin's eyes widened in shock as he felt Sirius' soft, plump lips against his own. He had often wondered what it would be like to kiss Sirius Black. He imagined fireworks, electricity, and a fiery passion. But what he got instead was a dull warmth. A kind of cozy feeling that settled in his bones and slowly thawed over his cold skin. The same kind of comfort he had found in his friend on long, painful days after a full moon when Sirius would climb into his hospital bed, wrap his arms around him, and lay his ear against Remus' beating heart. He began to feel Sirius pull away from the tender, closed-lipped kiss, but he wasn't ready to let go yet. So, Remus took his hand wrapped in Sirius' charmed curls and nestled his palm against Sirius' cheek, using his fingertips wrapped around the back of the boy's neck to drive him in closer. Surprised, Sirius opened his mouth, letting out a gasp, and Remus took the opportunity to deepen his kiss and scrape his rough, smokey tongue against Sirius'. The werewolf could practically feel all pretense melt away as Sirius moved from his spot on the wall to straddle Remus' legs while he kept his lips locked languidly against the boy on the floor.

“Oh, I definitely would have remembered that.” Crouch said, busting through their lustful haze. “How come you never kiss *me* like that, Reggie?”

Remus could feel the huff of warm air as Sirius laughed. To the werewolf’s dismay, Sirius climbed off of him and stood up. He stood looking down on Remus with an unreadable expression.

It was eerie looking up at Sirius and seeing Regulus’ face. Just as it was *unsettling* watching James kiss Regulus as he wore the mask of his brother. Rather than the expected cold, green pit leaving an emptiness in his heart as he watched the two boys explore each other, he felt a warm, red fullness tugging at his abdomen. He had stayed for far too long watching James test the boundaries of his friendship with not-Sirius.

He could have said something—probably should have—but it was clear that the brothers were up to something, and curiosity got the better of Remus, so he stayed silent as he walked down to the dungeons to investigate. Watching Sirius enter the room wearing Regulus’ face made their plot clear. They had made some sort of arrangement to swap lives for a day, knowing Sirius it was some kind of prank, but Remus wasn’t ready to show his hand yet. And Evan had given him the opportunity to indulge in a delight Remus knew he would otherwise never have the chance to experience. Selfishly, he took it.

Remus lifted his fingers to his lips as he stared at Regulus’ face, still sporting that quizzical brow as if he were solving a great mystery. The werewolf’s gaze flicked to Evan, who was sporting a shit-eating grin as he leaned against the bedpost with his arms crossed.

“It’s getting late.” Remus said as he stood and tested Sirius’ resolve to maintain the masquerade as he said, “Surely, your brother and James are done with their— *activities* .”

Sirius’ fists clenched at his side but other than that his expression remained stoic. He leaned in and pressed one last soft kiss against Sirius’ lips and whispered as he felt the boy he had spent the better half of his childhood pining for melt against him, “Goodnight, Starlight.”

He turned to leave and heard Barty complain about the absence of *his* good night kiss, followed by Evan threatening to have his fist kiss Barty’s face if he didn’t shut up.

When he reached his own dorm, he saw Peter practically dead to the world as he slept face down on the bed in the far corner. Remus continued his trek to his own bed, flopped dramatically onto his back, and gazed at the ceiling, which Sirius and James had decorated with constellations of the night sky. His eyes naturally drifted to a white blob of paint—larger than all the others, before they drifted toward a lion. The reminder of the little prince in the room with him caused him to glance at James’ bed, where he found Sirius’s eyes staring back at him. James had draped himself over Regulus the way he had so many nights before. A tanned, toned arm wrapped securely around the younger boy, and though visually it was no different than any other night—Remus knew better. Regulus would never let James hold him like that, but here he was, curled up against the bane of his existence and either put on a great show of not being bothered by it or actually allowing himself comfort from the other boy.

With a smirk that elicited a look of puzzlement from the smaller boy, Remus sent him a wink and whispered, “Good night, *Sirius* .”

Regulus' brows furrowed and a frown fell across his face, but Remus just smiled, turned back to the stars above him and fell asleep with the phantom kiss of the *real* Sirius Black lingering on his lips.

Never Let Anyone Drive You Crazy; It's Nearby Anyway And The Walk Is Good For You

Chapter Notes

To my dearest little bird: I hope you enjoy this chapter half as much as I enjoyed writing it for you. ❤️

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The first thing Regulus noticed when he woke was the cocoon of warmth radiating around him. Safety was a luxury he wasn't familiar with, so the feeling startled him. He opened his eyes to see the bright red curtains of the bed across from him; then, immediately closed them again to spare himself from the gauche colors. The night came back to him in a slow montage of moving images flashing behind his eyelids. Soft kisses, unskilled thrusts, and sweet words meant for someone else pulsed before him, but still, he found himself sinking into the rising sun as it wrapped itself around him with offerings of fellowship and peace—neither of which were something Regulus was prepared for from the boy who gave so freely. He had to remind himself that these gifts were *not meant for him*. They were meant for *Sirius*. But Regulus was greedy and deprived, and he wanted so desperately to taste a bit of the life Sirius had built for himself, so he buried the guilt in his empty stomach and buried his body further into the rising sun behind him.

The boy pressed so tightly against him, coiled his arm, and pulled him in, further smelling his neck as he whispered against his flesh in a husky, sleep-ridden voice, “Morning Pads.”

Regulus grunted and felt the reverberating chuckles against his back and neck as James' warm breath sank into his skin, infecting him with false feelings of safety and belonging, “How about we skip today?”

“We can't,” Regulus mourned. He had a test later in potions and didn't trust Sirius to keep up with his impeccable record. He also needed to see his brother and bring himself out of the rabbit hole he had fallen into. Regulus felt James shift and slot himself on top of the younger boy between his legs. A deep breath left him as he felt James' morning glory proudly jutting against his hip.

He looked up to see curious, skeptical eyes as James asked, “Who are you, and what have you done with Sirius Black?”

Regulus's eyes widened, and he tried to think of a clever lie to appease James's doubt, “I have to go meet Regulus this afternoon. If I don't come—”

Regulus tapered off. He knew if Sirius had intentionally skipped their rendezvous, he would feel the all-too-familiar sense of abandonment creep in. He had told his brother to leave their

home because he knew it was what was best for him. But the truth is, Sirius had left their home the minute he was sorted into Gryffindor. The moment Regulus proved to be the embodiment of a *good* Black when the hat had cursed him with his ill-fated destiny.

He began choking on the words lodged in his tightened throat, and James took mercy on him as he smiled sadly—knowingly and brushed their noses together before he leaned in and whispered against his lips, “I was only teasing, Padfoot.”

James closed the gap between them and graced Regulus with resplendent luminescence, and he graced him with a closed-mouthed kiss.

“What the fuck is this?” A squealing voice pierced through the air, shattering the rose-tinted moment. Suddenly, the warm, cozy feeling that had settled in Regulus’ bones blazed and rushed to his cheeks. James flopped dramatically onto his back, allowing Regulus to see a baffled Peter and a smug-looking Remus. There was something about the way his friend held himself, which was reminiscent of the gaze he pierced him with the night before. He would have to be extra careful to keep up the charade with Remus.

“When—what—how—whe—whyyy,” Peter sputtered and moaned.

Remus smirked and offered a reprieve from the questioning, for which Regulus was eternally grateful as he said, “Come on, lads. We’ll be late for breakfast.”

The four got dressed in an awkward silence. Regulus avoided Peter’s puzzled stare as he put on a fresh set of clothes and the vulgar scarlet and gold tie. He silently reinforced the charms as he looked at himself in the mirror and saw the freckles that clung to his face like confetti peek through the magical mask. He watched his eyes reignite that starlit shine his brother was blessed with, and his hair, which had begun to curl ever so slightly, fell back in the natural waves his brother carried. As he gazed at the reflection of the looking glass, he was met with the all too familiar envious feeling in his gut. His brother was naturally and effortlessly beautiful. Regulus always felt he had to work hard to tame his wild curls; his matte gray eyes had always left something to be desired, in his opinion, and the freckles on his face gave him a boyish look, unlike the smooth, flawless flesh that he spent too long observing. It was no wonder James was attracted to him, and as his stomach grumbled with envy and emptiness, he placed those untouched thoughts and feelings into little boxes and wrapped them neatly with brown paper, tying them up tightly with twine.

The four strolled down the stairs and toward the Great Hall. James happily rambled about quidditch practice and a new maneuver he was excited to try while Peter occasionally flicked his gaze between the pair of them. Remus was silent, but his smirk was telling as Regulus caught his eye on occasion. Finally, they reached the Hall and took their seats. James sat beside Regulus, facing the Slytherin table, while Peter and Remus sat opposite them. A burning sensation irritated his cheeks, and he looked up to see himself sitting across the Hall at the Slytherin tables.

Cold gray eyes narrowed as they watched James wrap his arm around Regulus and twin threads intertwined around his heart. The green thread of jealousy from the disconcerted look on his own face was braided with the red thread of satisfaction in irritating his brother, creating a conflicting wreath on his overworked organ. Tugging at the red cord, he leaned

into James' touch and wrapped his arm around the boy's waist as he let his head rest on the boy's shoulder. The taunting act earned him a hardened glare, and gratification at his own menacing stare piercing him swelled within his warm body. He sent himself a provoking wink and watched from across the Hall as his own face burned and turned back to Barty. When he was sure Sirius was no longer looking at him, he grabbed a cup and began to reach for the tea kettle out of habit, but he stopped when a full mug of black sludge was thrust toward him by Remus' hand.

"Here you go, Padfoot," he smirked, "just how you like it."

Regulus looked down at the offending liquid and back up to Remus' mirthful eyes, which twinkled with the hypothesis. Regulus looked back down at the cup of black coffee and silently cursed his brother for his wretched taste.

"Thanks, Moony," he gritted out as he lifted the cup to his lips and tasted the acrid bitterness.

He was sure he had no clue how his brother endured the harsh, earthy water, but in the spirit of keeping up appearances, he did his best to pretend like he was enjoying it. A sadistic smile stretched across Remus' face, and he found himself wondering if the boy had guessed at the tricky game the brothers were playing. Surely not. His performance was impeccable.

He stuffed his face with the meats that lined his plate, being sure to use his hands rather than the utensils as Sirius was prone to eat like a savage rather than display a modicum of the decorum beaten into him—rebellious in even the smallest of ways. The grease that coated his fingers made him feel dirty, and he licked them clean, watching the satisfied smirk on Remus' face turn dark and wanting. He was no stranger to how his friend felt about his brother, as he would often lament his lack of prospects regarding the possibility of Sirius ever returning his affections. Hogwash, in Regulus' opinion. If the years of silent observation across the great hall proved anything, it was that Sirius was enamored with the tawny-haired boy, and Regulus quickly packaged the feelings that went along with that knowledge as well, placing them next to the plethora of boxes that seemed to be piling up.

Regulus felt like the cat that caught the canary as he slowly swirled his tongue around each digit. He refused to blink as he stared meaningfully at Remus' eyes, which were trained on Sirius' mouth. Once he was satisfied with the effect of his teasing, he wiped his spit-shined fingers on a napkin he had gathered from the table and rose from his seat.

"Come on, Moony. We wouldn't want to be late for Herbology," he teased with a smirk.

Remus fixed him with a deadly stare, and he swore he could hear the boy growl lowly as he rose from his seat and gathered his books. Regulus took another look down at James, who smiled brightly up at him.

He felt his heart tug just a little at the pesky sky-blue eyes that offered sincere warmth as he asked, "Do you want to meet up after you go see Regulus?"

The younger Black brother forced a winning smile and said, "Sure, Prongs."

Then he walked off toward the greenhouses with a muttering Remus trailing beside him.

“So, how was it being Sirius Black for a day?” his brother teased as he leaned languidly against the archway with his arms crossed. It was odd to see himself reflecting Sirius’ natural demeanor. Where the elder Black was naturally lithe and relaxed, the younger Black always carried a forced and practiced elegance, and to see himself look so free was an assault on the image he had of himself—the image he expected others to have of him.

“It was—” several adjectives swarmed through Regulus’ mind, but he settled on a less offensive answer as he was *trying* to rekindle their relationship: “Enlightening.”

The pair walked toward their spot on the grass and stripped themselves of their magical barriers and their borrowed ties. Silence lingered between them for a few minutes while they regained their bearings and settled back into their own skins, unmasked and unbarred.

Regulus felt silver eyes on his face searching for something as he lay on the grass with his lids closed.

“What?” Regulus asked, breaking the quiet arcadia.

“Nothing,” Sirius said quickly as he looked away. Regulus peaked his eyes open to see Sirius sitting down on the clover patch, picking at the buds. He huffed, obviously warring with himself, and finally mumbled, “Do you have anything you want to tell me?”

Rosebuds blossomed on Regulus’ freckled cheeks, and he closed his eyes again, unable to look at his brother as he offered his confessions of the night before.

“Yeah, I guess we should discuss what happened yesterday to keep up appearances for today.

“I went to the tower; Peter read my cards, then I went to the dorm where your annoying friend kissed me and stuff, and then we went to sleep. I woke up; we went to breakfast where I had to drink fucking *black coffee*—honestly, I have no idea how you stomach it—the. I went to Herbology and Charms—I have your notes, by the way, and then I came here.” Regulus sat up and dug through his satchel to retrieve the notes he had mentioned. With a steady hand, he held out the papers to Sirius, who stared at him disbelievingly with narrowed eyes.

“You kissed James.”

Regulus lowered his outstretched hand when he realized Sirius was not going to take the notes.

He fumbled as he said, “I—well—no. He kissed me. Well—actually, he kissed *you*.”

His face was on fire and continued to sear as Sirius’ eyes grew dark and ominous. “Just a quick peck?”

“Um—no,” Regulus admitted and began to squirm in the face of the inquisition, “he um—well, he made out with me and um—stuff.”

“And stuff,” Sirius deadpanned, “what kind of *stuff*?”

Regulus began to feel uncomfortable—like perhaps he had crossed a line. But honestly, Sirius should have warned him about the nature of his relationship with James before they agreed to this bet.

“I don't know—stuff—like we made out and then we—I don't know—rubbed up against each other while we were kissing. You know—whatever you normally do.” Regulus fumbled.

The feral look in Sirius' eyes made his naturally silver eyes almost shine green as he repeated, “What we normally do.”

Regulus cleared his throat, “Yeah—you know you really should have told me what you get up to with him. I was blindsided, and it was hard to keep up appearances, but I wasn't going to tap out because you failed to mention the sordid activities you get up to with your *friend*.”

Sirius let out a low growl, not unlike the noise Remus made at breakfast, as he said, “I have *never* made out with James Potter, and I have certainly never *frotted* against him.”

Regulus' eyes narrowed and then widened in realization as he sputtered, “But—but—he made—it seemed—I—”

Regulus stumbled, and he was sure his face was as red as the forbidden apple he had tasted the night before. The *experience* he had with James last night seemed so natural and unworried--like they had done it a thousand times before.

The misplaced green in Sirius' eyes flashed red with mischief as he watched Regulus flounder, and a bestial smile flashed across his brother's lips.

“You know—I didn't know you had it in you—but you're a little *slut*,” *Sirius* taunted.

If Regulus thought his face couldn't flush any more than it had, he was undoubtedly wrong. Annoyance struck him as Sirius fixed him with an indiscernible look. If Regulus had to guess, it was a mixture concocted of humor, underlying jealousy, possibly a dash of pride, and something else Regulus couldn't quite put his finger on. He felt as if he was being cornered—caged by a hungry dog ready to gnash its teeth into Regulus' proud facade by debasing him by way of degradation.

“I'm not a *slut*,” Regulus whispered the defamatory term, “I was pretending to be *you*. I would never, in a thousand years, have done *that* with *him* if I were myself.”

Sirius hummed, and though his teasing smile remained, his eyes narrowed darkly with accusation as he said, “But you'll make out with Remus at parties.”

Confusion riddled Regulus as he struggled to grasp what Sirius was talking about. “What?”

“Imagine my surprise when I walk into the dungeons and hear all about how my baby brother made out with my best friend.”

“I—*what?* Start at the beginning.” Regulus demanded, eager to know where the fabrication came from. Sirius recounted his experience from when he left Regulus after trading places. He stored the lack of typical disdain when speaking about his conversation with Severus for later and focused on what happened in the dorm room. The younger Black flushed as he heard about the bet and how Remus was the one to tell Sirius of his *activities* with James. He had completely forgotten that the boy was in the room when the sordid mess started.

His brows drew together when Sirius recanted the conversation of the bet and widened when he continued, “And then Rosier said, ‘Perhaps they’re just *very good friends* like Regulus and Remus are’—which, for the record, we’re not *very good friends* like you two.”

“What do you mean *very good friends* like Remus and me?”

“That’s what I wanted to know—” Sirius answered hotly and continued, “and then Rosier started talking to Crouch about the party where you two made out.”

“Me and Barty? What has that got to do with Rem—”

“Not you and *Crouch*,” Sirius rolled his eyes exasperatedly, “You and *Remus*.”

A calmness washed over Regulus as he looked at his brother, who was raging with jealousy. He couldn’t help but take pity on the older boy. Sirius had been pining for Remus for *years* and must have been furious to learn of the secret, *non-existent* affair between his brother and the boy he was crushing after.

His brother was breathing heavily, and his entire demeanor radiated the energy of a bomb ready for ignition. Regulus leaned forward and placed both hands on either side of Sirius’ face, forcing his brother to look into his eyes as he corrected the falsity: “Sirius, I have never kissed Remus Lupin.”

“Bullshit—”

Sirius tried to tear away Regulus’ hands, but the younger Black tightened his hold on his brother’s face as he repeated firmly, “I have *never* kissed Remus Lupin.”

Sirius searched his eyes, obviously looking for the lie, but none was to be found, and confusion quickly replaced the fury.

“I’ve only ever kissed Barty,” Regulus said, immediately correcting himself as he sheepishly added, “Well, James, too.”

“But Rosier said—” Sirius recalled as Regulus dropped his hands, “and Remus even *confirmed*.”

Regulus was drawn out of his hazy thoughts at that, and a broad smile stretched across his face as he looked back up at his brother, “*Remus* said we kissed?”

Sirius pouted at Regulus’ smile and spat, “He said, ‘Oh, how could I forget. It’s not every day you find yourself snogging Regulus Black.’”

The Cheshire smile grew impossibly large, and Regulus leaned in close to whisper to his brother, “Hey, Siri?”

“What?” Sirius snapped at the smug demeanor Regulus was exhibiting.

“You lost the bet.”

Chapter End Notes

Don't worry. The fun is just beginning.

Every Adventure Requires A First Step

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Sirius watched Regulus' smug smile grow wide, and his brother's breath ghosted against his lips as he whispered, "*You lost the bet.*"

The smell of hearty earth filled the air around him, and Sirius found himself lost in the beauty of an unchained Regulus. Gone were the shackles of Black expectations; gone was the sense of decorum his brother maintained even when he thought no one was looking. He looked younger than he ever had, with beautiful lines of merriment adorning his face, and Sirius couldn't help but observe the wonder speckled in the younger boy's eyes as Regulus chartered the forgotten world of childish whims and games.

A joyous laugh echoed against the trees that lined the lawn, breaking Sirius out of his reverie, "I—what?"

"You lost!" Regulus laughed.

"What—no." Sirius denied as he tried to break himself from admiring his brother to salvage the pieces of the picture he couldn't seem to see.

"How did I lose?" Sirius asked.

"I'm not sure, but they pegged you." Regulus giggled.

"Trust me, if anyone had pegged me, I would have felt it."

His brother's giggles abruptly stopped, and he gave Sirius an unamused look, which made the older boy smile.

"Alright, start back at the beginning," Regulus demanded, and he listened to Sirius with a determined look on his face.

"I walked in." Sirius said, "Rosier was being dramatic. Crouch was going on about some bet he had won about James and me—which, by the way, is absurd."

Sirius had never once thought of James in a *romantic* way. They had a strictly platonic relationship. Sure, they kissed a couple of times, but friends did that—even Regulus admitted to kissing Crouch, and as far as he knew, there was no relationship there as Crouch was head over heels for Rosier. And sure—he wasn't *blind*; he knew James was fit. He couldn't help if his eyes lingered a little too long in the locker room after quidditch practice, but anyone with working eyes would want to admire someone so—

"Focus, Sirius!" Regulus snapped and derailed his train of thought.

“Right, so Crouch won some bet; Remus had the *audacity* to say he would have bet along with you all if he had known about it, then Crouch told me to pay up. I went to hand him his money and then Evan—”

“Hold on a minute,” Regulus paused him, and he huffed at the interruption, “You paid him.”

“Yeah—well, I was going to, and then Evan interrupted me and started spouting nonsense about you and Remus.” Sirius paused when he watched his brother’s victorious face beam brightly. “What?”

“You went to *pay* him.”

“Yeahhhh,” Sirius drew out slowly, as if he were speaking to someone much younger than himself rather than his brother, who was less than a year apart from him in age.

“*Immediately.*” Regulus added, and Sirius confirmed with a slow nod, unsure where this was going, “Sirius—when have I *ever* given into anything so *easily*, especially if it means admitting I was wrong?”

“I—” Sirius struggled to think of a time when he had *ever* admitted to being wrong about anything and came up short. Everything had always been a challenge when it came to Regulus; it was part of why Sirius loved him. As he realized his error, the blood drained from his face. *He lost the bet*. He circled back to the night, thought back on his misstep, and found one piece missing from the puzzle.

“What about Remus?”

“What *about* Remus?” Regulus asked, steel eyes melting into mercury as they shimmered with triumph.

“Remus just went along with what Evan was saying—he wouldn’t have done that unless he had some hint as to what was happening.” Sirius countered.

A thoughtful look crossed his brother’s face as he said, “Well, he watched you try to give the money to Barty; he probably caught on that something was awry.”

“Remus Lupin is not a gambling man. He would have to know with absolute certainty that he was right in his thinking before he went along with any prank.”

Sirius racked his brain for hints from the night before and thought about the calm nature of his friend and how uncharacteristically serene he was at the idea of James and Sirius hooking up. Not that he imagined Remus would be jealous, but there should have been some reaction to his *platonic best friends* engaging in anything remotely sexual. But there he was, on the ground, leaning against the wall, taking a drag as if it were the most natural thing in the world, and suddenly, he realized, “Remus knew before he came to the dungeons.”

“What?” Regulus asked with a blank expression.

“Yeah—” Sirius continued as he stood up and started pacing, “there is no way he would have walked out of our dorm and down to the dungeons after having seen James and I make out

and— *stuff* —” Sirius couldn’t bring himself to say the words as an unsettling feeling filled his abdomen at the thought of him and *James* —“and not be bothered in some way.”

“So, you’re saying you think *I* lost the bet?” Regulus scoffed.

Sirius shook his head as he continued pacing on the grass. He rolled his wrist as he waved his hand, “Run your night back by me.”

Regulus let out a long sigh but conceded as he continued to sit on the grass, “I walked into the tower. James was on the couch, Peter was on the floor at the table, and Remus was reading a book in the chair. I sat down next to James and Peter read my cards. I went back to the dorm and laid down on your bed. James came in afterward with Remus. James laid down on the bed next to me, and Remus sat on his bed; James started teasing me—you—about our *dates*, as he called them. Then I hit him with a pillow, then he caught my wrists and,” Sirius stopped moving as Regulus took a gulp and continued, “he pinned me down, he gave me—you—us—some really good advice, and then the tosser ruined it with tickling me.”

Sirius stood stock-still as he watched Regulus’ face while the boy recalled the memory. His eyes were not riddled with malice as they usually were whenever his brother referred to his best friend, but something warmer—something lighter. He loved it—he hated it. “Then he asked for a kiss—which made me think you do this sort of thing all the time, so I—” Regulus sighed reluctantly—yet *wistfully*— ‘I let him kiss me. It was—nice. Soft, warm, a small thing, really, but then when it was over, he did it again. And then he rolled his hips—and” Regulus whispered a barely audible curse, but Sirius heard it—the image in his head was wrong. He imagined James rutting against Regulus and felt a jealous fire burning in his chest like indigestion, and then it sank deeper and deeper past his stomach and into his lower abdomen. Then, he realized the falseness of the image he was envisioning. It wasn’t *Regulus* James was writhing against; it was *him*, and suddenly, the fire traveled into uncharted territory, and the picture Regulus painted was far too much for him to handle.

“Yeah—let’s skip that bit, shall we?” Sirius croaked out, and that beautiful pink splattered across Regulus’ face, highlighting the sun kissed sprinkles along his brother’s cheeks, which surprisingly did nothing for his current predicament. He turned away and began to pace awkwardly, searching for the hint he knew was there. Sirius stopped and looked toward the sky to see expansive blue and, in the distance, an almost full moon shining brightly down on him in the mid-day. Realization dawned on him, and he could have punched himself for being so carelessly stupid. The full was three days away. “Remus was on the bed?”

“*His* bed,” Regulus corrected. But the semantics were unnecessary, as he realized it would have been close enough for Remus to smell his brother’s vanilla scent rather than his own cedar wood.

Sirius turned with a smile and watched his brother’s face wilt as Regulus gritted out, “What?”

“He knew it was you.” Sirius bounced on the balls of his feet.

“He couldn’t possibly have known it was me. My performance was *flawless*.” Regulus rebutted.

“Oh, I have no doubt, mon petite frère, but you smell of vanilla, and I would wager Remus could smell it on you,” he said as he plopped himself down on the grass across from Regulus.

“He was on *his* bed, more than five feet away from me at all times—how could he have *smelled it on me*?” Regulus countered.

“Because he—” Sirius faltered. As much as he wanted to explain how he had won—and even though he trusted his brother—he couldn’t betray Remus’ trust. It was not his secret to tell, so he bent the truth ever so slightly: “Remus has an excellent sense of smell. Honestly, he’s practically part bloodhound.”

Regulus fixed him with a skeptical stare as he leaned in and mocked his brother’s earlier movements by whispering, “You lost the bet.”

Not one to give up easily, Regulus huffed as he stood, “Fine, we’ll go ask Remus and Evan which of us lost.”

Regulus began to walk away, and suddenly, winning didn’t feel that great anymore. Sirius had expected the pair to last longer but forgot a crucial detail that ruined his plans.

“Wait,” Sirius leapt up after his brother, “Wait. Neither of them has directly said they *know*.” Sirius reasoned.

Regulus paused and turned back to Sirius, which was enough for him to continue, “So, until we are confirmed to have been caught—we keep going.”

“We know they already *know*, Siri,” Regulus pointed out.

“Yes—but—” Sirius began with a mischievous smile, “they don’t *know* we know that they know.”

Regulus scoffed, and Sirius added, “Double or nothing, we keep going—yeah? But we fuck with them. We make them think we have no clue that we’re on to them, and we let chaos reign until someone *admits* that they know.”

“And what happens when we learn the truth about who *actually* lost?” Regulus asked curiously.

“Okay—new rules,” Sirius began, “Regardless of who lost first, the real winner is the one to get Remus or Evan to confess they know,” Sirius proposed, “they’re both stubborn bastards, so it’ll be a bit more of a challenge than the previous bet.”

“And how do you propose we provoke it out of them?”

“Now, why would I tell you my plans?” Sirius smirked, knowing full well he was flying by the seat of his pants and desperate for Regulus to agree if only to keep playing the game.

“What about James and Barty?” Regulus asked.

“James and Crouch wouldn’t be able to hold it in. They’ll admit it as soon as they find out,” Sirius provided.

The older boy watched as his brother nodded in agreement. He could see the wheels turning in Regulus’ curly-haired head, trying to find flaws in the new deal. Then, finally, he looked up with a soft smile, “All right—stakes are the same but with an addition.”

“I’m all ears,” Sirius spread his arms wide to match his grin as his brother continued.

“Shortly before the loser drinks the Veritiserum, he has to put on a girl’s school uniform, and he can’t take it off until the potion wears off.”

Sirius smirked at his brother as he folded his arms and smirked, “Jokes on you—I look fabulous in a skirt.”

Blush rose to Regulus’ face as Sirius sent him a wink, but his brother smiled behind the flush and said, “So you’re confident you’re going to lose?”

“No—” Sirius scoffed and added flirtatiously as he traced his brother’s body with his eyes, “but if *I* look good in a skirt, then I have no doubt you would too.”

Almost immediately, he regretted the taunt as the image of Regulus in a short skirt with his creamy thighs bare for him to see plagued his mind and sent a warm shock down his spine.

“We still have fifteen minutes; what do you want to do?” Regulus asked.

Dopily, Sirius’ mouth worked faster than his brain, and he heard himself say in a breathy voice, “Kiss you.”

Both boys sobered instantly with mirrored shock on their faces. The silence that followed was deafening, and Sirius tried his best to recover as he scratched the back of his head, “Well, I kind of have to.”

Regulus narrowed his eyes as his brother floundered. “Why on earth would you have to kiss me?”

“Well—” Sirius stuttered, “you kissed Prongs.”

“I’m failing to connect the dots here.” Regulus deadpanned.

“And I kissed Remus—“

“You *what* ?” His brother’s eyes widened in disbelief.

“I—yeah—did I not—did I not mention that?” Sirius stammered.

“No, Sirius, you left that bit out.” Regulus chided, “Why did you kiss Remus?”

“Well, he—they convinced me you had done it before, and then I tried to play it off like I didn’t remember because I—you were drunk. Then he asked me—you—if I wanted a

reminder, and I—I just thought it was something you two did.”

Sirius stumbled over his words, and he watched as Regulus’ stony face burst into laughter.

“My *God*, we’re terrible at this,” Regulus admitted between his hearty laughs, and Sirius chuckled awkwardly.

“So, how was it?” Regulus asked when he had caught his breath.

“It wasn’t what I expected—“ Sirius admitted, “better than I expected, actually.”

Dread filled him instantly at the confession, and he looked up to see a soft, knowing smile across Regulus’ face.

“I—I mean—not that I thought about kissing Remus—just—” Sirius backtracked and was saved by Regulus’ blunt remark.

“The way you two pine over each other is almost as sickening to watch as Evan and Barty. I’m happy for you.” There was the slightest edge to his voice that cut like paper. Not enough to draw blood—but enough to feel—to hear, and Sirius couldn’t decipher its meaning.

“Well, it’s not as if he was kissing *me*. He was kissing *you*,” Sirius admitted, recalling the pet name Remus had used.

“At this point—I think we can both concede Remus knew who he was kissing.”

“I—no—cause he called me—you—Starlight.” Everything seemed so turned around and upside down Sirius was struggling to keep up.

“Remus has never called me Starlight, Siri. That kiss? That was all for you.” The words dripped like honey from his brother’s tongue—sweet and thick—but stung against the minuscule wounds caused by that irritating edge.

“You have yet to explain why either kiss would warrant *us* kissing.” Regulus reminded him.

“Well—“ Sirius reasoned, “I’m going to try to let James down easy—but he’s a bit of a persistent tosser—so if he kisses me—I need to know how to kiss him back to give a proper performance. And you would need to know how to kiss,” Sirius gulped, “you would need to know how to kiss Remus back if he tried to kiss you.”

Regulus’ brows drew together as he chewed on his lower lip. The thought of kissing James was not as unpleasant as he had previously thought, but still uncomfortable. But the idea of Remus kissing Regulus—or Regulus kissing Remus? Well, he honestly didn’t know which was worse. His thoughts must have shown on his face as Regulus gently placed a hand on his shoulder and said, “We don’t have to do this—pretend—we can call the bet off, and you can just go and be with Remus. I think you’re aware now that he has feelings for you.”

Sirius nodded and warred with himself as he thought about the potential of just admitting everything and asking Remus to be his boyfriend. But that would mean losing out on the game he was playing with Regulus—and the *whole point* of this bet was to get closer to his

brother. So, he straightened up and declined with a smirk, “You’re just scared you’re going to lose.”

His brother rolled his eyes and withdrew his hand as he scoffed, “All right then.”

Sirius idly noted that pink suited Regulus, who blushed profusely and leaned forward, planting a chaste kiss against Sirius' unsuspecting lips. It was so brief that he didn't even have a moment to react or truly feel anything but shock.

Regulus leaned back and searched Sirius' face. A slight crease just above Regulus' pinched brow and a frown marred his beautiful face.

Sirius barked out a laugh and teased, “That’s how you kiss? That’s not a kiss. That was a *peck* .”

“Well—what do you expect? We’re brothers, Siri. I’m hardly going to kiss you like a lover.” The cut was much deeper than the tiny abrasion of his previous words. But Sirius pushed past it as he stepped forward, placing one hand on his brother’s hip and the other curled into the hair at the nape of Regulus’ neck.

“Brothers, we may be—but we won’t be kissing James and Remus like brothers,” Sirius leaned in and whispered against Regulus’ lips. The younger boy gasped softly as Sirius tightened his hold on his brother’s hair ever so slightly and continued, “And if we’re going to convince them, we’d better do it properly, yeah?”

Sirius looked down at Regulus’ plump pink lips and patiently waited for a sign of permission. It came in the form of a breathy *yeah*, and Sirius wasted no time closing the gap.

His brother’s lips were warm and wet, and Regulus moved them with a virginal timidity against his own. Soft, pliant, plush skin caressed him lightly, shyly, unhurriedly. It was as if they had all the time in the world to let their lips explore one another. Sirius felt that warm sensation that had been teasing him throughout their *date* (as James called it) reignite and settle deep within him. Regulus’ kisses were unskilled, but the longer their lips stayed locked in their closed-mouth kisses, the more Regulus melted into his hold. Desperate to explore more of this wondrous feeling, Sirius gripped Regulus’ lower lip, which was well accustomed to the sensation of teeth, and bit lightly. Regulus hissed, and Sirius soothed the sting with a tender tongue before sucking on the supple flesh. His brother gasped, and he took advantage of the opened mouth to slot his tongue against Regulus, and the little shit had the audacity to *moan* against him. The vibrations sent a shock of pleasure through Sirius that urged him to take more of the willing boy in his arms. Sirius tightened his grip on Regulus’ hair and hip. He was sure to leave bruises there and felt his cock swelling even more than it already was at the thought of purple marks that Remus might find later if his crush decided to explore his brother the way he was. A groan escaped him as he felt his brother’s hardness against his own, and he couldn’t help but try to soothe their twin aches with a bit of friction. Sirius maneuvered their hips to alleviate their conditions. At some point, the brothers had stopped kissing and were content to breathe against each other’s open mouths as they rutted against each other. Melted metal met starlight, and testing the spell they were under, Sirius asked in a breathy voice against Regulus’ open mouth, “Does that feel good?”

Regulus let out a whine behind hazy eyes as he whispered back, “Yeah—I—fuck, Siri—I—”

The pair continued to grind their hips, occasionally offering small kisses, and Sirius lost himself in the high-pitched whines and breathless delights desperate to escape his brother’s body.

A roar of laughter in the distance caused the pair to cease all movement and break apart. Sirius quickly looked at where the noise was coming from and noted the distance before looking back to his brother. It was everything Sirius could do not to come on the spot as he roamed his eyes over the younger boy. Regulus’ chest was heaving, his eyes were wide, and his pupils practically eclipsed his silver irises. His lips were as red as his rosy cheeks, and his clothes were rumpled against his thin frame. Black curls usually tamed to perfection, were tousled, and though the image of his brother in this tantalizing state had Sirius desperate for more, he plucked his wand from his holster and whispered a spell to set everything right again.

He repeated the motion to himself and looked back at his brother. Regulus’ breath had returned to a passing standard, but his eyes stayed as black as his name, threatening to eat him alive with their insatiable hunger.

“Did you get what you needed?” Regulus asked huskily.

Sirius gulped and nodded, “I—yeah, I got what I needed. Did you?”

Regulus let out a shaky breath and whispered, “Yeah.”

Sirius felt James wrap his arm around his shoulder, and he turned to his friend.

“Regulus.”

“Potter,” Regulus tried to match his normal disdain, but Sirius could hear the lack in his voice. With insecurity in his eyes, Regulus gathered himself and set to walk past the two boys, but Sirius shot out a hand and gripped his brother’s arm, “Hey—are we—are we good?”

The metal in his brother's eyes had cooled, and black holes had shrunken back to their normal state. But a small twitch of Regulus’ lips reassured him, and he saw the younger boy pass a glance at his best friend before he whispered, “Yeah, Siri, we’re good.”

Then, quite unexpectedly, Regulus gave him a small peck on the cheek and walked toward his next class.

“Looks like your *date* went well,” James whispered in his ear.

“Piss off, Prongs,” Sirius said with no real heat as he watched his brother walk away down the corridor.

Chapter End Notes



It Would Be So Nice If Something Made Sense For A Change

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

When the classes had finished for the day, Sirius felt himself being dragged into an alcove near the library. A plethora of ideas as to who his attacker might be raced through his mind, but he hardly suspected his *best friend* to treat him with such brute force. He felt his back hit the hard stone and looked up to see familiar blue eyes shining back at him.

“You’ve been avoiding me,” James said in the way of an explanation for his rough treatment.

“No, I haven’t.” Sirius lied. The truth was he *had* been avoiding James. Sirius didn’t want to have the stiff and awkward talk of letting his best friend down easily. In fact, he shouldn’t even be the one having this conversation, but he hardly expected Regulus to be kind about it, so it fell on his shoulders to do the honorable thing.

“Yes, you have.” James rebutted as he caged Sirius with both hands pressed firmly against the wall.

Shortly after he watched his brother stroll out of view after their *date*, he had made an excuse for why he couldn’t hang out with James as *apparently* previously planned. Then he decided to skip all the classes he shared with James that afternoon and only went to his final class, History of Magic, where he daydreamed about curly locks and stormy eyes. But it seemed the unavoidable was—well, *unavoidable*, and it was time to let James down easy. Sirius was confident it wouldn’t ruin their friendship. After all, it was just a kiss—*and stuff*—and he chalked James’ advances up to hormones and his dry spell due to his ever-growing infatuation with Lily Evans.

“Listen, Prongs,” Sirius began placing one hand on each of James’ hips in an effort to put some distance between them, but to his utter surprise, James took the touch as a come-on, and James leaned in, slotting his thigh between Sirius’. Words died on the elder Black’s tongue as he felt James nuzzle at his neck.

He felt the cold frames of his best friend’s glasses against his ear and James’ hot breath on his neck as he whispered suggestively, “I’m listening, *Sirius*.”

Fuck. Sirius had never heard James’ voice sound so *sultry*. The way his name rolled off of his best friend’s tongue in a seductive, yet calming wave made his mind blank, and all he could hear was the static noise of water lifting and sinking to the pattern of the blood that rushed away from his heart and toward his ears and his cock.

James wrapped his hand around the gold and scarlet tie that hung loosely from his neck and tugged lightly. Gravity was Sirius’ enemy as it pulled him closer to the sun-kissed boy. He felt the dull burn against his flesh as James pressed his lips against his neck, and every word that ever existed in the English language abandoned Sirius’ hazy mind. He tried to formulate

a sentence—a word—but all that came out was a breathy sigh, and his traitorous body arched, forcing his hips to roll like the waves trapped in his head.

“I—” Sirius managed but failed to add anything further as he felt warm hands slide down his chest and around to lay flat against his back, pulling him in closer.

“You?” James teased—the bastard. Of course, Prongs would take advantage of his delirium to take the piss out of him. A sharp metal frame lightly grazed against his cheek as he moved his lips higher and higher toward Sirius’ mouth. When James reached his destination, he didn’t close the infinitesimal distance between them but hovered and smirked.

“You had something you wanted to say, Padfoot?”

He knew he shouldn’t indulge in this debauched dance James was leading. Prolonging the inevitable he had already avoided for too long would do more harm than good, and there were other things—other people he had to consider. He had finally gotten to a place with Remus, even though it was shrouded with confusion and mendaciousness, where he felt once the curtain had been pulled back after his little prank that they could be *something* to each other. And then—there was Regulus to consider. Though as he thought of his brother, his pants tightened even more around his aching cock. But James—Prongs— *his best mate* , was looking down at him with bright blue eyes. Sirius’ gaze traveled lower and landed upon lush, wet lips that sang a sirenic melody. *Drink me* , they beckoned, and Sirius found himself reasoning, *surely, a taste wouldn’t do any harm* .

Sirius closed the gap with a tentativeness that was uncharacteristic for him. At first, he did his best to mimic Regulus’ unsure, inexperienced movements, but as James deepened the kiss, Sirius realized his fatal mistake. He had forgotten to search those lips for the label marked *poison* and found them positively *addictive* . Soon, all pretense was forgotten, and he felt himself grow smaller and smaller until he was no more than a piece of driftwood in a vast ocean of pleasure.

Sirius let himself be dragged and pulled across the waves, not minding where they were taking him. His body coiled and tightened, and his lungs felt waterlogged as he continued to kiss James Fleamont Potter. Their tongues danced to the tune of maritime cadences, and suddenly, Sirius was deprived of the sensational feeling of his best friend's mouth as James ordered him to “Breathe, Padfoot.”

The air burned his lungs, and he cursed them for their limited capacity. Once they were full again, he went to dive back into the deep waters again, but a head of black curly hair was caught in the corner of his eye.

Next to a stone-faced Regulus was the boy of his dreams, and suddenly, the taste of James Potter turned bittersweet as he glanced at the indecipherable look on the werewolf’s face. James’ brows furrowed, and he turned to see what Sirius was glancing at. He felt his friend wilt ever so slightly at the image of their fellow marauder. Sirius watched Regulus turn to his friend and beckoned him to lower his head. Amber eyes never left Sirius’ silver gaze as his brother whispered into Moony’s ear. The ironclad face buckled into a feral grin as he nodded once to the shorter boy and broke the staring contest with Sirius in favor of searching pyrite

eyes. Remus whispered something as he bent down. Regulus nodded and moved his hands across Remus' chest and around his neck.

Green fire coursed through Sirius as he watched his five-year-long crush and his brother grow closer and closer. He could barely hear James' heavy breaths over the pounding in his ears. His grip on James' hips tightened, and just as he was about to push his best friend off of him in a jealous rage, he saw Remus, who was centimeters away from Regulus' lips, give him the briefest glance followed by a wink.

The moon devoured his lion's heart with a searing kiss. Sirius watched as they melted together, lips and teeth and flesh. The kiss seemed to last forever, and the more time passed, the dimmer that green fire became, giving way to the white-hot heat that reignited his cock. James and Sirius watched the pair continue to bite and lick and *suck* at each other's lips, and the celestial collision teased Sirius' eyes like a small cake labeled: *eat me* . And with hungry eyes, Sirius obeyed gorging himself on the salacious sight and felt himself grow larger and larger.

"*Fuck*" he heard James' moan as he looked back at Sirius. The elder Black hadn't even realized he was thrusting his hips against James' thigh as he watched Remus and Regulus. Sirius felt ashamed as his gaze shifted back to James, whose eyes were practically black, and he stilled his movements and furrowed his brow when a mischievous smile crossed James' face.

"Oh, no, you don't," James whispered as he leaned in, sliding one hand up to cup Sirius' jaw and forcing him to watch the obscene performance made for him.

"You're going to be a *good boy* , and you're going to keep your eyes open, yeah?" James purred against his ear.

Sirius whimpered at the demand but obeyed, watching Remus run his hands through his brother's hair and tug down lightly, giving the younger boy a better angle.

James ghosted his lips against Sirius' and mocked him as he watched the unlikely pair make out in the middle of the empty hallway.

"Tell me, Sirius," James breathed against his lips, "because I know you have been pining for Moony for *ages* . I may be thick, but I'm not *blind* . Is it the image of Remus kissing someone who looks so much like you that has you hot and bothered?"

Sirius whined as James continued to tease, "Or perhaps it's more specific than that. Is it because it's *Regulus* ?"

An unbidden moan echoed in the alcove, and James smiled in the corner of Sirius' eyes with victory and hammered the nail further, "You like watching Moony and *your brother* making out in front of you? I can't blame you, honestly. They look *so fucking good* together."

James assisted Sirius' gratification by thrusting back against him, and a groan escaped James as he turned back to the image. The pair watched Remus lift Regulus to wrap the younger boy's legs around his waist and push him into the wall behind the more petite boy.

“Fuck—look at them.” James encouraged and continued his assault on Sirius’ ears, “Reggie is so small up against him. I’ll bet he’s a virgin, too—prissy little thing. Do you think he could take Remus’ cock?”

The Sun, the moon, and a bright star swirled around Sirius’ eyes, making him impossibly dizzy. They all grew brighter and brighter until suddenly, all Sirius could see was a blinding light. The sound of twin groans of release echoed in his ears, and he and James came against each other in their trousers.

Sirius had to remember how to breathe again and then consciously reminded himself to do so. His eyes were closed, heightening his other senses—the sound of his own heart beating like a little white rabbit out of time, the feel of James’ pants against his face, the smell of citrus divinity that permeated the air around him, and the taste of cherry tart from James’ lunch still lingered on his tongue. Eventually, his breathing returned to normal, and the rush of blood in his veins calmed. He opened his eyes to see James, and the pair looked over to see Remus and Regulus still working themselves into a frenzy.

“I don’t know what to tell you, Barty—he said he was going to meet us in the library.” Rosier’s bored drawl came echoing around the corner.

“That was ages ago—” Barty whined, “he should have already met us.”

Sirius looked at James with frantic eyes, and his friend quickly cast a cleansing charm on the pair of them. The boys rushed toward the unassuming pair, but neither Remus nor Regulus noticed their presence. James cleared his throat, and Regulus opened his eyes to see James and Sirius. Remus continued his lavishing on the smaller boy's throat as if he were attempting to tear open the flesh and build a home inside of the boy’s neck. His brother’s hazy eyes fluttered and then snapped abruptly when James said, “Crouch and Rosier are about to come around the corner.”

The younger boy went deathly, still at the warning, but Remus—. The moon was three days away, and his animalistic urges were always more prominent around that time of the month.

James placed his hand on Remus’ shoulder and called out, “Moony,”

A snarl erupted from the werewolf, but he didn’t stop.

“That’s enough, Moony,” James warned with a deep, challenging timber, but Remus was too far gone in the pleasurable feeling of Regulus’ flesh between his teeth. Despite the precarious situation, Sirius couldn’t blame him—not when he had tasted that malleable flesh for himself only hours ago.

“Right,” James huffed, pulling Remus off the boy and pushing him into the cold, hard stone. Sirius quickly grabbed Regulus and pulled him into his arms and away from the wolf who was determined to make a meal out of his younger brother.

Remus’ eyes had a golden hue that Sirius had only ever seen from Moony on a full moon, and a thrill of arousal ran through him like a bolt of lightning. The brothers watched as James

persisted and pushed back against the defiant werewolf. His body was flush against Remus, and he was whispering calm but firm words as he stared directly into those golden eyes.

“There you are!” Crouch yelled down the hall, “fucking finally!”

All eyes snapped to toward the interruption. James and Remus pulled themselves apart and Sirius looked at his brother, who was facing away from the two Slytherins, and quickly cast a series of charms to hide the evidence of their depravity.

“You said you would meet us in the library ages ago!” Crouch whined as he dramatically wrapped his arms around the younger Black.

“Barty, it’s been fifteen minutes,” Regulus gave his best unbothered drawl.

“You’re never late,” Barty said skeptically, pushing back to inspect his friend.

“Yes, well, my brother doesn’t seem to understand the concept of timeliness and kept me away.” Regulus explained as he straightened his cuff and gave Rosier a solemn look, “My apologies, Evan.”

“I—what? Where are *my* apologies?” Crouch sputtered indignantly as he pulled away from his friend.

“My apologies are not for my tardiness but for having to put up with you in my absence.” Regulus explained, then addressed Rosier again, “Truly, you have the patience of a saint.”

“You’ve no idea,” Rosier agreed gravely.

Crouch looked back and forth between his friends and pouted, “None of you love me.”

Regulus and Rosier rolled their eyes collectively at Crouch’s antics and with a final look at Sirius, Regulus licked his bruised lips and turned toward Remus to ask suggestively, “You coming, Lupin?”

Moony had calmed down, but a flash of golden light flickered in his eyes at the wicked taunt.

Remus pushed himself off the wall, walked past Sirius with a smirk, and wrapped his arm around Regulus. The only form of goodbye Sirius received was Rosier’s curious gaze before he turned to join his mates in their pursuit of the library.

Quietness fell in the hallway as the boys rounded the corner and left Sirius alone with James. The chaser slid his palm over his face and looked toward Sirius with an indecipherable stare before he smiled sheepishly. The silence was broken as the clocktower rang, signaling the time, and James went white with panic.

“Fuck—” he whispered, “I’m late for quidditch.”

James began to hurry away frantically and leave Sirius alone with his new revelations, but the sudden pounding of running footsteps toward him made Sirius look up again. James trapped both cheeks in his hands, “No more avoiding me, yeah? We’ll talk after practice.”

A tender, closed-mouthed kiss was placed on Sirius' lips before the warm feeling of James Potter abandoned him completely, leaving him to wonder how he had gotten himself into such a mess.

Chapter End Notes

Next up:

Evan: Would you like to form an alliance-with me?

Remus: Absolutely, I would.

Evan: Good. Good.

Well! After A Fall Such As This I Shall Think Nothing Of Tumbling Down Stairs!

Chapter Notes

This chapter picks up during Regulus and Sirius' date in chapter 6.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Remus was lost in a fog of memory as he walked toward the courtyard. Peter was in divination taking his exam, James was in the Gryffindor tower working on homework to get ahead since he had quidditch practice later that night, and Sirius had a free period, but he had allotted that time for *family bonding*, leaving Remus to his own devices. There was a quietness that the werewolf hardly got to experience due to his rowdy friends causing mischief. He supposed that's why he enjoyed hanging out with the Slytherins.

Barty was a manic little demon sometimes, but even demons need rest every once in a while. Sometimes he could find the boy in the library or the dungeons with his head in Evan's lap, content to just lay there and feel the hand carding through his hair idly as the blond boy read a book—sometimes aloud, sometimes silently. However, Remus noticed a hidden pattern. Evan Rosier only read *romantic adventures* out loud. The kind where two independent protagonists quarreled and challenged each other as they worked toward a common goal. He couldn't help but notice sometimes the pair would reenact rows from the novels without meaning to. It was truly a wonder they were so blind to see the apparent adoration they held for each other.

Remus let his mind wander then trailed after it, picking up the baubles and breadcrumbs it left behind in an effort to encourage him to follow it. When he looked up from the dirt path, he found his mind had arrived at a black sky with only a bright shining star to guide him.

He had always imagined that touching that star would char him, but when he kissed Sirius last night, it was like a cool balm on his heart, which had burned for what felt like a lifetime. Of course, after he had his moment and woke up with a clear head—guilt strapped itself to his conscience like heavy iron chains, weighing him down the more he dwelled on his actions the night before.

He shouldn't have kissed him—not like that. But there was a good chance it would be his *only* chance, so he chanced it, and by chance, Sirius didn't lean away but rather into his touch.

But was it *real*, or was Sirius just playing along—pretending to be enthusiastic for the sake of whatever prank he had concocted with Regulus? There would be no way of telling until the Black brothers' little ruse was finished, and Remus began to pick at the skin around his nails as he leaned against the archway.

“That’s a terrible habit you have there, Lupin.” A sultry familiar voice chimed like silver cylinders rattling in a soft summer breeze.

“Rosier,” he greeted with a nod, not bothering to look up at the blonde boy who had saddled up next to him as he focused on the peeling skin around his clean beds.

“Thinking about a heavenly body?” Evan mocked, and Remus couldn’t help the scoff that left him as he lifted his head to stare into crystal blue eyes, promising mischief and mayhem.

“What do you want, Rosier?”

“I want to know what you’re thinking about,” Evan said with a Cheshire grin. “Or, more importantly,” blue eyes roamed over Remus’ body, and he felt himself grow hot under the scrutiny. “Who you’re thinking about?”

A heavy sigh left his lips as he mumbled, “Sirius.”

“Ahhh,” Evan said knowingly, “you mean Regulus.”

“No,” the tawny-haired boy denied, “I mean Sirius.”

“Yes, but Sirius is Regulus, and Regulus is Sirius, so if you’re thinking of Sirius, surely you mean to say you’re thinking of Regulus; otherwise, you would have said Regulus to convey that you meant Sirius.”

A dumbfounded look crossed Remus’ face as he stared at Evan Rosier, who made perfect nonsense.

“Regulus, then.”

“Hmmm, so you’re thinking of Regulus.”

“What—no—I—you’re mad, and you’re driving me mad. Go away.” Remus shooed the boy next to him, but to his dismay, the rose stayed firmly planted.

“I don’t think I will.” Evan said, and after precisely forty-six seconds of silence, he added, “How long do you think these fools intend to keep going?”

“Knowing Sirius until someone catches him,” Remus admitted.

“He’s already been caught,” Evan pointed out.

Remus hummed and rephrased his response, “Until someone calls them out on it then.”

“What happens if no one calls them out on it?” The unspoken challenge lingered between them, but Remus was clever enough to pick up on it.

"I would wager no more than three days," Remus knew Sirius was unable to sit still the way Regulus was nor could he keep from boasting how he had *fooled* everyone with his clever wit. He also knew Regulus well enough to wager he couldn't keep up with Sirius' usual antics. Both boys were sure to tire eventually, and Sirius had a track record of not being committed to anything for more than three days.

"I think they'll last a week." Evan bargained, "In the meantime, I think it would be fun to fuck with them."

"Fuck with them, how?"

"Regulus is wound tighter than McGonagall's hair, and Sirius has never sat long enough to notice things right in front of him." Evan explained, "I think it would do Regulus some good to live on the wild side and for Sirius to learn to be still—to take a moment to really observe all that he misses by constantly moving."

Remus ignored the obvious dig at his friend. He didn't share Evan's view that Sirius couldn't see what was before him but thought what his friend saw left him wanting.

"You didn't answer my question, Rosier." Remus was growing irritated by the riddles. He looked up to see a nearly full moon shining proudly against the light blue autumn sky.

"I did, actually—perhaps you just weren't listening." Evan retorted.

A familiar scent drifted through the air on a light breeze, tickling the werewolf's nose. He looked past Evan to see Regulus—Sirius—*Regulus*—right? The boy drew closer, and his senses were overloaded by the combination of scents: vanilla, cedarwood, cinnamon, lavender, arousal—wait, *what*? Remus searched every inch of Regulus with his eyes since his nose was *clearly* failing him. Blush settled deep in the ivory cheeks, and if Remus hadn't seen him walk up to them, he would have thought Regulus had run to them. The low sounds of heavy breaths, as if the boy were exerting effort to remember how to breathe properly, brushed against his ears, and the faint echo of a rapidly beating heart pounded on his ear drums. Remus could taste Sirius' lemon tart magic on the more petite boy and feel Regulus' unsatisfied arousal thicken the air around the trio.

It was Regulus—definitely Regulus. He was 99% certain of it.

"Hi Moo—Remus," 87% sure. Regulus was just fucking with him. Right? He knew the boy was aware of their nicknames, though he never used them himself, and this just had to be part of the prank.

"Regulus," He said with a hoarse voice as the smell of unsated passion melded with the scent of the two brothers.

The boy tore his gaze away from Remus, giving him a slight reprieve from the mirthful gaze of Sirius—Regulus? No. Sirius. *Fuck*.

"Where is Barty?" The undetermined Black asked.

Evan scoffed, "How do you expect me to know?"

Remus and Regulus—Sirius—*fucking Regulus* fixed Evan with a sardonic stare, and the rose wilted under the pressure of their mocking gazes, "He's with Pandora in the greenhouses."

Regulus hummed non-committally and left the pair without a word as he presumably walked off to find Barty and Pandora. When the boy was out of sight, Remus looked to Evan for a clue that the Slytherin might know which brother they were speaking to. But his lips were downturned, and his brow was heavily furrowed with puzzlement.

"Regulus, right?" Evan asked as he turned toward the werewolf.

"Yeah," Remus nodded, "Definitely Regulus."

He was 54% sure.

Remus was walking down from the Astronomy tower when he ran into Regulus—definitely Regulus. The scent of Sirius from their date had faded significantly along with the intoxicating smell of lust and left behind the vanilla and cinnamon aroma Remus was so used to from the younger Black. He felt the world tilt back on its axis, resuming its regular rotation as he looked at his Slytherin friend. "Regulus." He said confidently, and the boy smirked, shifting his world ever so slightly to the left once again. "Where are you off to?"

"I promised Barty and Evan I would meet them in the library. Care to join?" As the pair walked down the hall and toward the library, Remus could hear faint whispers echoing from the alcove further down the empty hallway.

"*Something you wanted to say, Padfoot ?*" A familiar drawl echoed in his ear and licked down his spine, freezing him on the spot. Regulus paused when Remus failed to make his feet, which had been transfigured to lead move. In the corner of his eye, he could see Regulus turn to search for what had caused Remus to halt his steps—his breath—his beating heart. The tiny gasp from beside him, combined with the vision of James Potter and Sirius Black pressed so tightly that not even a grain of sand could pass between them, made his skin itch and burn. He was hypnotized as his star grew brighter and brighter under the careful ministrations of the sun, and he felt his heart grow heavy and tight, matching the insurmountable arousal pooling in his groin. Regulus' breathing became uneven, and a sweet, musky scent gathered and settled just below his upper lip.

"*Breathe, Padfoot ,*" he heard James say, and though the command was meant for his friend, Remus felt himself obeying it with just as much effort as the doped-up boy before him. Trapped inside his euphoric haze, Sirius leaned in and paused when his eyes finally landed on the pair in the hall. Remus expected Sirius to break away instantly, but he didn't. Sirius just stood helplessly in his best friend's arms while his eyes drifted from Regulus to Remus.

When Sirius' starlight eyes finally landed on amber grains, Remus held him there—pierced him through—forcing him to keep his sights on the werewolf.

From beside him, Remus heard Regulus lightly whisper for him to lean down. He yielded to the younger Black's request, but he never once lost sight of the twin black holes staring directly at him, devouring his every movement.

"I think it's high time my brother got a taste of his own medicine, don't you, Remus?" Regulus conspired in his ear, "Make it look good, Lupin. Show my brother *exactly* what he's missing."

It hadn't occurred to him until that moment how vindictive Regulus could be. But memories of the night before with James on top of the boy beside him flashed in his mind, and he couldn't help but smirk at the idea that Sirius wasn't the only one who was missing out—even if James was helplessly unaware. Perhaps a demonstration would help to illuminate his dear Prongs to alternative options and leave *his* fucking star alone.

He nodded once and averted his gaze to see similar blackness in the younger brother's eyes. "You sure about this, little lion?" Remus asked, and a thrill of fear and lust tangled together and roped themselves around Remus' body, holding him back until Regulus nodded. He could practically feel the wet pink lips against his, though they weren't touching yet, and in a moment of malicious defiance, Remus flicked his gaze back to his sun-kissed star and sent him a suggestive wink before closing the gap.

There was nothing tentative about his first kiss with Regulus. He had let the boy's words cut into his heart and bury themselves there, and he fully intended on giving Sirius Black a damn good show. But somewhere between the bruising kisses, sweet nips, and melted tongues, he heard and felt a tiny moan from beneath him that *ruined him*. It was too close to the moon, and his inhibitions were low, allowing him to be bolder, more dominating, and unrelenting as he did his best imitation of a cannibal and feasted on the smaller boy. He wrapped his hands around the boy's waist and growled as his thumbs and middle fingers almost touched each other. Remus felt the gravitational pull from the moon urging him to take and take and *take*, and Regulus Black melted into his hold like molten iron, waiting for Remus' firm hands to smelt and mold him into whatever he wished.

Heady scents washed together and fueled the fire ablaze in Remus. He could hear James' commanding words and salacious theories in the distance. The werewolf listened at the whines and groans and moans of Sirius taunting him, egging him on to keep going—not to stop until he had swallowed his little brother entirely, and as James alluded to the illicit taboo and the *obscene* suggestion, Remus Lupin saw *black*.

In the darkness, Remus latched on to anything he could feel—smooth, supple flesh, soft, loose curls, unwanted fabric.

The itch was unbearable and everywhere. His palms, his chest, his *cock*, and Remus only felt soothed if he was running his hands along the boy before him, rutting his body against the boy plastered against him, rubbing the pair of hardened sticks between them, burning away the itch that seemed to consume him. The warm body attached to him made the most delicious sounds as he trapped the tender flesh against his teeth and sucked and lapped at the salty sweetness bubbling to the surface. Muffled voices called his name, but Remus couldn't hear beyond the heavy panting and the thunderous drumming of their hearts. He felt the body beneath him still, but he was a man possessed by the wolf inside him and couldn't tear

himself away. Two strong hands latched onto him from behind and turned him around, slamming him against a hard, cold stone. He moved to push the boy in front of him away, only to be thrust back against the wall again.

The boy pressed himself against him and whispered, “You need to calm down, Remus.”

The call of his name snapped something in him, and the darkness dissipated in the presence of the sun.

Calm blue waters poured into his own golden fire and soothed the burning of his flesh as he whispered, “Rosier and Crouch are just around the corner. I know they’re your friends, but I don’t think you’re ready for them to know all your secrets, are you?”

Remus shook his head slightly, and James continued to put pressure on his body as he continued, “I didn’t think so. Rosier is clever—Crouch, too. And they will know something is awry, so I need you to calm down for me. Deep breaths, yeah?”

Remus did his best to match James’ breathing and finally got to a point where he could focus properly when he heard Barty’s loud voice echo in the hall, “There you are! Fuckin’ finally!”

The tether that bound James and Remus snapped as the Slytherins approached.

Remus watched Sirius quickly work his wand over Regulus and himself, leaving behind a lemon tart scent. He watched with the brothers with clear eyes and had to admit that Regulus Black was a terrific actor. His bored drawl and stoic face gave away nothing of the indecent activities the younger boy had just been a part of, but his jackrabbit heart raced as though Regulus were running a marathon. He looked over toward the elder Black to see his eyes fixed on his brother in a *very* unbothered stare, and Remus could practically taste the salty arousal on his tongue. Suddenly, the odd combination of smells from earlier made so much sense, and a smirk at the hidden knowledge stretched across his white-lined face.

Regulus gave his brother a teasing look and licked his lips before turning to Remus. “You coming, Lupin?”

The little lion man threw him an audacious look, and Remus had to control himself from continuing what he had started. He pushed himself off the wall and sauntered to Regulus, glancing at Sirius and all his flustered glory as he wrapped his arm around the younger boy. The pair walked toward the library, and when Evan caught up to them in long strides, the boy looked up at Remus, “Given any thought to my proposal?”

Remus glanced over his shoulder toward his best mates as the four rounded the corner.

“Fuck it. I’m in.”

Rosemoon alliance unlocked.

It's Very Easy To Take More Than Nothing

Chapter Notes

I'm sorry for the late update. I got a little too down with the sickness. Hope this was worth the wait!!

To Heated_Mausoleum: As always, my love. I hope you especially enjoy this. Thank you for being a friend. xoxo.

"The sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his might:
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright —
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done —
"It's very rude of him," she said,
"To come and spoil the fun."

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying overhead —
There were no birds to fly."

-Excerpt from "The Walrus And The Carpenter" By Lewis Carroll

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Sweat dripped from James' body as he raced up the never-ending staircase toward Gryffindor Tower. Quidditch practice was a complete bust because his mind kept drifting toward soft black waves, harsh stoney glares, and amber eyes. His thoughts bounced from one boy to the next, and it was hard to juggle the images flashing before his eyes as he flew in the air. He didn't even get to try the new move he had planned because his mind was focused on *other moves* he wanted to discover. His imagination ran wild as he thought of a different broom between his thighs, and James Potter was forced to do something he had never done before. He ended quidditch practice early. So early, when James opened the door to his dorm, startling Sirius so severely that his friend turned into Padfoot and scurried toward the bed,

hiding underneath it. James let out a low chuckle while he placed the broom in his hand against the wall and walked toward the bed, crouching to see his timid friend with his paws over his eyes.

“You’re avoiding me again, Padfoot. Do I need to remind you that I won’t tolerate such nonsense from you?”

Padfoot whimpered and removed his paws but stayed firm in his spot, so James sprawled out on the floor between Sirius’ and Remus’ bed.

“We’re friends, right? Best friends. Practically brothers.” James exhaled as he looked up toward the ceiling, offering Sirius a modicum of privacy. He heard Padfoot huff, and he couldn’t help but giggle in the light of new revelations that had been shed on him earlier that afternoon.

“Alright, Pads, let’s play a game,” James suggested, coming up with a clever idea to coax the anxiety out of his friend. “Pretend I’m not in the mix. Replace my name with someone else’s. Just tell me what you’re thinking. You always tell me what’s on your mind, and this—*especially this*—should be no different. But if it makes you feel better to talk to me about it, pretend it’s some other bloke we’re talking about.”

Padfoot huffed and shuffled from underneath the bed and settled next to James, who instinctively began to stroke Padfoot’s fur. Without warning, the dog beside him transformed into Sirius, and he began to speak quietly but carefully—as if he were choosing his words meticulously.. “So a friend of mine—Frank—“

“Longbottom?” James played along, and Sirius let out a chuckle.

“Yeah. Longbottom. So Frank—out of nowhere started kissing me. I’ve never thought of Frank like that before.” A lie they both knew because Frank was fit as *fuck*, and they had both talked about his appeal at length, “but fuck he’s a good kisser. And I wasn’t prepared for him to be so fucking good at it, but *Merlin*, the man can *kiss*.”

It was hard for James to keep his comments to himself, but he did his best to douse the swelling pride that burned in his chest at the idea that *Sirius*, who was no stranger to kissing, thought that he was a phenomenal kisser.

“So what’s the issue?”

“Well—there are several. For starters—“ Sirius swallowed thickly and avoided James’ gaze as he admitted the shameful truth, “I also—sort of—well not sort of—definitely—not sort of—ugh—ikissedregulustoo.”

James was unable to hold back his reaction to *this* news. A soft moan escaped his lips, and he had to adjust his quidditch trousers to relieve the swelling that was caused by the mental image of Regulus and Sirius engaging in a passionate kiss. He’d always found both brothers incredibly attractive. Anyone with eyes would agree. Hell—a blind man would have to agree because they shone so brightly separately but together? They erased every bit of darkness from the world. His mouth felt grainy and dry as he croaked out, “And how was that?”

Sirius sighed wistfully as he looked up at the ceiling, “I’ve never truly had a home, James. The closest I’ve ever come is the Potter Manor and even then—not to say I’m not grateful for everything your family has done for me—it’s not exactly *mine*. But kissing Regulus? It felt like what I imagine coming home would feel like. It was warm and inviting, and fuck if I can’t get it off my mind. And kissing yo—Frank?”

Sirius blushed at his error, “kissing Frank was equally devastating. But the kicker is I’m still head over heels for Remus. I know we’ve never outright talked about it, but—I’m in love with him, Prongs. Have been since second year. And apparently, he’s been kissing my brother—and the worst part is—I can’t even fucking *blame him*. And part of me is heartbroken because he *seems* to want Regulus, but then Regulus said—“ Sirius paused, and though

James was desperate to know what Regulus said, he wasn't going to push, "well—it doesn't matter. The point is the boy I've been pining over is out here kissing my brother, and I'm conflicted because they're perfect for each other, honestly. And I want them both to be happy, but I'm also selfish and want them for myself."

"Together or separately?" James asked curiously.

"Does it matter? I can't have either of them the way I want them."

James hummed as he continued to stroke Sirius' soft, black hair.

"And then there's Frank—" Sirius stuttered out a breath as he managed to find the courage to look up at James, "Our friendship means the world to me, but I *want* —and I shouldn't because you know that he holds a torch for Lil—Alice. And I still don't see him in a romantic way but *physically*?" Sirius groaned and pressed his legs together, "Well—that doesn't matter either because I'm not willing to sacrifice a lifelong friendship over something as trivial as sex."

"Who says you have to be involved romantically?" James questioned, "Friends kiss and stuff. We could be those kinds of friends."

"What do you mean, like friends with benefits?" Sirius scoffed and looked up at James' face.

"Why not? You're pining for your fella, and I'm pining for my gal. What's wrong with a couple of friends helping each other out with their—tension?"

"You don't see any issues with this?"

James thought for a moment and couldn't think of any potential problems. They both cared about each other in the ways that mattered, and it was just sex—no romance attached. James shook his head, and Sirius sighed.

"And what happens if one of us starts to develop *feelings*?" Sirius pointed out.

"Now, why would we go and do a foolish thing like that?" James laughed and rubbed Sirius' head playfully, making a mess of the tamed waves.

"You think you could resist my charms, James Potter?" Sirius whispered seductively against James' ear, and his spine shivered at the taunt.

"Have done for the past five years, Black."

"Yes, but you haven't been shagging me for the past five years. That tends to change things for some people." Sirius noted.

"Yeah—but we're not *some people*. We're James and Sirius. Prongs and Padfoot." James said confidently, then added, for Sirius' benefit, "How about you sleep on it, yeah? And in the morning, you can either tell me to bugger off, and I will, or you can tell me to bugger you, and I *will*."

Sirius chuckled and let out a sigh. The pair of boys stayed in each other's arms, glancing up at the ceiling until Peter and Remus bounded through the door, startling them out of their separate thoughts.

Remus walked up toward Gryffindor Tower after a surprisingly quiet night with the Slytherins. Regulus and Remus didn't discuss what had happened in the hallway before Barty and Evan showed up. They just kept to their routine of silently studying. Occasionally, the werewolf could feel his friend's eyes on him, but every time he looked up, Regulus' head was in his book. Upon reaching the Gryffindor common room, he ran into Peter, who had fallen asleep on the couch. Despite the gentle nudge Remus gave the sleeping boy, Peter woke up just as startled as if Remus had yelled his name in the boy's ear. The mousey boy gathered his books once his heart rate had settled a bit and leaned on Remus for support in his tired state.

The pair wound up hurtling through the door as Remus clumsily tripped over the rug, and he found James and Sirius lying on the floor, fully clothed. The smell of arousal was absent—thank Merlin for small favors—but James gave Sirius a quick peck on the forehead and whispered something into his ear before they got up and went to their respective beds. As Remus traveled to his own bed and stared at the painted ceiling, he thought about how odd it was to see them go to separate beds. Maybe they had decided to stop fooling around? The thought soothed his jealous heart, then immediately pained him, and he couldn't fathom why. The soft rustling of his closed curtains gritted against his tender ears. The full was coming soon, and everything seemed to put him on edge. He hoped these swelling thoughts and feelings would diminish once the darkness cast over her again, but he doubted it. He looked over to see James' head comically peeking through the curtains.

"Moony, can I come in?" James whispered with nervousness in his voice.

Remus nodded silently, too on edge to speak, and James crawled in to sit on the bed. Remus looked back up at his stars.

After a moment of insecure silence and unsteady breathing from the boy in his bed, James finally asked, "Are we gonna talk about it?"

Remus brought his fingers and thumb toward the bridge of his nose and pinched to stave off the oncoming headache of the conversation he was not ready for but needed to have.

"What specifically would you like to talk about?"

"All of it."

"All of what, James? Pick a point to start with," Remus said a bit too harshly, but James took it in stride. After four years of helping Remus through the moons, he knew what to take to heart and what not to.

"How about we start by talking about what's going on with you and Regulus?" James asked gently and waited as Remus sighed and fixed his eyes on the white heart of the lion swimming in the navy sky above them.

"Nothing is going on." Remus denied and cringed as James fixed him with an unimpressed stare.

"It didn't look like *nothing* in the corridor." James pushed, "It looked a hell of a lot like *more* than *nothing*."

Remus remained silent, and though James could see his body stiffen, he continued, "You were gone, Remus. What I saw? That was all Moony."

James could practically see the heavy weight on Remus's chest, and it pained him to think friend hated any part of himself.

"And Remus?" The tawny-haired boy hummed against the silence of the night, "He was *beautiful*."

Remus' eyes shot open, and he stared into James' summer sky eyes—clear and blue. The boy could feel the werewolf search his eyes for a trace of falsity but found no lies there, and James continued, "he was raw and passionate, and *fuck*—he was perfect." *You're perfect*, James thought but didn't linger on the words or the effect the confession had; instead, he pushed through, "And Regulus? He just melted against you. So don't lie to me and tell me it was *nothing*. That it *is* nothing."

Remus studied his friend for a moment, nodded once, and resumed perusing the heavenly bodies plastered on the ceiling.

"I heard you, you know?" Remus admitted, and James tilted his head in confusion, so the werewolf elaborated, "What you said to Sirius in the alcove."

"Oh?" James said with an even voice despite the heat rising to his cheeks and the desperate pounding of his heart. The chaser knew he hadn't fooled Remus when James saw the smirk

settle on his friend's face, but he still played the game as if there was a chance of winning. "Which part?" James asked, suddenly fascinated by the crimson pattern on Remus' duvet. "All of it," Remus said with a hungry growl as he propped himself on his elbows. "And I can't help but wonder whose benefit you said it for, Sirius' or mine." Remus' brow raised questioningly as he patiently waited for unspoken truths in their makeshift confessional.

"Why not both?" James challenged.

"So, Sirius fancies me," Remus said softly with a bit of reluctance. He couldn't fathom why a boy like Sirius would ever deign to love a monster like him.

James hummed quietly, "And Regulus, apparently."

The pair stared at each other for a long, silent second before bursting out into a fit of giggles that had James collapsing over himself in the bed. After the pair had calmed, James settled in to lay down next to Remus and gaze up longingly at the night sky, lovingly etched for Remus' benefit. He saw scores of constellations and a bright, large full moon that Sirius had manufactured with love and accuracy. James recalled when his best friend had been determined in 3rd year to recreate the heavens for their beloved moony.

"Sirius, why in Merlin's name are you painting a fucking *full moon*. Don't you think that's a bit—I don't know—insensitive?" James had asked nervously.

"He never gets to enjoy it, James. When was the last time he witnessed a full moon with his own eyes? When he was four? He never gets to see how beautiful it is. This way, he'll be able to see it as *Remus*."

Remus' voice wrangled James out of his memory as he asked, "So you're not weirded out by Sirius and Regulus?"

James blinked and flushed deeply as he stuttered, "I—well—no—I mean—they're brothers, but like—*they're brothers*, you know? It's kind of—it's kind of hot, right?"

James turned his head to gauge Remus' reaction. Though he softly hummed in agreement, the sun-kissed boy could see Remus shift his legs to hide his obvious arousal at the idea of the black brothers *together*.

"You know, I never noticed how much Regulus looks like Sirius. They're practically twins."

James noted idly and smiled curiously when Remus burst out into a fit of laughter.

Tears were forming in the corners of Remus' eyes, making them shine brightly in the night, and James felt a sudden spasm in his chest but brushed it off quickly.

"What's so funny?" A crooked smile of confusion at the sudden outburst, but Remus just shook his head.

"Nothing." The werewolf giggled, and the pair returned to looking up toward the heavens.

"Hey, Moony?"

"Yes, Prongs?"

"Do you want me to stop kissing Sirius?"

Silence slipped between the two boys and gripped their throats. Neither of the marauders breathed, and the only sound was the twin pair of hearts that beat rapidly until Remus finally answered in a sure and steady voice, "Ask me again in the morning, Prongs."

James nodded once and moved to leave Remus in the solitude of sleep, but a firm hand yanked him back down.

"Go to sleep, James," Remus whispered, closing his eyes and settling in for the night.

As James drifted in and out of consciousness in his friend's warm bed, his eyes traveled upward, tracing the lion's heart, the Dog Star, and the full moon and as he succumbed to his slumber, he wondered if there was any room for a sun among them.

Chapter End Notes

How are we feeling?

Next up: James and Regulus have a *chat*.

The Adventures First, Explanations Take Such A Dreadful Time

Chapter Notes

Thank you for spiraling into madness with me.

I hope you're enjoying your trip.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Despite the promise of conversations from both Sirius and Remus, James woke up with only one thing on his mind: Regulus. Or, more specifically, talking to Regulus and trying to knock some sense into that great thick head of his. Seeing Sirius so broken the night before over his illicit and decidedly not fraternal feelings for his brother, he decided to give the younger Black a push. No—not a push. A nudge. A gentle nudge. Regulus needed perspective from someone who knew him and knew him well. And who better to provide insight into the inner workings of Sirius Black than his own best friend?

So, with determination and courage, James Potter walked into the Great Hall for breakfast and made a beeline for the Slytherin table. He could see Regulus sitting next to a beautiful blonde girl with a blue and bronze tie and the back of two heads, one whose hair matched the platinum Ravenclaw not in length but in color and texture. The other had chocolate strands that gave the appearance of organized chaos, seemingly placed meticulously to give the appearance of apathy and unruliness. The gap between the two boys was wide enough that no one could sit on the other side of them but narrow enough to where no one in their right mind would dare to try and fit between the two.

James stood behind the two boys, who didn't bother to acknowledge his presence, but he could sense they were fully aware of him and flashed a winning smile that threatened to falter the longer Regulus stared at him like he had wings sprouting from his head rather than ears.

They all had a full plate of food before them, and despite this, the Ravenclaw seemed to be helping herself to another plate. James could sense he would not get an invitation to sit, verbal or written, so he decided to invite himself and squeezed in next to Rosier and Crouch. A huff from the blonde on his right and a sharp curse from the brunette on his left made his position clear: He was not wanted here. But that was no matter. He was determined to get a word with Regulus, and though he would prefer it to be in private, he wasn't above speaking his mind in front of the others, though he would have to tread lightly so as not to reveal secrets between the brothers to the rest of the group.

He sat expectantly, waiting for Regulus to break, but his eyes were strained with forced

malice, and in the end, James broke his stare to glance at the plate being pushed toward him.

“For the love of Merlin, Dora,” Evan said, “don’t feed it. It’s likely to take it as an invitation to come back.”

“Not that an invitation would be necessary as he seems to have invited himself,” Crouch mumbled as he stabbed at the potato on his plate, causing the prongs to clash loudly against the plate.

“Thank you, Pandora,” James chirped as he lifted his arms to pour himself some pumpkin juice. The space between Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum was quite tight, as they refused to move, so he accidentally banged his elbow on the table when he brought his arms back down, and the chuckle on his left grated on his nerves.

James looked up to Regulus, who was still just as stoic as before, and asked, “Can I be frank?”

Regulus tilted his head and lifted a brow before looking at the boy to James' left. He nodded once. Not at James but at Crouch, who smiled wickedly and said, “Longbottom?”

James rolled his eyes.

“I’m sure if you brewed some polyjuice potion, you could manage to be him for a while.” Crouch continued to ponder the idea, and James could already feel a headache forming at the sound of the boy's voice. “However, you’d probably have to detain the real Frank if you wanted to pull it off, and honestly, your acting skills probably aren’t up to par. On second thought, no. I don’t think you can be frank.”

James rolled his eyes at the boy beside him, who was grinning wildly, before turning back toward Regulus, “Can I speak truthfully?”

Evan lifted his cup and considered, “Well, obviously you can speak, as you have proven multiple times throughout the years with your inability to remain silent, whether the truth will leave your lips is entirely your business.”

James went to throw his hands up in exasperation, but both elbows banged harshly against the edge of the table. The shining light in his pain was the sliver of a smile that cracked through Regulus’ facade of indifference, and it gave him strength to try again, “May I be honest with you, Regulus?”

The humor in the porcelain face before him vanished as quickly as it came, “Does what you have to say regard my brother?”

“Yes,” James said, boring a hole into Regulus’ eyes, praying to all the gods that he would understand this conversation would be best had alone without interruptions.

“Speaking of Sirius,” Barty began with mischief in his voice as he gazed at the younger Black, “You still owe me my five galleons, Black.”

Riddled with curiosity, James couldn’t help but ask, “Why does Regulus owe you five galleons? And what does it have to do with Sirius?”

Barty turned his head to give James his undivided attention when he answered, “We made a wager.”

Their faces were so close James could feel the phantom touch of Barty’s nose against his own.

“We made a wager that you and the disgraced heir to the House of Black were an item,” Barty revealed, and his pupils dilated, desperate to soak in the reaction James was sure to have.

However, the Gryffindor didn’t want to give him the satisfaction but rather taunt him with his own word games.

“Define item,” James demanded.

“That you’re together.” Barty elaborated weakly to James’ utter satisfaction, and the crimson-clad boy grinned as he turned toward Regulus.

“That’s a terrible bet to make. We live together. Obviously, we are together and often.”

A scowl broached Regulus’ face as he delivered more concisely than Crouch, “Romantically together, potter. A couple. You’re dating.”

“We’re dating?” James asked with faux innocence.

“You’re *not* dating?” Barty asked with a frown.

“We’re not dating.” James confirmed, “Keep your galleons, Regulus.”

Hope for Sirius bloomed in James’ chest as he saw relief in Regulus’ eyes.

Barty’s eyes narrowed, and James could feel their heat. “Lupin saw you kissing.”

“Yeah. We kissed—and stuff, but we’re not dating. We’re just friends,” James corrected.

Barty shook his head in confusion and said, “Friends don’t just go around kissing each other.”

James leaned in a bit closer to Barty, aiming to make the boy feel just shy of comfortable, “Yes, they do. Sirius and I kiss. Remus and Regulus kiss.”

In a low voice, only meant for Crouch, James added, “Honestly, you should try it sometime.”

Roses bloomed across Crouch’s cheeks and the bridge of his nose as the boy looked just past James toward his friend, who seemed more interested in Regulus’ expressions than what was going on next to him. Crouch looked back at James, and the Gryffindor couldn’t help but send him a cheeky wink, which made the boy blush even further and mutter something under his breath before staring intently at the contents of his plate.

“You wanted to talk to me about Sirius?”

Regulus said with a sharpness that cut through James’ thoughts.

James snapped his eyes back to the cold steel grey eyes.

“Yes,” James said, swallowing thickly as his gaze traveled lower to the thin line the Slytherin’s lips had formed.

They trembled ever so slightly, and he wouldn’t have noticed had James not been staring at them.

“Is it—is it serious?” Regulus asked.

“It is very serious. And I’d like to speak to you alone if I can—“ James said and then immediately corrected himself as Evan went to make a snarky comment, “if I may.”

Regulus nodded once and rose from the table. James looked down at the plate before him to see a paper bag where his plate of pasties had been. He looked back up to see a smiling Pandora, and as he rose, he held out his hand for her. Once her delicate fingers caressed his palm, he turned them to kiss the back of her hand and winked as he said, “You’re a saint.”

“That’s me,” Pandora said, “Patron Saint of starving idiots.”

Evan scoffed, and just before James walked off to join Regulus, who had already left the Great Hall, he leaned down with a hand on Barty’s shoulder and his lips against the boy’s ear, “Just think about what I said, yeah?”

“Piss off, Potter,” Barty mumbled with no real malice. James grabbed the bag of food and ran off toward Regulus.

Regulus began pacing the corridor outside the Great Hall. *Did Sirius tell James about their kiss? Was James going to tell him to stop seeing his brother? Was James going to point out what a black stain he was on their perfect golden lives? That his brother was better off without him?* The spiral of self-deprecating thoughts was interrupted by the clash of a heavy body against his own. A hand wrapped around the back of his head as he and his assailant tumbled toward the ground, and Regulus’ back slammed against the hard stone.

“*Fuck,*” a familiar voice hissed at the pain that was likely burning in his hand as it was crushed between the cold stone floor and the back of Regulus’ skull.

Regulus took a sharp breath and exhaled the name of his assailant in what he had hoped sounded like disdain, but his voice sounded breathy even to his own ears.

For longer than appropriate, James Potter lay on top of Regulus, searching for signs of injury before admiring the blunt eyes that matched the floor beneath them.

“Reggie,”

“Regulus.” The younger boy corrected.

“No, I’m James. You’re Regulus.” James teased, and Regulus scoffed when the older boy asked, “How hard did you hit your head?”

With a light shove, Regulus signaled for James to get off of him. To his surprise, the boy complied with the silent gesture and then held out a hand for Regulus to take and right himself.

Unwilling to accept help, Regulus shoved the hand away, lifted himself off the floor, and leaned against the cold stone wall while he caught his breath.

“You wanted to talk to me about Sirius,” Regulus reminded the doe-eyed boy, who was lost in a haze of his own thoughts.

James cleared his throat and scratched the back of his head, further tangling the unruly locks, which had likely not been brushed through if that haphazard appearance of James’ shirt and tie were anything to go by.

“Right, yes. Sirius.” James began and then faltered, clearly picking his words with care.

“If you’re here to lecture me or tell me to stop seeing him—“ Regulus was cut off by the furious shaking of James’ head and his wide eyes, which pleaded, *You’ve got it all wrong.*

“Nonononono—nothing—nothing like that. In fact,” James huffed out a laugh, “I was going to encourage you to keep seeing him.”

Regulus shifted his weight from one foot to another as he leaned further into the stone, praying for some convergence miracle that would allow him to become one with the wall.

No such luck.

“You want me to keep seeing him?” Regulus asked, his skepticism palpable. He watched as James’ uneasy smile faltered under his piercing gaze.

“In what capacity?” Regulus asked.

“In whatever capacity you feel comfortable with.” James answered honestly, “Sirius—he—Sirius cannot lose you again. It will break him—and he—he’s come so far, Regulus. These few months with you have been the happiest I’ve seen him in—well—since first year. And it would damage him beyond repair if you—he’ll take you however he can get you—in

whatever way you feel most comfortable with. Be it brothers or—“ James’ wrist rolled in the air as he searched for another label that would be appropriate.

“So he told you. What we—he told you what we did?” Regulus asked, slightly hurt because, of course, he would tell James. He tells James everything, and Regulus should have known this would be no exception.

“Of course he did.” James answered and looked at the younger Black brother perplexedly before echoing Regulus’ thoughts, “he tells me everything.”

A cruel smile erupted on Regulus’ face as he whispered menacingly, “No, James. Not everything.”

Bafflement drenched James’ face, and Regulus took a moment to revel in the glory of the upper hand. However, it was a short-lived victory when Potter said, “You called me James.”

Regulus blinked, shook his head, and then blinked again before denying, “No. I most certainly didn’t.”

But all the declinations in the world would not wipe away the sheer look of triumph on James Potter’s perfect face, and to Regulus’ horror, the older boy began to walk closer toward him.

“You called me James,” The devil repeated despite Regulus’ narrowed eyes and shaking head.

“You’re delusional.”

“You. Called. Me. *James.*” two palms kissed the cold traitorous stone behind Regulus. The same stone that failed to swallow him up the way he wished, and Regulus felt a twinge of fear as James’ hungry eyes threatened to acquiesce to the wishes he had silently to the unrelenting stone.

“Admit it,” James whispered with a vanquishing grin as he leaned closer toward Regulus.

“I haven’t the faintest idea what you’re talking about.” Regulus denied and swallowed thickly as he pressed himself further into the stone in a mockery of an attempt to put more difference between himself and the agitating boy, “I have never in my life called you James.”

A soft groan passed James' lips, and Regulus could feel the warm, inviting puff of air tickle against his bangs, which lay just under the corner of his eyes.

"Say it again," James murmured as he pressed his forehead against the younger boys' and trapped the younger black with his thigh, which hadâ€”at some point—worked its way in between Regulus' thighs.

"I think you've mistaken me for the wrong brother, Potter." Regulus tried as he pressed his palms against James' chest in a feeble attempt to push the boy off of him. "We may look alike, but we are vastly different people."

"No," James denied and pressed his body impossibly close to Regulus'. "You have some distinct differences between you, like your eyes."

Regulus held his breath as James continued, "Sirius' eyes are bright and warm—"

"Where mine are dull and cold, yes, I know," Regulus interjected with a roll of his eyes, but the hand that gripped his chin startled him, and he became lost in the incandescent blue windows, ready to bear the soul that lay trapped behind them.

"I was going to say your eyes are smooth and cool, like stones in a river, worn down by time and abrasion. Like your eyes have seen too much for someone so young. And bit by bit those coarse visions have rubbed and eroded and eaten away at the glossy finish and left behind is something opaque and smooth. But it's also calming and cool."

"And then your hair—" James moved his hand from Regulus' chin to card his hand through the thick curly locks, "Sirius' is wavy and smooth; it takes almost no grooming or upkeep and always manages to fall in a devil may care way but still looks effortlessly amazing. But your hair? Full of life and love. You take pride in the way you maintain it and make every curl fall just the way you want it to."

James swiped a thumb against Regulus' cheek, caressing the collection of freckles and beauty marks, "and then there are these. Little constellations on your face guiding the way for anyone bold enough to bask in your beauty."

Regulus couldn't help but shutter out the boy's name in warning as James continued to trace the cluster of stars. But as the "s" rolled off his tongue he felt James' lips press against his.

James was at war with his mind as it drifted back and forth between Sirius and Regulus. He couldn't help but compare the two experiences as his mind drifted back to his and Sirius' first kiss. Their first real kiss. The first time, he ventured further than just a quick peck on the lips or the cheek. He tasted like black coffee and grapes—bitter and sour flavors lingered on his tongue and cut the sweetness lingering in his mouth from this morning's pumpkin juice. The smell of cinnamon and Lillie's overwhelmed him as he breathed in through his nose, desperate to fill his lungs with Regulus as he lowered his hands toward the boy's slender waist in an effort to keep his hands full of the younger black brother as well. He felt Regulus' hands slide up his chest and link around his neck, pulling him closer and deepening the kiss. Suddenly James felt the sharp poke of a wand against his jugular, and a familiar heated voice growled, "*James Fleamont Potter* get your hands off my fucking *brother*."

Chapter End Notes

Yikes 🙄

I Know Who I Was When I Woke Up This Morning But I Think I Must Have Changed Several Times Since Then

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the delay! I have the next three chapters written so I'll be giving weekly updates until September 7th. After that I truly make no promises, but I am hopeful that I will continue to have weekly updates. <3

To my darling bird: As always, I adore you and I hope you enjoy this chapter angsty as it may be...

Sirius sat at the Gryffindor table, looking over Remus' shoulder every minute or two. His brother seemed unbothered as Regulus wielded a knife to spread the creamy butter along the face of his toast and listened carefully to Pandora, who was seated beside him.

The Gryffindor waited for Regulus to catch his eye, but his brother seemed too enraptured by his friend's conversation to spare Sirius a glance, so he focused on the tawny-haired boy before him.

James' proposition weighed heavily on his heart as he took in Remus' soft brown eyes. It didn't escape his notice that James' bed was empty this morning while the boy's steady snores could be heard from behind Remus' curtains.

But something about accepting James' offer felt *wrong*. Not because he wasn't intrigued—his cock certainly was—but because he was apprehensive that this would be a fork in the road of their friendship.

It would either strengthen it or *tear it apart* .

And while Sirius loved to take chances, his friendship with Prongs was not something he was willing to give up.

The devil appeared in the doorway of the great hall, and Sirius' silver eyes trailed after him and widened when the boy walked in the opposite direction toward the Slytherin table. With his back toward Sirius, the anxious boy couldn't see his friend's face, but he could see *his brothers* . Sirius knew Regulus' tells—every twitch, every feigned frown, every roll of his eyes meant something different and as Sirius watched his brother, he came to one conclusion: Regulus was *interested* in James.

For what purpose, Sirius could only guess, but something about his friend caught his brother's eye, and he was determined to find out what.

A series of snaps from long, dexterous fingers erupted before him, and Sirius focused on the boy, attempting to divert his attention. Remus turned his body to see Regulus getting up from the table and James following suit, then he turned back to Sirius, who was already set to pursue them.

“Padfoot, no,” Remus said fiercely, and for a moment, Sirius stopped. Like a well-trained dog, his feet became firmly planted on the floor, and his eyes shot to his master. He could see the edges of Remus’ eyes shine a bright gold against the warm brown, making like two sunflowers itching to face the sun but desperate to be heard and obeyed.

Sirius shook his head, clearing it from the spell Moony had cast over him. Bounding for the door with a hurried conviction to stop—what, he didn’t know, but whatever it was, he knew he wouldn’t like it when he saw it.

He just barely reached the outside of the Great Hall when a pair of solid arms pushed him against the unforgiving stone of the hallway. Silver eyes brightly blazed against the amber eclipses staring down at him, “What the fuck, Padfoot.”

“They’re up to something, and I want to know what it is,” Sirius whined.

“Don’t you think, given *everything*, that maybe you should just sit this one out?” Sirius couldn’t tell if he was talking about the prank or not, either letting the knowledge of Sirius’ and Regulus’ game slip past his lips or if he was simply talking about the unnatural incidents of him kissing his brother and his best friend—both of which were honestly Regulus’ fault.

Sirius would have never kissed James the way he had if it weren’t for Regulus’ slutty antics, and he never would have kissed Regulus if it weren’t for well— *Regulus* .

Sirius hazarded a glance over toward the end of the hall and found Regulus in a situation that was very similar to his own. Pinned against the stone with James crowding his space.

At first, he marveled at how *right* they looked together. As he watched them get closer together, he could see a *life* before his eyes.

One of *romance* that needn’t be hidden from the world for its taboo nature.

One of laughter and joy unmarred by shared trauma and pain.

The sight of it—of *them*— left a caramelized, ashy taste in his mouth, and he swallowed the thought that it should be *him* before he had a chance to think deeper about *whom* he should be replacing.

Violent sunset hues danced before his eyes as he pushed back against Remus and stormed toward his *brothers*.

His hand seemed to work faster than his brain, which was muddled and covered in crimson, as he pulled his wand from the holster beneath his robes and slotted the tip against the soft spot just beneath James’ jutting chin.

A canine, possessive voice came barreling from the heavily beating organ in his chest as he growled, “*James Fleamont Potter* get your hands off my fucking *brother* .”

The kiss paused, but their lips didn't part, and Sirius dug the dark brown Acadia wood into the golden skin that blushed deeply.

Sirius could see the bruise forming along the indentation and vowed silently to force the sun to kiss the horizon and bury it so far deep beyond the horizon that it would never rise again if it didn't get its damnable lips off his brother's.

Mercifully, James felt the threat and removed his lips, leaving his brother whining and chasing after that warmth.

He had never been angry at James before, and the feeling unsettled him, so Sirius pushed James out of the way, discarding him, and set his sights and anger on his brother.

This anger was comfortable, normal even. Two brothers fighting over a toy—a plaything—and Regulus had the audacity to mock him for it, presenting Sirius with a wry grin as he lifted his fingers and touched the rosebud lips, teased and bitten by his *best friend* .

Molten silver eyes followed the movement, and he leaned in close, watching those lips, mesmerized by all they had to offer, all they *had* offered—to him, to Remus, to *James*.

Sirius crowded him and cloaked the pair of them with the wings of his black robes that hid just how *close* they were to each other. Close enough to feel the desperation in Regulus' cock pressing against his own steel-rodded jealous snake.

“What the fuck do you think you're doing, *Regulus*?” Sirius bit off the name like it was a rebounding curse piercing his own heart—infesting it like a plague that spread to every extremity.

“Well, I *was* kissing James. And I would very much like to get back to that, so if you'll excuse me—” Sirius cut him off with a hateful hand that wrapped around Regulus' slim throat—stifling the blood, the air, but ineffectually quelling the desire that had clearly seeped into his brother's blood.

Regulus had tasted golden poison, and Sirius wanted to squeeze it out of him—suck it out of him—until Regulus could no longer recall the crave-worthy taste.

“No.” Sirius demanded, “James is off limits to *you* .”

Regulus' face had turned a tempting shade of candy apple red, and Sirius could feel his mouth water at the desire to take a *bite* of him.

But suddenly, Sirius was no longer firmly planted on the ground, nor was his brother's throat in his clutches as Remus hoisted him up with one arm, holding him back from the vengeance he planned to enact in the form of bruising kisses.

“*Sirius* .” Remus barked admonishingly, redirecting his attention briefly.

Sirius looked at James, who stood stock still, shocked and alarmed, breathing heavily and staring at *his* star, itching to reach out and comfort him.

Regulus took his throat in his own hand, massaging the ache and the carmine impressions Sirius had left behind, but his brother didn't look broken. He didn't even look upset as a devilish smile broached, spreading across his face, smearing it in sin.

“Off limits to *me*.” Regulus' voice was raspy and haughty as he scrunched his nose up and leaned toward Sirius just past the strong arm that held the elder Black back, “*noted*.”

Sirius lunged forward like a rabid dog, but Remus held him back from sinking his teeth into the treacherous brother. Regulus laughed and gave an uneasy James an agonizingly slow once-over before licking his lips and sauntering down the hall.

Ferality hit Sirius like a fever, swelling inside his organs, and he had no relief—no outlet now that Regulus had walked away, so he turned to the nearest object of his fury and bit *harshly*.

“No.” He said with firm conviction and gangly green bled from his tongue as he choked on the venomous word, feeling his own heart shatter like heated glass.

“I—yeah,” James mumbled as he looked over his shoulder, watching Regulus round the corner, “I won't kiss him again. I promise.”

“No. You won't.” Sirius gritted out, tasting the sand that filled his mouth as he continued, “But that's not all I was saying no to.”

James tilted his head in confusion, searching Sirius' eyes as if they held the answer. Sirius could practically see the light bulb above James' head as his eyes widened in realization, then it brightened and busted raining down crystal confetti and settling in his dark brown hair.

James swiveled his head, shaking off the invisible glass shards, as he whispered a small and broken, “No?”

“No.” Sirius choked on the words as they left his lips, “I slept on it.”

“You slept on it?” James repeated quietly.

“And then I woke up.” Sirius continued despite every bit of his body begging him not to, “and while it was a fantastic dream—”

Sirius looked down the hall after a phantom, “The reality isn't—*feasible* .”

“Not feasible,” James repeated like a broken record cursed to repeat the words actively shattering it.

“No,” Sirius said, less sure than before as he watched his friend put on a smile he'd only ever seen reserved for others. A counterfeit grin. Far too wide to be real, with far too many teeth showing and far too many lines around it as if he had carved them there with the dull blade of rejection.

“James,” Sirius called out, beckoning the boy he knew to resurface, but he was gone, and in his place, a jester's mask had replaced any sincerity.

“It’s alright, Pads. Truly. You have enough to deal with—no point in tacking another item on your to-do list.” James said with humorous self-deprecation.

“*James*, ” Sirius whined but cut himself off at the feel of a firm grip around his arm and he looked up to see fiery amber smoldering.

James had walked off in the opposite direction Regulus had, not bothering to look over his tightened shoulders toward his friends.

“You never listen, do you, Sirius.”

“You—you saw them, Remus. They were—”

“Kissing. Yeah, Sirius. I saw them.” Remus bit out and towered over Sirius as he asked angrily, “Tell me why you had *this* reaction. You didn’t seem to mind when it was *me* kissing Regulus. If anything—you seemed spurred on by it.”

“I—” Sirius failed to explain.

“Perhaps you could use some time alone to think about it. And you *should*, Sirius. You should really think about it. If not for your own sake, for James’. Because that?” Remus hoisted his satchel over his shoulder as he pointed to the empty space his heart and soul had occupied, “That was *not okay*. ”

Remus gave Sirius a lingering disapproving look before he turned on his heel and left Sirius alone with only his thoughts to keep him company.

“Why did you do that?” Sirius asked quietly, breaking the silence as he plucked another clover blossom from the patch the two brothers were lounging.

Regulus didn’t bother to open his eyes as he let the sun kiss his pale skin, drawing out the freckled constellations that lined the bridge of his nose and the apples of his cheeks.

“Why did you get so angry?” Regulus breathed out.

“You could have him.”

“So could you.” Regulus pointed out. “Try again.”

“He could have *you*. ” Sirius let the whisper float in the gentle breeze that ran through midnight waves, and the sound of his words as they passed his ears felt frail.

Regulus opened his eyes and lifted himself to lean on his forearms, boring his eyes into Sirius and crooned a tempting melodic song of verboten temptation in the way *only sirens* could:
“So could *you* .”

Sirius gaped like a fish out of water gasping for air but was found wanting and choked on the sound of societal expectations.

Regulus rolled his eyes when Sirius said nothing and fell back into the bed of clovers before he repeated, “Try again.”

Sirius looped the stem of a clover with nimble fingers, tying it in a knot. Then, threading another stem through the eye, he tugged on it with the same gentility his heartstrings had been tugged by three simple words.

“You could have each other— *properly* . In a way, I could never have either of you.”

“Does she sound as shrill in your head as she sounds in mine?” Regulus asked bitterly.

“Who?” Sirius asked, idly searching for little bits of luck amongst the greenery.

“ *Mother.* ”

Sirius froze and listened to the voice that told him *no* . Admittedly, the pitch was so high and loud that Sirius could scarcely make out the sound of it—he only felt the vibrations of it rattling in his bones. But when he stilled himself, he could actually hear the piercing voice of his mother fracturing him.

The bell tolled in the distance from the tower, and both boys rose from the natural bed they were resting on.

Regulus waved his wand over himself, transforming into a mirror image of Sirius.

His hair was less kempt, and his unhappy frown reflected the helplessness in his soul.

“Yes is the answer to your question.” Regulus mocked Sirius' voice as he tugged off the green tie wrapped around his neck, “You *really do* look like shit.”

Sirius snatched the emerald fabric from Regulus' outstretched hand and hastily draped it over his head, letting it lay haphazardly against the scarlet.

Regulus tutted and stepped closer toward Sirius, carefully unfurling the Gryffindor's tie, siphoning his bravery with every exchange.

Scarlet wrapped around the neck of his image, and Sirius watched his hands delicately move, overlapping the ends, tugging at them, knotting it to perfection before wrecking it, creating a devil-may-care appearance that Sirius effortlessly emanated.

Satisfied with the appearance, Regulus looked up and smiled while Sirius stood watching himself.

His brother popped Sirius' collar and loosened the emerald tie, unraveling it—unraveling *him* — before putting it back together better than new.

Regulus smoothed down the collar and let his hand drift toward his heart, “Much more fitting today, I would say.”

“What is?” Sirius asked with a dry voice.

“ *The green.* ” Regulus smirked, “all jealousy and self-preservation.”

Sirius scoffed and watched teasing eyes transform into sincere mourning, “though, I prefer you in *red* .”

Sirius placed his hand over the hand pressed against his heart and admitted shyly, “I’m not feeling very *red* today.”

Sirius watched himself as his double leaned in close enough to whisper against his lips, “I’ll be red enough for the both of us, yeah?”

Sirius nodded and felt the honeysuckle-flavored magic wash over him as his long waves spiraled and curled, retracting in length.

He watched as his brother waved his wand and gently lifted the clover crown over the precious curls, nestling them in like they belonged there naturally.

“Come on, Sirius, you can’t be grumpy when you’re wearing a flower crown. It’s against the laws of nature.” Regulus teased and pulled a small smile from pillowy pink lips, “Besides, if Barty sees you frowning, he will pester you until you admit what’s wrong, and I trust you not to murder my best friend.”

All semblance of a smile faded at the mention of Crouch.

“I can’t deal with Crouch today.”

“Find a way.” Regulus deadpanned.

The dramatic way Sirius rolled his eyes brought light and life to his face, and he found himself mirroring the infectious gesture.

“I think James got under his skin,” Regulus admitted.

“Oh, one good snog, and he’s *James* now.” Sirius teased.

“Technically, it’s been three good snogs, thank you very much.” Regulus bristled.

“What did James say that got Barty in a tizzy?” Sirius asked as the pair headed toward the castle.

“He put the idiotic idea in Barty’s head that *friends* could *kiss* .” Regulus frowned.

“Friends *can* kiss.” Sirius parroted.

“*Friends* can kiss. *Friends* can kiss, and it mean nothing. They just laugh and go about their day, not worried in the slightest. *Barty* and *Evan* are not *friends*. They're so much more than that. And I fear that if they kiss before they acknowledge that, it will only cause more heartache for them.”

Regulus gave Sirius a pointed look, which Sirius promptly ignored and finished, “Which means more annoyance for *me*. Great.”

The pair reached their destination, and the sound of the other students began pounding through the hall.

“I’ll talk to him,” Sirius said, running the back of his neck, “try to beat some sense into him.”

“That is literally the worst thing you could do.” Regulus laughed, “If you tell him not to, he’ll do it anyway just to prove he can. You’ve got to be *cunning* about it.”

Regulus tugged at the green tie hanging limply from Sirius’ neck, “Make him think it’s *his* idea. You fix my friend, and I’ll fix yours?”

“Don’t know how you’re gonna manage that one.” Sirius admitted, “I was pretty harsh on James.”

An evil smirk adorned his own face as Sirius stared at his doppelgänger, “I’m gonna offer him something he can’t refuse.”

Sirius mindlessly drifted toward himself as he whispered curiously, “What are you gonna give him?”

“*You.*”

Sirius’ cheeks burned at Regulus’ words and deepened as his brother hummed.

“What?” Sirius asked with an unsure smile.

“Oh, nothing, I was just thinking I really do look good in red,” Regulus smirked.

Sirius lifted his hands to his cheeks in an attempt to wipe away the evidence of the rose-tinted porcelain, and as his lips spread, revealing his own white teeth, Sirius cursed at his brother, “Piss off Reg.”

I Can't Go Back To Yesterday Because I Was A Different Person Then

Chapter Notes

To my darling bird: I hope you enjoy this chapter. Take this dose with tea. <3

Special thanks at the end.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

James trudged up the stairs. Practice had been abysmal, to say the least. The heavens had opened up and left everything beneath them sodden and cold, and while James could have easily used charms to dry and warm himself, he chose not to.

James opted to let the cold, wet curse of the October monsoon seep into his bones as an act of penance as he atoned for the sins he had committed. His lust for love, belonging, and unity was far too great, and he was foolish enough to think he could have *everything* .

James shivered as he dripped along the carpet of the Gryffindor common room, where he spotted Peter. The mousey boy smiled brightly when he saw James, then frowned at the state of him. His friend beckoned him over and did what James refused to do for himself.

His body felt lighter and warmer, but it was superficial. The damage of the morning *adventure's* fallout lingered, but he couldn't bring himself to regret having tasted Regulus' wine-flavored lips.

“How are you doing, Petey?” James asked as he set his broom against the arm of the red-velvet sofa before flopping dramatically against the cushions—willing them to swallow him whole.

“A sight better than you, I'd say.” Peter admitted, “Want to talk about it?”

“Not particularly,” James admitted as he fiddled with a golden thread loosely hung from the protruding button.

“How about some tea?” Peter offered.

James nodded and sat up, downing the cup in one go, letting it burn his tongue and throat.

It did nothing to rid him of the feel of Regulus' kiss—nor did it erase the lingering taste of Sirius.

Peter sat on the floor on the other side of the table and leaned over to silently ask for the cup.

James handed it over lazily and leaned back against the couch.

“Tell me, Pete,” James said with mockery, “what does my future hold?”

Peter was too engrossed in the cup and flipping through pages to note the derision, “Well, there’s a dog—which means faithful friends.”

James’ chuckle was wrong even to his own ears. His friends *were* faithful, and it was his own fault for the downward spiral he found himself in. That’s all he seemed to be doing lately—*falling*. And the further he fell, the further away he grew from the heavenly bodies he was falling *for*.

“Next to the dog is a—“ Peter squinted and tilted the cup to make out the object. His fingers flipped the page back and forth, trying to decipher the image in the porcelain, and finally declared, “A deer. Which represents disputes.”

James groaned as he pulled the worn scarlet pillow to hide his own blushing shame.

“Above the deer is a wolf—which advises to,” Peter trailed off, and James peeked through the pillow to see large green eyes staring back at him.

“*What?*” James gritted out, and Peter squeaked and averted his gaze, staring at the parchment, which was sure not to nip at him out of frustration.

“The wolf advises to guard against *jealous friends* .”

“Yes, well, that probably would have been more helpful information to have had *this morning* .”

He watched as Peter sank somberly and bit his lip, and James cursed himself as his friend seemed to shrink inward to avoid James’ wrath.

He was only trying to *help*.

“Go on, Pete, what does it all mean?” James said in a softer, albeit defeated, tone.

“Are you sure?” Peter mumbled.

“Yeah, ‘m sure.”

“Well, there are two more objects—a cat. Which advises to beware of trouble caused by treachery.” Peter rushed out.

James sat up and gaped at Peter, “Treachery? Like betrayal?”

Peter tilted his head in thought and shook his head, “Words are like art—many have multiple meanings, and it’s up to you to decide which definition to interpret based on the context of the situation or, in this case, your life.”

James hummed as he fell against the sofa and cradled the pillow against his chest, “What do you think it means, Pete?”

“It *could* mean betrayal—but given the dog...I would say it is more likely that it means deceitful behavior.”

“How is that better?” James groaned.

“Deception is *also* an art,” Peter smirked.

James deadpanned and threw his pillow at the cackling boy, “*Everything* is an art to you.”

“True—but what is life without meaning? The “meaning” is something you have to interpret for yourself like your own personal puzzle or riddle to understand and work out.”

James smiled tiredly—too tiredly to work out the riddle for himself, “how is deception an art?”

“Well—it’s all about intent, yeah? For instance—some of our pranks are quite deceptive, but we don’t mean any harm by them. They’re just a bit of fun. Now— *sometimes, some of us,*” Peter gave James a pointed look, “go a little overboard, and some people wind up in the crosshairs of our trickery, but we never *intentionally* harm anyone. Then, there are others who would deceive intentionally and purposefully cause harm. Then, of course, you have those who hoodwink with no intent and do not care if they hurt or cause no harm. They simply do it because they can, and well, you get the picture. But *in my mind*, the word treachery implies some sort of relationship—some kind of closeness with the person or persons, so combined with the dog—I would argue that those who are deceiving you have no malintent toward you; *however*, that doesn’t mean you shouldn’t be wary of the trouble caused by the likely playful deception.”

Peter pointed toward the black cat as if to prove his point.

“So, all-around bad news? Great.” James lamented.

“Actually—the final symbol above all of them is celestial bodies—which symbolizes good luck and great happiness.” Peter countered.

“So what is your final diagnosis, Dr. Pettigrew?”

“Your friends are playing a game that you have been roped into unknowingly, and some of them are not playing fairly; emotions and tensions are high, and you must tread lightly, but overall, happiness is just around the corner, James—just beyond the horizon. And it would benefit you to fix your eyes to the skies and wait for the sun to rise.”

James sighed as he looked out the common room window to see the moon's soft, pale light bleed through the glass and contrast with the brightly colored room.

He closed his eyes and wished against it, prayed to it, and he could practically feel its touch against his unruly hair made all the more untamable by the fall rain and the warming charm cast by Peter earlier.

It spoke to him in a deep timber, “Sirius wants to talk to you, Prongs.”

James opened his eyes to see Remus looking down at him with a soft, pitting stare.

James sat up, away from his moon, and curled in on himself, “I’m not really up for talking. I just want to go to sleep.”

Remus settled down next to him and continued to card his hand through James’ hair, pulling him in to rest his head on the werewolf’s shoulder.

“I think it might be best for you to talk. Don’t let the sun go down on your anger and all that,” Remus said as he rolled his wrist lazily in the air.

“He was so angry, Moony.” James said quietly, “I’ve seen him angry like that before, but it was never—he’s never been angry with *me*— not like *that*. ”

“Sirius is—going through some things. He had no right to take it out on you—but, well, he’s not known for addressing his feelings.”

James chuckled and sighed as Remus kissed the top of his head and mumbled into his hair, “I think you’ll find that he’s a completely different person than he was this morning, and you should kiss and make up.”

The waves of oceanic eyes threatened to crest and crash against the barrier of fine lashes as James whispered defeatedly, “he doesn’t want to kiss me.”

A light tug of dark brown locks forced James to look up at Remus, and those waves rose higher and higher in an attempt to soar toward the moon in their wake before a fluttering of lashes finally had them toppling over themselves, rolling down the shores of dark sandy cheeks.

“I don’t think it’s a matter of him not *wanting* to kiss you, James. But until he realizes that, if you like—I’ll kiss you enough for the both of us.”

James leaned in slowly before backing away—cursed with the memory of an angry Sirius, “I—I can’t. He’ll—“

“Sirius doesn’t own me. He doesn’t own you. He doesn’t own *Regulus*. ” Remus traced his nose along the edge of James’ cheek with his hand still firmly gripping James’ hair, neither pulling nor pushing, “What do *you* want, James?”

“I—“ James tilted his head and felt his lips ghost against Remus’ as he quietly confessed, “I don’t want you to kiss me—not if it doesn’t mean anything to you. I don’t think I can take another rejection today, Remus.”

“And what if it *did* mean something?”

“It can’t—you—you like Sirius. You’re meant to be with Sirius, and I can’t—“

Remus interrupted the spiral by curling his hand into the soft, fizzy locks, tightening his grip, “I *do* like Sirius. I also happened to have come to the realization that I like *Regulus* as well. But do you want to know a secret, James?”

Remus purred as his index finger skimmed against the stubble of James’ jaw and nestled beneath his chin. Amber eyes were drawn to James’ thin, pale lips and the pink tongue that darted out to lick them as James nodded sharply.

“You were my first crush.” James’ eyes widened brightly, and Remus smirked at the reaction.

“I—what—I—no—“

“You were. Eleven-year-old James oozed confidence and charisma, blinding everyone in his path with his beauty and excitement. At first, I was convinced that I just wanted to be you. That I was tired of being this creature of the night—pale and frail, constantly waxing and waning, a never-ending cycle. *I* wanted to shine as brightly as you, be as confident as you, be as beautiful as you. But then I got to know you—see the dark spots, see the way you expand and contract. And I realized you weren’t much different than me—and then idolization transformed into something deeper and richer. I was always quite jealous of Sirius—being able to climb in your bed and hold you at will. I never had the confidence to do that. Then I started wishing I was Sirius—watching his every move in some childish attempt to gain a secret knowledge to be that close to you. I’ve always been envious of what you two share. Which is the main reason I didn’t give you an answer last night. Not because I was jealous of *you* kissing *Sirius* , but because I was envious that he had tasted your lips when *I had not*. ”

James blinked owlishly at Remus, taking in his words, searching through whiskey eyes for lies and finding nothing but moon-drunk admission.

“So, in truth, James, it wouldn’t just mean *something*; it would mean *everything*. ” James watched as the courage slipped in the wake of his own silence and mourned the loss of the fingers as Remus relinquished his grip and continued, “But I understand if that’s not something you’re interested in explo—“

James leaned and stole the words from Remus’ tongue as he slotted his lips against the werewolf’s. It was a timid, unsure, fumbling kiss—almost like a childish first-ever kiss. It felt new—fresh—like when the rain would pour and clear away all the grime and haze of the world, leaving it green and bright, and James felt a wave of clarity in the wake of it and chased after the feeling with bolder lips and an adventurous tongue. He climbed on top of Remus, digging his knees into the fold of the sofa and rocking against him, fueling the flame of desire as their clothed cocks grazed against one another.

“Is that how you kiss your *friends*? ” A sly foxy voice echoed between them, breaking them apart with heavy breaths lingering in the space of the shattered moment.

“Rosier,” Remus gritted out in greeting, clearly annoyed by the intrusion.

“Lupin.” Rosier grinned widely, “You’re late for our *very* important date.”

“Date?” James huffed confusedly.

“Date.” Evan confirmed, “an arrangement to meet someone at a previously agreed upon time.”

James sighed in relief because, *honestly*— he could not take another person being added to the ever growing confusion of his romantic life.

“Remus agreed to meet me at eight o’clock.” The Slytherin pulled out a gold pocket watch from his trousers. “I have 8:17 p.m.” Rosier announced before he set his cerulean eyes on James and pointedly said, “It’s quite rude to keep someone *waiting*.”

Dark brows pinched in confusion, and his mouth parted open as he looked to Remus, who nodded toward their chambers.

Realization dawned on James as he muttered, “Oh shit! Sirius.”

“Indeed,” Rosier drawled.

James scrambled off Remus, grabbed the broom he had propped against the couch and began running for the stairs. He stopped mid-stride and turned on his heel to run back toward Remus and kiss him lightly on the lips as he whispered, “Thank you, Moony.”

He graced a blushing cheek with a quick peck and smiled brightly before darting back toward their bedroom and while he ran, Remus lifted his hand toward the phantom kiss that burned against his cheek.

James stood outside his room, the high from his moment with moony waning in the face of confrontation. He lifted his curled fist to knock and thought of the ridiculousness of knocking on his *own door*. Still, he gave three sharp raps and waited for permission to enter.

When none came, he felt like a fool, but still, he opened the door expecting a sour-faced Sirius and found nothingness instead. No soft light of a star, nor warm candlelight—only the moon illuminating the room.

A series of scenarios flashed before his eyes, and he felt the static pop against his veins. *What if Sirius had grown tired of waiting? What if he walked down to the common room and saw Remus and him kissing? What if he ran off in a fury?*

He would receive no answers tonight, though the questions were sure to plague his dreams. Defeated, James set his broom next to his drawn-curtained four-post bed and shucked off his clothes down to his underwear.

Too tired to shower, he cast a quick cleansing charm and set his wand on the table next to his bed.

Tired hands parted the thick scarlet curtain, and he nestled into his bed, pulling the duvet past his thighs. The cool night air ghosted along his body as he tried to quell the loud swarm of thoughts that buzzed around angrily begging for attention. But rather than chase the thoughts, he sought after a feeling.

Warm hands hugging his hips, satin lips that melded with his own, a rough tongue licking the soft edges of his mouth—scraping along his teeth, the hard undefinable proof of arousal as it rubbed against his own.

James let his left hand drift over his right nipple, pinching it lightly while his right hand slowly worked its way through the brush around his half-hard cock. Fingers lightly grazing against the electric blue veins that surfaced against the thin, pinkening skin.

He teased himself with barely there touches and allowed himself to moan loudly in the empty room.

“Jamie?” A rose petal voice that sounded a lot like Regulus sighed out next to him, and he retracted his hand away from his cock and his body from the bed as he tangled himself in the curtains and fell to the floor.

The curtains closed at will, leaving only a sliver of darkness to peek through.

James maneuvered himself to sit on his haunches and tried to capture a glimpse of the ghost, but all he saw was darkness. He reached over toward his wand, lit the candles in the room, and found Sirius Black’s head comically protruding from the red curtains.

A sly grin formed on Sirius’ face as he looked down to see James’ arousal and he cheekily asked, “Were you thinking about my brother?”

James raised his hands in innocent alarm and denied with a shout, “No! No—I was—no.”

The smirk seemed to falter for a moment, but it was surely a trick of the light.

Sirius rolled his eyes and opened the curtains, “Come along, Prongs.”

A soft, pale hand reached out to James and he couldn’t help but wonder if a *bite* would come along with it should he accept.

But bravery in the face of his fears won out, and he accepted the outstretched hand and hoisted himself up and into the bed.

The pair lay stock still next to each other, unsure where to begin—waiting for the other to break the silence.

After a moment, both boys found their courage at the same time and whispered simultaneous apologies.

“No, James—let me, just let me say this,” Sirius whispered, “I was unforgivably cruel to you. The truth is—I’m a bit at war with myself. And unfortunately, you bore the brunt of my battle. It was never my intention to hurt you. You see, it’s not in my nature to— *share*. And seeing you with my brother, who—well, you know how I feel about him—it evoked that age-old possessive reaction, and I’m not excusing my behavior; I’m just trying to explain it—explain my thoughts, my— *feelings*. ”

James stayed silent despite the energy rushing through his veins, trying to find a way out.

“I want it *all*. And I am trying to reconcile that in order to have it all, I have to be willing to sacrifice bits—bits of time, of love, of flesh so that I can have everything. And I’m not very good at letting go.”

James frowned and shook his head, “You don’t—you don’t have to sacrifice anything. Love isn’t—it’s not a piece of bread you have to give out and dwindle down to nothing. Love is like trees.”

Sirius furrowed his brows and looked at him incredulously in a way that reminded him so much of his brother, “Like *trees*?”

“Yes—like—we breathe out, creating carbon monoxide, and we feed the trees, and in turn, they feed us oxygen. It’s reciprocal and never-ending.”

“What happens if a tree doesn’t breathe for you?” Sirius asked quietly.

“Then it breathes for someone else, and that’s okay—and though it might hurt, it won’t last. You’ll find a tree that *does* breathe for you. And if you’re lucky— *you’ll find a forest that breathes for you*. And I’ve never met a luckier bastard than you.”

James smirked and watched as Sirius smiled sheepishly before pushing against him playfully.

“When did you get to be so wise, James Potter?” Sirius sighed dreamily against James’ lips, and the chaser could practically taste the unspoken wishes in his breath.

“You keep saying that—when are you going to realize I’ve always been wise—you’ve just never noticed until recently. Says more about you than it does about me, tosser.” James said affectionately, and while he longed to bridge the gap between their lips, he held himself back.

“When did you become so sesquipedalian?”

Sirius balked and frowned, “what do you mean?”

“Just—the way you apologized—you’ve been spending a lot of time with Regulus, I can tell. He’s rubbing off on you.” James said with wagging brows.

“Fuck off, I’m smart,” Regulus said with a mocking grin as he mimicked James’ deep timber, “I’ve always been smart—you’ve just never noticed until now. Says more about you than it did about me.”

“Oh, Sirius, you’re incredibly clever, of that I have no doubt. But you never used to speak like some Victorian prince wasting away in a castle before,” James raised his pitch and manipulated his tongue to let out a posh lit, ““It evoked an age-old possessive reaction””

Sirius blushed and smacked him upside the head with a pillow, “Dick.”

“Bitch.”

“Cunt.”

“Princess.” Sirius’ eyes widened in a way they never had before at the moniker, and James’ smile grew wide in realization, “Oh?”

“No.” Sirius denied with a firm voice.

“Oh, but you like that, don’t you, *Princess*. ” James teased.

“ *James*. ” Gryffindor could tell that Sirius meant for the name to elicit fear—meant for him to buckle beneath the weight of the tone, but instead, it came out as a feminine whine that sounded wrong—like that sound should have been emitted from behind plump pink lips.

James cleared his throat and let his head hit the pillow beneath him dramatically, groaning, “You’re making it really hard for me to not kiss you, Pads.”

Sirius leaned over and traced James’ lips with his fingers as he whispered, “I’m sorry, Jamie.”

“You’ve never called me that before,” James sighed as he closed his eyes. “I like it. Sounds soft—sweet.”

Like a tree cut down in the forest, he laid still, gasping for a breath of love as Sirius pressed his lips against James and forced it down his throat, reviving him.

The pair shared breaths between them, feeding off each other. The kiss tasted like bittersweet apologies, and James lapped at the flavor with a fervor.

The door opened abruptly and startled the pair despite their being well hidden behind a thick scarlet curtain.

Quiet chuckles bounced off the fabric and tickled their ears. When they finally calmed down from their childish fit, James plucked up the courage to ask, “Does this mean you’ve changed your mind?”

James’ heart stopped as he watched Sirius smile sadly. Sure, rejection was on the tip of his tongue, but as Sirius traced the concerned bushy brows of James’ face, he melted at the touch.

Sirius pressed a brief, chaste kiss on James’ lips and whispered, “Ask me again tomorrow, Jamie.”

Chapter End Notes

Special Thanks to faeries_withspirits for "moon-drunk" line. You're amazing.

MOONSHINE UNLOCKED. 🌕☀️

Also, please note that yes, Peter was still present during Moonshine scene, (little voyeur).

End Notes

Special thanks to Sagiko for reading it for me and listening to my mad cackling as I explained the plot of the fic.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!