

I would like to thank everyone for their support and encouragement. All your reviews and comments drive me further to write, so keep them up.

Heads up! I have started releasing early chapters on Patre(on). If you would like to read ahead, feel free to join. I will warn you that they are of lower quality, however, as they are not yet fully edited.

This chapter has been edited by Gladiusx. Do check out his awesome works on HP and ASOIAF.

Harry frowned when he realised the voice belonged to his least favourite teacher. What did *he* want? He could see all the occupants of the room looked confused, while the girls near the door had flinched away from the relentless banging.

“Pomfrey, open this door at *once!*”

The school matron looked stormy. She waved her wand at the door, which burst open, allowing the greasy bat himself in. He had a wild look in his eyes as he searched the room until they fell on him.

“What is the meaning of this, Severus? This is the hospital wing! I have patients here—”

Snape ignored her and glared balefully at him. Harry gazed back evenly, wondering what in the seven hells crawled up the man’s ass and died. A handful of wooden splinters that suspiciously looked like the remnants of a wand were grasped by a fist so tightly that the knuckles had gone white...

Oh.

Ever since the debacle in the Chamber, Harry had tried his best to thoroughly ignore the existence of Severus Snape. While Harry hated the git, he was also wary of him. Jon, however, had learned the hard way that people like Snape, who were openly antagonistic and wished him harm, needed to be dealt with swiftly and decisively if he ever wanted a moment of peace. He was unsure if he would be able to endure any of his usual behaviour without stabbing the fool with the basilisk fang that even now was sheathed on his belt.

Nevertheless, Harry reigned in his wariness - it wouldn’t hurt to hear him out. There must have been a reason why he was so apoplectic, and Harry had a bad feeling as his eyes traced the broken wand in the man’s hand.

“How may I help you, professor?”

The question seemed to incense Snape even more, the usual control over his emotions was non-existent. Harry could feel the rage emanating from the man had reached a boiling point, and his question had seemingly been the last straw.

"Help me? You *bloody brat* crashed into me, running like a lunatic in the halls. Look at what you did to h-my wand!."

The man was spitting mad as he waved the remains of the wand, the core of what looked like a unicorn's tail hair.

"I apologise for the harm and inconvenience, Professor Snape." He inclined his head slightly, much to the shock of the man, there was no reason to cry crow when he was in the wrong. "I had to carry Astoria here for an emergency. I am, of course, more than willing to reimburse you for the broken wand."

Susan, Hannah, and Luna looked on from the sidelines. Hannah and Luna had worried looks as they stared at the angry professor. Curiously, Susan looked annoyed at the man, and Harry could sense a heavy amount of hostility from her.

Tracey and Daphne approached from Astoria's bed to stand by his side, feeling uneasy.

"It's true, Professor Snape. My sister is very ill, and Potter's timely assistance prevented her from a lengthy stay in Saint Mungos. House Greengrass is willing to pitch in to cover the costs."

Daphne rationally appealed to the man's position as professor while subtly leveraging her name. Unfortunately, the potion's master seemed unmoved by the words.

"I don't care if he had to save the bloody minister from a boggart! Fifty points from Gryffindor and detention for the rest of the year, Potter. And I mean *the rest of the year*." He growled out, "Do you think my wand is so easily replaced?"

"But, professor," Tracey protested. "Surely, Potter should be rewarded, not punished, for saving someone's life?"

"Indeed, if everyone has to worry about reprisal for doing a good deed, then should we pretend not to see those suffering around us?" Susan's biting tone was full of disdain, "And to be fair, the only way he could have broken your wand was if you had it out while in the hallway. It's against school rules to walk the hallways with our wands out, as you would want to remind us, professor." The girl's lips curled into a sneer. "Don't you have a wand holster to keep it protected at all times?"

Slytherin's head of house was taken aback by the daring cheek coming from the girl and loomed menacingly over her. "I heard an imbecile screaming like a lunatic in the hallways. Of course, I had my wand out to defend myself!"

Susan stood there, ramrod straight, undaunted by the man looming over her, "Did you not think that someone shouting in the hallways near the hospital wing could, perhaps, have a reason? I guess my aunt was right about you, it was always you first before anyone else, wasn't it?"

Harry whistled inwardly. That girl had a lot of spine and wit with an acerbic tongue that could ruffle a duck's tail, let alone a bat's.

Snape's nose flared as he glared at the daring Hufflepuff, although Harry could detect a hint of wariness at the mention of her aunt. "How *dare* you? Fifty points from Hufflepuff!" Susan had a retort on her tongue, but the man didn't let up, "Would you like to join *Potter* in detention as well, Ms Bones?"

The sheer vindictive spite he could feel from the man caused Harry's eyebrows to rise, more so when his name was spat out with *such* venom. It amused him more than anything; although the supporting words of the girls were touching, there was no need for them to take on more heat from a man like Snape. Then again, he could feel that Bones also had nothing but hostility for the man, and he doubted it was from this morning's potions class.

"I've heard enough of this farce." The school matron stepped in, seemingly fed up. "Mr Potter has already apologised to you and promised to reimburse you for your wand. This matter should be closed here and now without any further retaliations." Poppy's tone softened a tad bit, "I understand the bond a wizard would have with his wand, but it was also your fault for waving it around a corner of the hallway."

Snape's scowl deepened, but he said nothing as Madame Pomfrey moved to stand beside Harry.

"If you insist on being petty about this, Severus, I will be forced to intervene." The words were cold and annoyed, "I'm sure Minerva will countermand any of your punishments due to the circumstances. I suggest you control your emotions – this is highly unbecoming of a professor."

The words finally seemed to reach the Potion master's head, making him squint his eyes angrily. He looked around the room and glowered at the sight of so many students watching on with interest. Susan still looked mutinous, and Hannah tried to calm her down. Luna was trying to melt into the background while Tracey and Daphne looked at their head of house with unreadable expressions, but Harry felt their *distaste*, so heavy it was tangible.

The potions master took several deep breaths, and Harry could practically see his towering fury and grief evaporate into nothingness behind his usual cold and stoic mask of apathy as Snape schooled his face. He could begrudgingly respect the ability to control one's emotions to such a degree, even if Snape still oozed hatred and rage when he looked at him. As the man looked at his broken wand one last time, and Harry felt something, a faint sliver he could not identify, break

through that perfect mask... wait, was it sadness? It honestly took him aback, but then again, Harry was pretty sure he too would be angry and sad if someone broke his wand.

"Very well," The words came out like venom through gritted teeth. "200 Galleons to be at my desk before the end of the day."

The black-clad man turned around, his dark robes billowing behind him, and Harry couldn't help but gawk at the sheer audacity of the man.

"200? But Professor, it only costs 49 Galleons for a new wand."

Harry turned to Hannah, confused. Didn't it only cost him seven Galleons when he bought his wand?

"The first wand you buy from Ollivander's is sponsored by the ministry. Return purchases are seven times as expensive." Tracey whispered quickly, and Harry realised he mumbled that last thought aloud. He nodded in thanks even as Snape stopped by the door and smirked at Hannah.

"Didn't your friend chastise me for the lack of protection for my wand? Well then, I will be in need of a wand holster." He turned his smirk to Harry, "I'm sure you won't have a problem with that, Potter."

Harry stared back at Snape impassively, but he was scowling inwardly. The audacity of the man, to fleece a poor orphan like him.

"Of course, he won't have a problem, as I will be covering the entire cost. Harry Potter has done a great service to the House of Greengrass, and we *never* forget our debts."

The cold voice of Daphne Greengrass sounded out from behind him as she held her sister's hand.

Snape's smirk turned into a sneer, "I care not. 200 Galleons, by the end of the day, on my desk."

He turned away and left the hospital wing, cradling his wand like a lost lover.

"Well, I never!"

Poppy was not amused, not one bit, as she glared at the doors with her arms on her hips.

Susan approached him hesitantly, followed by Hannah. "I'm sorry I goaded him into punishing you further, Harry."

"He would have done it regardless. At least it was interesting to watch him lose his composure for once. I take it you have a history with him?"

The tall crimson witch smiled wanly, "Sort of. A story for another day. In the meantime," She turned to her fidgeting friend, "Hannah? Don't you have something to say to Harry?"

Harry gazed at the slightly pudgy blonde witch. From his memory, Hannah was one of the many that usually stared at him with apprehension during breakfast. Remembering how she had agreed with Ernie over the suspicions of him being the Heir of Slytherin, he raised an eyebrow at her with a blank face.

"I apologise for doubting you, Harry."

"Whatever for?" He had some idea, of course, but he would rather let her say her piece.

"For believing you were the Heir of Slytherin. I know it's a bit late to seek amends, but I was wrong. I wish for your forgiveness and the chance to redeem myself."

Harry sighed inwardly as the girl gave a proper curtsy and awaited his response. He could feel the rest of the occupants of the room staring at him in trepidation. This was it; this was their chance to finally gauge Harry Potter. Would he scorn a girl for a childish mistake? One which he honestly never truly took offence to? He remembered how she tried to defend him when Macmillan accused him of being a secret dark lord. It was his fault for childishly clashing with them like that in the library, and that's probably why Hannah stood by her friends.

Hufflepuff Loyalty... He could respect that.

Still, that did not mean he would not take advantage of this situation. If he recalled correctly, wizarding genealogy had interesting things to say about the Abbots, specifically about a certain tavern owner named Tom.

"I accept your apology, Hannah. Let this be a lesson for both of us to not judge someone too hastily through rumours alone and to not lash out at people for speaking their opinion."

He added the last bit to lessen the bite in his words, but the girl didn't mind as she brightened up and smiled at her crimson-haired friend. They were about to speak further, but the school matron interrupted again.

"If we are done here, I need anyone unrelated to the younger Greengrass to leave."

Susan and Hannah nodded and gave a quick farewell and well wishes to Daphne and Tracey before leaving.

Luna looked lost, and Harry took pity on her.

"Come, Luna. Let's see what we could do about your stuff."

"No need, I need you to stay, Harry. This will concern you. Ms Lovegood, you can wait for Mr Potter outside. This won't take long."

Luna nodded hesitantly before she went into the hallway.

"Why does Potter need to stay, Poppy?" Daphne asked, not unkindly.

"I'm getting to that." Pomfrey turned to the boy, "Mr Potter. Do you recall what we discussed regarding your blood?"

He slowly nodded, a thoughtful look coming over his face. "I might have an idea of where this is going."

Poppy gave a light smile, "You're a smart boy. Would you be willing to donate some of your blood to help a sweet yet reckless child?"

Daphne looked alarmed, "Wait, what? Poppy, you can't! Didn't Healer Tonks explain that Astoria has a rare blood type? Combined with her curse, her blood rejects all other blood except her own."

Harry looked at her thoughtfully, "I thought you said it was a disease?"

She clammed up at her slip and looked pleadingly at her friend Tracey, who had a pensive look on her face, her green eyes narrowing. "Susan and Hannah are friendly, but we don't trust them enough to tell them the entire truth."

"And you trust me?" He raised his eyebrow.

"You saved her life," Tracey smiled gently. "And you got in trouble with Professor Snape because of that, yet you do not hold ill will to us for it."

"Of course, I wouldn't." Harry grinned at the blonde girl, "Snape's a piece of work. I'd be glad to stand in his way any day of the week for a pretty girl's smile."

Tracey's smile turned into a giggle, "Flatterer. No one ever said that flattery will get you nowhere."

"Oh, get a room, you two," Daphne huffed, yet Harry could see a small grin forming on her lips. "Besides, Poppy clearly believes you will be of help here."

"Indeed." Davis coughed and adopted a serious expression, "Long story short, it's a blood curse passed down generations of female Greengrasses. It's quite rare for it to actually surface, but when it does, this is the result." She gazed sadly at the sleeping girl.

He squinted his eyes, "How do you know all of this? You aren't a Greengrass, as far as I know, at least. Not that I know much, if at all, about either of you." A smirk appeared on his face, "Aside from the horror stories of slimy snakes eating babies in the dungeons of Hogwarts."

Despite her previous alarm, Harry could feel amusement from Daphne as she giggled at him, taking his joke in stride. She hooked her arm through Tracey's elbow, whose gentle smile returned, and hugged her sideways.

"Tell me, Harry. Has anyone ever said you have lovely green eyes?" Despite speaking to him, Daphne pointed to Tracey's eyes for emphasis.

The sudden compliment took him aback, and he stared at them confused, "What are you..."

His eyes darted between the two girls, Harry inspected them closely with a frown as if seeing them for the first time. They had the same large upturned eyes, almost cat-like, with a shade of dark green that reminded him of the colour of grass after rainfall. They were both the same height, which, to Harry's chagrin, was slightly taller than him. The same general facial structure, with the high cheekbones, full and well-defined lips, straight noses, as well as the same fair-skinned tone. The only difference Harry could see in both girls was the black hair of Daphne's and the golden blonde of Tracey's, as well as the cute mole under her left eye. The girls were so similar they could have been twins—

"You're sisters, aren't you?"

They both gave him identical cheshire grins, showing off two sets of perfectly straight white teeth that would have made the average British muggle green with envy.

"Correct. Tracey is my half-sister. To keep a long story short, my parents are old and had me late in life due to some... circumstances."

Tracey tightened her hands around her sister's waist, "Mom is muggle-born and became an apprentice to Daphne's mom for a time."

Daphne continued, and Harry was reminded of the Weasley twins' habit of speaking in turns. "One thing led to another, and she became my parents' lover, and yes, I mean both of them. One of the best decisions my parents ever made as they gave me the bestest ever friend any witch could ask for."

Tracey turned to her sister, and Harry could feel the pure joy and love that emanated from them both. It made him nostalgic as he remembered his half-siblings. He didn't care about the three-way relationship their parents had, as it was nothing strange compared to the Dornish or the Wildlings.

"I'm surprised you're taking this all in stride, Potter." Tracey gave him a sly smile, "It's not like it was a secret or anything, but we don't advertise it to the rest of the school. Although we probably shouldn't take your reaction as the regular one we could expect from the rest of the students."

Harry waved his hand in dismissal, "It's not my concern who beds who."

"How touching," They all jumped slightly at Poppy's voice, having forgotten about her. The older witch had a talent to seemingly disappear from their senses, even his. "Now, if you are all done, you can continue this conversation later. Potter, will you agree to aid the young missus?"

He raised an eyebrow, "And what makes you so confident I would be able to help her, Poppy?"

The school matron looked pointedly at the newly revealed sisters, "Are you sure you want me to disclose your medical records in front of them?"

"A bit too late for that, eh Poppy?" He snorted, "Besides, they already told me *their* secrets. Still, I hate leaving things half-done. I already helped the girl, might as well see it through to the end. If it's just a sample for now, then I do not mind."

"Wow, you really are a helpful soul, aren't you, Potter?"

"Now, now, *Daphne*." Harry grinned, "I'm pretty sure we are well-acquainted enough to skip such courtesies."

"How presumptive of you, *Harry*," Daphne nudged her sister, "I'm sure Tracey doesn't mind either, right?"

The blonde girl gave a huff of amusement, "Like Harry said, it is too late for us to pretend to be strangers. Now, Poppy? Would you mind explaining why you believe Harry's blood could help Astoria?"

It was Poppy's turn to look questioningly at him, and he nodded with a shrug.

"You can get the full details from him later, but after Mr Potter's ordeal in the Chamber of Secrets, his blood had gained restorative properties. Nothing crazy," she added hastily. "I will require further studies to see if it will be of any aid. His blood type is the same as Astoria's, so there is a chance that transfusion might work, but some tests need to be run first."

Astoria's sisters nodded and looked questioningly at him.

"Is her situation that desperate?"

Tracey gazed at her sister sadly, "It is. Astoria's curse won't allow her to live long. It would be a miracle if she reaches twenty, and that's without all the extra care we provide for her, at which

point she would be lucky to reach thirty. If there's the slightest glimmer of hope, then we will take it."

"We will definitely make it worth your while." Daphne added with a nod, "If this works, and you are somehow capable of helping my sister long-term, then you will have our eternal gratitude and the aid of House Greengrass in perpetuity. As Heiress Greengrass, I have access to plenty of gold and resources. We will provide anything you need, and I'm sure our parents would gladly offer the same."

"I'll help you with school or spell work if you like," the blonde sister interjected weakly, "I might not be as smart as Granger, but I am still no slouch."

Daphne squeezed her hands awkwardly, and Harry felt worry coming from the normally confident and vivacious girl. Gaining access to the Greengrass resources would be a windfall for him, considering what he read about them. They were renowned for their enchanters and the rune smiths they kept at their employ, not to mention the lord and lady's prowess in the arts. It was no wonder Lord Greengrass took a paramour, and no one dared to judge him for it.

Nevertheless, this was his blood they were asking for. If there was ever a more powerful reagent for magic, it would be blood, especially his, as the Red Witch's words reverberated in his mind. If there was power in King's blood, then what kind of power would be in a wizard's?

"What guarantees can you offer me that you will not misuse my blood?"

"I can promise you, Mr Potter, that only I will have access to your blood. I will not use your blood for anything you do not know unless I have your explicit approval. If the testing shows results, you can always be present whenever I am transfusing the blood, just to be sure that none of it would be misplaced. Yet your concerns about the matter are understandable. I am willing to swear a vow if need be, and I am certain they will also be willing to do so."

The sisters nodded empathically at the matron's confident words. Pomfrey was simply being her professional self, but Daphne and Tracey truly cared about their younger sister.

A small part of Harry, a tiny one really, from Jon to be more precise, thought it would be better to let nature run its course. Astoria was clearly not fated to live long; why swim against the current? That part was ruthlessly squashed by Harry, however. There was nothing wrong with striving to do your best to save your loved ones. So what if it went against nature? This was a world of magic; they lived and breathed the *unnatural*.

He presented his left arm to Poppy, "You are already bound by the healer's vow, Poppy, yet I will appreciate another one if you are offering. As for you two, we will discuss more once we know that my blood works. I'm not altruistic enough to give away my blood for free."

The sisters grinned happily, while the school nurse extracted enough of his blood to fill a small vial. After a hesitant moment, she asked to extract a similar vial from his right arm, and he easily obliged.

The matronly woman then swore a vow of secrecy to him, and Harry nodded graciously. He was sure there were other ways to formalise such vows, but a verbal one was enough for him. His enhanced senses allowed him to ascertain that Poppy Pomfrey was genuine, and even Ghost agreed in his mind that she was trustworthy.

"This will do." Poppy summoned a rune-encrusted table and placed the vials on them, "It won't take long to find out whether you're compatible. Come back in an hour or two; Astoria shall stay here until she recovers her strength. Meanwhile, perhaps you should check on Ms Lovegood?"

"Cheers, Poppy." Daphne dragged him and Tracey outside the hospital to find the young Ravenclaw leaning on the wall, seemingly lost in thought.

"Luna, it's good you waited for us." Harry called out to the girl, who nodded shyly, "I'm not sure if you know them, but these are Daphne—"

"We've met several times." Luna's gentle voice interrupted. "I would like to think we are friends?"

Harry felt for the girl at her hesitant tone. If the sisters said anything that—

"Of course we are, Luna. Anyone who can put up with Tori for so long deserves a trophy." Daphne's teasing voice was full of mirth.

"Thank you for being a good friend to Astoria." Tracey held the girl's hand comfortingly, yet Harry still saw apprehension in the younger girl's eyes.

"No one blames you for what happened to Tori, you know." Tracey also noticed it seemed. "It was her fault for missing out on her sessions with Pomfrey."

"Yeah, once Astoria is back on her feet, I will give her the spanking of a lifetime. I swear that girl will be the death of me one of these days." Daphne sighed theatrically.

That finally elicited a giggle from Luna, and they all enjoyed the pleasant mood as they walked towards the Great Hall. Harry glanced at the younger girl as she chatted with the two sisters.

"Luna? Are you ready to tell us what you argued with Astoria about?"

The girl sighed, clearly reluctant but also resigned. She must have resolved herself as she waited for them outside the hospital.

"I guess I should."

Daphne seemed to sense the mood shifting, "Maybe we could chat in privacy?" She pointed at one of the many abandoned classrooms in Hogwarts.

Tracey opened the door and led them in. Once they were settled, Harry and the sisters waited patiently for Luna to gather her thoughts before she spoke.

"So this has been happening all year?"

Luna nodded, causing Daphne to frown.

"Why didn't you tell any of us?"

The girl shrugged, "I would rather not bother anyone."

Harry sighed at the girl's mindset. How easy it was to roll over and blame oneself rather than your tormentors. He should know, as his memories of muggle school flashed in his mind. Clearly, the girl did not want to acknowledge that she was maliciously targeted, for by doing so, she would admit to being *weak*.

"But they stole your dead mother's photo! This cannot be allowed to continue, Luna." The normally cool and collected Tracey agitatedly held the younger girl's shoulders. "Please, let us help you. Didn't you say we were your friends?"

Luna's breath hitched, and her eyes shimmered. She nodded emphatically before a forlorn look came to her face.

"But I er...don't actually know who has been stealing my stuff."

An awkward silence followed, and Daphne facepalmed.

"Argh, come on, girl! Help us out here. Can't you think of anyone who looked at you wrong? Anyone who would call you names or try to trip you as you walked past them?"

Luna hummed in thought, "Well...Almost everyone in my house calls me Looney, but I'm unsure if it's because they don't know my name or something else." Harry flexed his fists while Tracey fidgeted.

"Although, now that I think about it, they never call me that when Tori is with me."

"Smart of them," Daphne flicked her dark locks as she smirked. "I taught Astoria always to make a scene if someone bothers her. No one would dare mess with my sister."

“Probably why she never noticed until so late in the year,” Luna said sadly. “A few girls would laugh at me whenever I was close or sometimes say mean things to me. I think one was called Amanda, but I’m not sure.”

Daphne looked ready to march up to Ravenclaw Tower and set the place on fire, and Tracey wasn’t too far behind.

“Okay.” Harry clapped his hands, grabbing the girls’ attention. “Let’s not get ahead of ourselves here. Trust me when I say I would like nothing more than to set your housemates straight, Luna.”

The young girl gave him a shy smile.

“However, I’m already in trouble with one head of house. I highly doubt I would be able to talk my way out of expulsion if I maimed half a dozen students.” Daphne looked like she disagreed as a wicked grin blossomed on her face. Thankfully, Tracey pinched her sister, causing her to yelp in mortification. “I think it’s time for us to pay a visit to your head of house, Luna. I am certain that Professor Flitwick would be truly interested in this matter.”

“Ehhh?” Daphne looked shocked. “Going to the teacher for this? That’s lame. We should be handling this ourselves. I thought you would be all for justice, Harry. It’s a good cause as well!” The girl looked at him pleadingly with puckered lips and large eyes, and he had to remind himself that the possibly insane girl was begging him to set fire to one of the Houses of Hogwarts.

“Justice sounds good, but we still need to find Luna’s belongings.” Harry rubbed the bridge of his nose as the girl blew a raspberry. He looked at Tracey, who shrugged helplessly before he sighed.

He's been sighing a lot ever since he met the sisters.

“Come on. The sooner we get this done, the sooner we can check on Astoria.”

That certainly lit a fire in their eyes, as they all followed him in search of the Charms Professor.

*A*L*S*M*

Severus Snape rushed down the damp, dimly lit dungeon corridors. His black robes flowed behind him as he cradled the broken remains of the wand. He entered his office, retrieved his wand and its holster from his desk, and sealed the doors. He continued to another door that led to his personal quarters.

The potion master’s quarters were shrouded in darkness, except for a flickering candle of green flames casting eerie shadows. In the corner of the room, hidden from view, was a secret shrine dedicated to Lily Potter. The shrine was filled with mementoes from their past, including locks of

her hair, photos, letters, and even some of her old schoolbooks and effects that he stole from her destroyed house on that fateful night many years ago.

A wave of his wand sealed the door, and then Snape touched the tip on a specific rune that activated a ward that would prevent any form of sounds, scents, or visions from entering or leaving the room. It had cost him a lot to install such a ward scheme, but needs must.

Severus stood before the shrine and gently, lovingly, placed the broken wand in an old jewellery box with the initials L.E. on it.

He whispered to the wand as if it held the essence of Lily Potter herself. "Lily, my love," he murmured, his voice trembling with an unsettling intensity. "I am so sorry for breaking your wand. I only borrowed it for a short while to collect your favourite flowers, but I swear it wasn't my fault."

The man's face took a disturbing turn as his control over his turbulent emotions shattered.

"It was that wretched spawn of Potter who broke it! No," He held his head, "not just Potter's. He's also your son! How could you, Lily? To sleep with the enemy like this? But know I forgive you, for I can never truly be angry at you."

Snape's eyes bulged with feverish intensity as he gazed upon the shrine. He reached out to touch one of the locks of her hair, caressing it as if it were her very skin. "You should have been mine, Lily. You should have been with me. We could have been together forever."

A deranged smile spread on his face, "The damn brat broke your wand, Lily. He must pay. Even if I swore to protect him, that doesn't mean I can't make life difficult for James Potter's son."

He shook his head furiously, "No! He is still Lily's son. I can't go too far with him. He even apologised and offered recompense, which James would never do! Perhaps you truly live on inside him, Lily?"

Silence was all he received, and his face twisted into a grotesque sneer. "It must be a ploy. Yes, James Potter lives on in his son more than you do, Lily. Strutting around the castle as if he owned the place, and his constant rule-breaking, just like his father. Even the friends he keeps are just like the ones James Potter had. At least the Weasley brat won't grow up to be a menace like *Black!*"

The man shuddered at the memory of his worst foe. He reminded himself that Sirius Black was in Azkaban and would never see the light of day. He stared at the picture frame sadly, "I have yet to see an iota of you in him."

Snape paced anxiously in the room yet did not break eye contact with Lily's picture. "Even the way he looked at me earlier – it was like he believed he was superior to me. At first, I thought the calm defiance was you shining through, but I was wrong, Lily! You have to believe me; that boy is no

good. There is too much of James in him, and Dumbledore refuses to see it. The boy has all the teachers hoodwinked; only I can see his true nature!"

More silence as Snape fell to his knees, and a single tear flowed down his eye as he gazed at the picture of the woman he idolised. He whispered incoherently for a few minutes as if he was in a conversation that only he could hear before he stood up abruptly.

"As you wish, Lily. I will continue to protect the boy. You did not believe me when I warned you about Potter and his ilk, and even now, you refuse to see the reality of the boy." Snape gritted his teeth as a sob escaped him, "Yet, your wish is my command, my love."

Snape took a deep breath, letting all emotion melt from his sallow face. His normally stone-faced expression that looked like a derisive sneer more than anything else, gazed one last time at the shrine. "I watch over you always, my sweet Lily. Every move, every thought, I know it all."

Silence followed as he left the room; Lily's smiling face in the picture looked unpleasant as the candle flickered, casting uncanny shadows over the shrine.

Harry gets close to the Greengrasses, and I bet none of you imagined I would have Tracey be their half-sister.

It is never explained what the blood curse did to Astoria, so I'm taking it literally in this case.

Snape is being Snape. Nothing to sing about. I have no proof that's what he does in his free time but you can't prove he didn't have a shrine for Lily either ;p

If you like my works and would like me to leave me a tip or read a few chapters ahead, feel free to join me on Patre(on). My Patre(on) name is the same as my pen name.