Harry Potter and the Golden Path - Year Four

by HeruKane

Summary

We will be following the life of a more intelligent and powerful Harry Potter, one who seems to be constantly tested by Fate, Destiny, and Magic. This story follows him through his Hogwarts years and the friendships, connections, and powerful decisions he makes along the way. It will also see him taking his place among the elite of the magical world, that of the Empire of Albion.

This story covers Year Four of Harry Potter's time at Hogwarts.
Welcome all to the start of year four, with all the amazing events that will be going on in his year.

From this point on you can expect at least one, though mostly two, sections per week (Sunday or Monday depending). As only four sections are not yet written, of which the first is in January of the school year (the second of four tournaments), there should be no interruption in posting.

For those wondering about the four unwritten sections, they are already outlined and even have the starts of their days written. My issue isn't so much with ideas but rather taking those images in my head and putting them down on paper in words - not so easy when one is golf-archery, another a dungeon, and a third a maze. But I have every confidence that I will get them written once the words come to me. :)

To both long time readers and new comers, I say thank you for reading, and I hope you continue to do so for as long as the journey continues.

See the end of the work for more notes.
Interesting Introductions

Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Late June

"Wait, aren't you that bloke who was all over the news last year?" Says a woman at the bar and grill that Harry and Sirius stop at after leaving the Platform.

Before Sirius can say anything, a man moves next to her and says, "Wasn't it in the news that it was all a misunderstanding?"

Sirius gives both individuals a roguish smile before saying, "Hello good sir, my lady. Indeed, I am and there was, although since then the government has apologized most profusely for their impolite characterization of myself." He then reaches for their hands and kisses the back of both.

To Harry's shock, and carefully hidden grin, it has both blushing as they accept the gesture.

Sirius gives them a sultry grin before commenting, "While I would like to stay and chat me and my godson here are a bit tired from a long journey and are in need of some good food." He then gives them both a bow before gesturing Harry to lead the way.

The two stammer their good days and apologies before heading out, much to Harry's amusement.

A little while later, after they were able to place their orders, Harry gave his godfather a grin. "Wow Sirius, can you teach me how to be so suave?"

Sirius chuckles at that, "Sure, in time Harry." He then grins widely before adding, "Can I say in this you are definitely more like me than your father."

"Oh," Harry says then with a twinkle in his eye adds, "What, he wouldn't have flirted with both of them?"

A shake of the head, "nope." Which gets a wide grin from both wizards before they change the subject slightly and continued the late lunch early dinner meal.

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"So, after reading some books both Nicolas and Professor Flitwick gave me I realized that there has to be many more ways one can manipulate spells and rituals than what is being talked about." A pause, "including using manifested and essential magic." Harry was saying as Sirius and he were walking back to 4 Privet Drive after a nice stroll around the nearby commons.

"You are not wrong," Sirius says with a nod, "Though what you are talking about is even beyond NEWT material." A pause, "in fact its basically mastery and archmastery manipulations."

"Is that why I don't see much more than half mentions and suggestions that more exist when I read about the subject?" Harry asks curiously.

"Exactly!" Sirius says with a smile and a nod. He then opens his mouth to begin explaining more about the magic when suddenly they feel a blast of magic.

Uncontrolled, uncomplicated magic of the type that a child would cast unconsciously.
The two wizards look at each other before Sirius manifests his Heir Ring and takes out his wand, before swish and flicking it in a complicated seeming yet easy to learn pattern.

"Hmm," Sirius then says before turning to look at Harry, "I thought only Arabella lived around you?"

"So, did I Sirius, so did I." Was Harry's immediate response. He opened his mouth, like Sirius did earlier, to comment more about it when a second blast of underage magic flew over them.

"It's not enough to set off the Ministry, especially considering they know magicals live nearby."

"We need to check don't we Sirius?"

A nod, "Yes, which I know you suspected the moment we detected the first wave of magic."

Harry grins at that while adding, "So which house did the magic come from, since I know the spell you cast would aid in learning that."

Which causes the two to grin at each other for a moment before Sirius says, "2 Rowan Drive."

"Ah," Harry says with a nod, "new residents." At a tilt of Sirius head in question Harry explains, "Last year the house was up for sale and the last I had heard was that a number of offers had been made."

"Right," Sirius says with a nod, "I guess we should head that way."

Harry nods at that before gesturing towards the direction they need to travel. A path, much to Sirius' amusement, which was designed to completely bypass the Dursley residence.

As they reached the door of the house Harry says softly, "So have you ever given a 'welcome to the magical world' speech?"

"Nope," Sirius says with a pop on the "p" as he grins at Harry before schooling his features and knocking on the door.

The door opens, and a man stands there, "Hello, how can I help you?"

Sirius gives him a smile and reaches out for a handshake before saying, "Hello my godson and I were passing by as I brought him back to 4 Privet Drive when we felt something. I think we have the answers to the questions you have on the experiences you are facing."

Harry blinks on how blatant Sirius went with the statement, but then he thought was there any other way to go about it. No matter what this is going to shatter one's perspective of the world.

The man stares at the two for a moment in shock before blinking and nodding. He then steps aside and opens the door wider, before gesturing for the two to come in. Once they do he closes the door and says, "I'm not sure how you know something is going on but honestly Karen and I are at our wits end, so any help would be great." He then pauses as they walk into the kitchen, "I'm Chris by the way and the twins are Jordan and Jenny." He then turns towards his wife and says, "Honey, these two came here saying they know what we are going through."

"Hello Karen," Sirius says with a smile as he moves over to shake her hand. "I'm Sirius and my godson here is Harry." A pause, "He currently lives with the Dursleys at Number 4 Privet Drive."

"Harry, Sirius." Karen says with a smile, "Its ah nice to meet you I guess. Though I am not sure how
you can help us."

The two wizards give each other a look before Sirius says, "Now there is no easy way to say this, so I am just going to lay it out. Okay?" At their looks he continues, "Have you noticed things going missing or moving places? Or has your children been doing things that should otherwise be impossible?"

"Oh heavens, you do understand. What is going on?" Karen says as she seems to go boneless in relief that there is an explanation for what is going on.

"Well," Sirius says slowly, "this is going to be the hard part. But your children have magic, they are magical."

"What?" Karen says with a gasp.

"Magic's real?" Chris adds moments later.

"Not only is magic real and your children have it but there is an entire world out there with people who have magical abilities." A pause and a gesture, "We have magic as well which is why we detected the magic aura they sent out." Which leads to their introduction to a whole new world.

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"Now one of the points that we need to be firm on is that the magical world does much to maintain its secrecy." Sirius states at one point in the conversation.

"What happens if we told others?" Asks Chris curiously.

"Honestly, the magical world protects itself. At best the muggles you told would have their memories erased and you would be given a fine. At medium you would be put under a geas to not reveal the information to unaware muggles." A pause then Sirius says in as direct a way as possible, "But at worst your memories would be changed, and your kids would be taken from you."

"They would do that?" Karen asks shocked.

Harry speaks, which was not the first time he did in the conversation, "if it was necessary than yes we would."

"But its not automatic right?"

"Not at all. Magical children to muggle parents, we call them muggleborn, live with their mundane, muggle, parents, all the time." Harry says. He then pauses, "I live with my muggle aunt and uncle for example and my parents were magicals."

Karen tilts her head then says, "Would I be right in saying I sense a story."

Harry nods at that, "You would be right on that." He then pauses, "One that Sirius will tell you since part of it is very important for you to know." Another pause, "Though I must take my leave, its late and I need to get back before the Dursley's get upset."

This leads to handshakes and goodbyes, a hug between Harry and Sirius, followed by Harry leaving.

Once that is done Sirius gives them a slight smile before saying, "So a few decades ago a dark wizard appeared in the magical world." This would lead to the story of the First War, and the nature of the whole Boy Who Lived, being told.
Walking into the Dursley residence and seeing Dudley in the living room watching tv was not what Harry expected. "Mum and dad went out to dinner," says Dudley the moment he looks up and sees Harry standing there. "Why so late?"

"I would have gotten back sooner but after leaving the pub I ran into someone I needed to speak to." A pause, "You didn't go with them?"

"Nah. I was going to at first but then I learned it was a business dinner, which is the last thing I want to participate in."

Harry nods at that, "Yeah, I can understand that." A pause, followed by a tilt of the head, "Do you have something to eat?"

A nod, "I will be getting food delivered. I already ordered since I figured you were going to see to your own dinner."

"You thought rightly," Harry says with a small smile, then he nods at his cousin, before making his way up to the smallest bedroom in Privet Drive.

Walking into the room he blinked as the tent was already set up. He laughs slightly as he closes the door and heads into the tent. As he makes his way to his office he says, "Hey Dobby, thanks for setting everything up for me."

Pop

"It was no problem for Dobby's greatest master ever!" He then pauses, "Your godwolf asked Dobby to tell you he is still finishing up some tasks at Hogwarts and so expect to see him much later."

A nod at that, "Thanks Dobby for the information. Can you quickly pop to him and inform him that Sirius will likewise be delayed as he is still talking to the parents of a muggle neighbor whose twin children just did magic."

"Dobby will do that for his best master ever!" Dobby says while popping away.

Harry just gives the space where Dobby was a grin before heading to his desk to begin working on some of the tasks he said he would do.

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Ward Transfer

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Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Late June

Albus Dumbledore appeared on Privet Drive on a day the Dursley's had told Harry they would be away. This was good as he had no need nor wish to explain to them what was going on. Walking up to the front door he was not surprised to see it was open and Harry standing there gazing at him.

With a bit of judgment in his eyes.

Choosing to not comment on it he nods at Harry pleasantly, "Hello Harry, how are you doing today?"

"Quite fine actually as the Dursley's are out, and I'm looking forward to the ward transference as well. I can't wait to get out of this place." Is Harry's polite response.

"Well if things go to plan then tonight will be your last night here. I will take the wards and put them in a node stone and then in a few days we can set them up at Potter Manor." Is Dumbledore's statement, twinkle in his eye.

"That is good to hear," Harry says. "So do you mind if I watch as I find this fascinating."

"Oh no not at all, and yes it is intriguing magic. What I'm doing is only possible due to both your magic pattern and the one you share with Sirius, otherwise it would fail."

Nodding at that, "Yeah I read about it, it's an intriguing bit of magical manipulation you are doing. It's soul and blood magic, and yet not." Harry shakes his head at the opposites, but then smiles.

"Plus its entirely a choice based magic, which is why it's so powerful. If force was involved it would never work." Dumbledore then pauses before adding, "In tandem with the potent wards of Potter Manor your safety will be assured."

"I'm happy to hear that," Harry says with an sly smile, "I like being safe. So do you need anything from me."

"Just knowledge of where the wards might have become centered at, where did you spend most of your time." Dumbledore asks.

Of course he was not expecting the answer he was given.

"From age one to middle of my eighth years I spent most of the time in the Cupboard Under the Stairs. From that point till Hogwarts the smallest bedroom was where I slept. I spent more time in the kitchen baking breakfast or in the back garden tending to it. So where would the wards have rooted." Is Harry's answer.

"The cupboard," Dumbledore says in shock, "please show me."

So Harry does.

"Lad," Dumbledore stops unsure of what to say. "I didn't realize, I didn't know. I knew they were less than loving but I didn't thing they would do this." Gesturing to the space.
"It's done and over with, has been for years. A group of teachers realized I was holding back, figured why, and then worked to make things a bit better. I was moved to different classes then Dudley and 'made' to play sports. It got me a new bedroom and freedom from Dursley stupidity."

"After Hogwarts, what of the summers."

"I bought a wizarding tent with expanded interior and set it to in the room upstairs. Within the house but not. But now I'm free, and I won't be back here." Harry says with firmness.

"No you won't," a pause, "so this is why you are so mature."

Harry just nods, what else can be said.

Deciding to get the ritual work finished Dumbledore asks Harry to stay back as he reaches out with wand and aura. Golden sounding syllables flow from his mouth as magic begins moving to and fro around the residence. Slithering like a serpent, prowling like a lion, and flying to and fro like an eagle the magic gathers and coalesces around the two before moving towards the crystal in the Headmaster's hand.

In the silence upon completion Dumbledore says, "Single drop of blood please, to bind it to you."

Expecting this, after researching to make sure it was proper, Harry takes his Potter athame and cuts his finger, one drop and one only is allowed to fall. The crystal glows for a moment before returning to normal.

"Okay, that's it the wards are now crystalized and ready for transference. Please stay within the property till you leave but with your tent that shouldn't be much of an issue." Dumbledore says with a twinkle in his eyes.

Harry grins at him, "I prepared for this and so can say I'm not going to be sitting on an empty bed feeling alone." A pause. "Actually, I plan on working on my summer assignments for if I get it done now I can enjoy the summer at Potter Manor."

"Now that does sound like a perfect use of your time." An eye twinkle. "Well, I'm going to be heading out but I did want to tell you what to do. When you get to Potter Manor both you and Sirius need to place five drops of blood on the stone and then place it on the ward pedestal. It should activate soon after and bond with the wards."

"Good to know Headmaster, thank you for the assistance and for not fighting my move." Harry says as he shakes the Headmaster's hand as he heads off. Afterward Harry goes back inside to work more on his assignments.

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Once he apparated back to Hogwarts the Headmaster made a beeline for his office, he needed to think. He had only been there for a half an hour before his alarms rang that McGonagall wanted up. So with a sigh he let her in.

“So,” she said as soon as she got in, “did it work.”

Dumbledore nods at that, twinkle in his eye, “yes it did. The wards crystalized and when Mr Potter heads to Potter Manor it will get added to the already potent wards there.”

“What did you think about the residence?” Is McGonagall’s next question with a glint in her eye.
The twinkle fades from Dumbledore’s at that. With a sad shake of the head, “You were right Minerva, they are they worst sort of people, and I apologize to you.”

A widening of the eyes, “What happened? What did you find?”

A sad scratch of his beard, “from one to eight he lived in the Cupboard Under the Stairs,” a pause, “and yes with capitalization. He was only moved to an actual bedroom when his teachers realized he was hiding his abilities and so investigated.”

“Oh Albus,” McGonagall says, not sure how to respond as she knows she can’t say I told you so. “I think that this proves you need to listen to us, it wouldn’t have happened if you trusted my judgment or had asked Severus or Remus about them.”

“I know,” a pause then, “we are lucky Minerva, lucky. His home life was similar to Riddle’s, but unlike with him Harry choose to take the experience and work to make sure others did not experience the same thing.”

“We are lucky Albus, I agree. As are you Albus, as he has chosen to forgive you for placing him there.”

“His ability to forgive those who wronged him is legendary Minerva, and our world is better for it.” A shake of the head then with a twinkle in his eye, “As is his ability to make friends out of even those who should be his enemies.” While thinking of the connections the lad has with those of his year, and above, and their parents.

“That and his love for our world Albus, that is what is going to get us through whatever dark times may come,” is what McGonagall says before changing the subject.

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Moving Out

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Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Late June

Harry was sitting in the room he was given at the Dursley's deep in thought. He knew today was going to be the day that he officially stopped residing here, and he couldn't have been happier. In fact, so happy was he about it that he was the one to pack his belongings and take down the tent - rather than let Dobby do it for him.

For all the fact that he had come to like the tent, he was quite ready to actually reside in a bedroom. But not just any bedroom, no the master bedroom of Potter Manor. The one that over a score of Potter men had resided in while leading the House in honor and glory.

His musings were interrupted by hearing Vernon yell up, "Potter, get down here now."

Smiling, Harry took one last look around the now empty room and headed downstairs. As he was walking down the stairs he heard Sirius, cause it was clearly Sirius' voice, say -

"Hello Vernon, do you remember me, I'm Sirius, we met at James' wedding."

"What are you doing here? Also, why did you get yourself put in jail, as you could have taken the boy otherwise." Was Vernon's response as his veins seem to pop up.

By this point Harry had come downstairs and was standing in the doorway where the hall met the living room.

Giving a small smile, as he wasn't going to let the oaf of a man disrupt his mood. "I get angry when betrayed you see, and on that night a friend had betrayed me. So I was in jail for murder. But it's okay, I escaped and was later proven innocent, so everything is fine." A wide grin. "Now I am here to pick up Harry."

"Which is perfect because I have decided to no longer live here." Harry says with complete confidence as he walks past a still steaming Vernon and moves to stand next to Sirius.

"What about the promise made to us boy, watching over you in exchange for protection and money." Vernon says.

While Petunia, who had since come into the living room just snorts, a most unlady like sound. "Vernon dear, we don't need any of that if it means we no longer have to deal with him and his kind. We are better off anyway."

Harry nods, "yep, we are all better off without contact. As for the deal, Vernon, well as the original one wasn't made with my permission I decided to declare it null and void. But since I am kind and generous, traits that my mother had Petunia, but that you do not, I will still provide you with the money for the next four weeks. After that its done and gone, and we will hopefully never speak to each other again."

Sirius just beams at Harry then turns to glare at the Dursley's, "I would say thank you for watching and caring about him, but since you really didn't I will say instead. Your parents would be ashamed of you Petunia, and I know that as I met them. They were, as was Lily, kind and good hearted people, unlike you two." Then he turns to Harry, "ready to go pup."
"Yep. Just one final thing. Vernon, Petunia, Dudley - and yes I see you hiding there in the corner - do know this. You won't see me again unless one thing happens - if any of your descendants have magic and I am still around then you can believe I will appear to make sure you treat them well. You understand." They nod, especially Petunia who knows what magic can do. "Good, then off we go Sirius, I am all ready."

Sirius nods at Harry once, then looks at the three muggles with the power of Black level derision and disdain before seeming to cease noticing them. Which causes a shimmer of cold to flow over there body. With a smile towards Harry, he says, "Good, lets take a walk to the park before heading out. For old times sake."

"Yes," Harry says with a smile, "lets." With that the two walk out of the house, hopefully for the very last time.

As they walk down the street they remain silent, though it is interrupted when they hear a voice running up to them yelling, "yo Harry, wait up."

They stop and turn around as they see Dudley coming up to them. He stops right in front of them and seems to take a deep breath, as if fortifying his spirit for what he is about to say.

Eventually he speaks up, "Look Harry, I know we haven't really gotten along and stuff," he then rubs his hair, "and that I have, well, bullied you. But I wanted to tell you that I have begun getting some help at school and I now realize I was wrong." He pauses for a moment. "I discovered last year that the therapist I was speaking to was a squim, I think that's the word." Not even waiting for correction he continues. "Anyway, when I mentioned my cousin was Harry Potter he, well, he told me some of the stuff you had to deal with. Anyway, as this is the last we will probably see each other I just wanted to say I'm sorry, I didn't realize it, and that I hope at some point maybe you can forgive me." He looks between Sirius and Harry and finishes with, "and that if I do have a magical child at some point in my life I will not do to him or her what mum and dad did to you. Okay."

Harry just nods, a bit shocked. "Well Dudley, I can't say I expected this but I am happy to hear that you are seeking help. If you ever find yourself in a situation where you are desperate and in need of help then you may call for Dobby."

As Harry says that a blink and Dobby appears, "Has Master Harry called for his Dobby?"

"Yes Dobby I did. This is my cousin Dudley, he just apologized for what he has done to me in the past. I accepted it and I want you to listen out for his call. If you hear it you are to answer it, to see what he needs." He gets a nod from Dobby who disappears as he knows he is no longer needed.

"Now Dudley know that this is when you are in danger, not for any little random thing. Okay."

Dudley reaches out with his hand to shake Harry's, which Harry accepts. Dudley then nods and turns around to walk away. He stops for one second and then says softly, "As a note, I never thought you were a waste of space." He nods firmly and leaves.

Harry and Sirius look at each other, still somewhat in shock. "Well, that was weird, and no magic was done to make him change was there." At Sirius shake of his head. "That's what I thought." They then continue walking to the park, in silence.
Once at the park, Harry and Sirius take a look at each other and the area. This was the area where Harry spent many hours in his youth wanting to escape the Dursley's. It was also where Harry first met dog Sirius, and the friendship developed.

After taking his needed look Harry turns to Sirius and says, "Lets head home."

Sirius gives him a look and then reaches for his arm and between one second and the next the two apparate away, hopefully never to return.

Upon appearing in the great hall of Potter Manor it was all that Harry could do not to laugh. At the sideways look from Sirius he gave in and chuckled. Looking at his godfather, and a smiling Remus who was coming into the room Harry says, “I was just laughing at how this was supposed to be my official first time here.” A shrug then, “but I bet Dobby already unpacked everything from the tent into the master suite.”

Dobby appears with a pop and a big smile, “Master Harry knows it, you are good to go to sleep in your bed and work from your official Lordy desk.”

As the other two laugh at that Harry smiles, “thanks Dobby for the help in that.” A pause, “though I hope you didn’t get too carried away for its not long before we go on Circuit.”

Dobby shakes his head, “Dobby can pack everything back up with a click of his fingers since Dobby’s magic is on it all.” With that, and a little bow, and a big smile, he pops away.

Sirius laughs, “Merlin, the little guy sure knows how to make a scene.” He then turns towards Harry and says, “well, lets transfer the wards before we head off to do our normal tasks.”

Harry nods at that and leads the two men towards the primary foundational ward stone, the one located deep within the depths of Potter Manor. As they walked Harry says, “I’m not sure if its just my luck or if the Headmaster actually overestimates how difficult this would be.”

“Its really neither,” Remus says.

“Though you must admit Remus,” Sirius comments, “a bit of the Potter luck does have a part to play.”

A tilt of the head followed by a nod, “Okay yeah, your right.” He then turns to Harry and says, “You are finding it easier because you have had the Head Ring for over a year now. If you either did not have it or just got it then the magic would probably require a much more in depth ritual from your official magical guardian.”

“ME,” Sirius says with a laugh showcasing how happy he is to be able to actually say that.

Harry nods, then smiles, before adding, “Okay that makes sense.” By this point they got to the room, Harry opens it, takes out the orb and then says, “because right now this is as simple as seven drops of blood, an act of Ring backed will, and bam, the wards are added to the already existing wards.” So said, so did, for Harry did not feel like there was any need to delay on this particular act.

Taking out the Potter athame he cut his finger and dropped the seven drops of blood in such a way that each drop touched by the ward orb made by the Headmaster and the actual core stone of Potter Manor. Then when that was done he basically slammed the orb onto the foundations while manifesting his House magic as a blinding white light. After both Sirius and Harry gave a bit of their magic to finalize the ritual they could feel the pure and potent magical weaves fly through them both
before injecting themselves deeply into the wards. When the light faded the stone was gone and Potter Manor was shifting a bit as it took in the added protections that had originally been manifested by Lily before being made stronger by Albus Dumbledore.

Once the ritual was complete the magic settled Harry smiles at the two, claps his hands gently, and says, “right then, its time for us to start the day properly.”

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Final Medical Update

Chapter Notes

Surprise! Four sections were uploaded today for your reading enjoyment, so enjoy! :)  
As a note next week there will only be one section uploaded, because its 12k in length and thus I feel can be on its own. As a bit of a future look, I am simply going to say Grand Circuit.

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Final Medical Update

Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Early July

"So in our final estimation Ms Ginny Weasley is as healed as she can be given the resources that currently exist." Healer Wetherby says at the end of an almost hour long presentation in a meeting room of Gringotts. Not that he spoke the entire time for there were some updates from the other healers and even questions from those gathered.

"Does this mean the end of sessions with a Healer?" Sirius asks a moment later.

"No, not entirely. We will just be pulling them back to monthly checkups and quarterly full sessions." Is the response from Healer Wetherby.

"Would that be for life?" Asks Bill curiously.

"Honestly, I doubt that though since the future is not written its hard to say." A pause then in a calm tone the Healer adds, "Relapse is of course possible though at the same time unlikely."

Nods of understanding come from around the room.

It is Remus that next asks. "So is there anything that Harry should or should not do?"

"Not really no. He can interact with her as he would anyone else." A pause, "In fact treating her like he would treat others would in fact be the best." A pause, "This includes, for example, hugging her in the same sorts of situation that you would hug others."

Harry nods at that while explaining what that means for those in the room who do not know. "Though it did not come easy to me at first I found that a hug given to someone sad often does more to help them feel better than any sort of sitting around and talking."

Nods from that.

It is Bill who says, "So, for the official record having her undertake occlumency training helped a lot."

"Oh yes, very much so." Wetherby says with a firm nod. "We were able to trace the issues all the way back to the event and the kernel of magic which suppressed House Wealsey’s healing magic from doing its job. Not only did we overcome that block we worked through the issues that made it possible. This would not have been possible without occlumency."
"Right then," Harry eventually says, "so that basically sums it up. Thank you Healer Wetherby for your hard work and great service. None of this could have happened without your aid."

A slight bow, "Thank you Lord Potter for the kind words I appreciate them."

Arthur nods in agreement at that before saying, "right Lord Potter, now that that is out of the way what is it you require of the House of Wealsey before this matter can be put to rest."

"I have been thinking about it for a while and I think the act that I would require to settle the matter for good is one Ginny Weasley performing a bit of community service."

"Wait, really Harry?" Bill says shocked.

Harry chuckles before saying, "honestly what else could I ask for. Money is out, I have more than, well, anyone could even imagine having. I refuse to accept public censure, as I like House Weasley. I wouldn't require incarceration or house arrest as that would be pointless after all the healing I supported."

Arthur nods at that before saying, "I think I know the perfect event. The Otterguard Hundred is holding a summer festival I could have her work there."

As the others nod at that Sirius adds to the discussion, "If more is needed to satisfy the conditions then you could always have her assist the workers in the Triwizard Tournament." Seeing their confused look he explains, "They are going to need some workers, supply assistants, and administrative staff."

Arthur nods at that before saying, "That is quite doable and would make this 'punishment' last long enough to satisfy magic." A pause, "I appreciate you not asking for even more."

Instead of answering Arthur, Harry turns towards Healer Wetherby and says, "How difficult was the lessons to get Ginny to recognize what she did was wrong?"

"Difficult, emotionally especially though the process to heal her was also tough on her body and magic."

"So you would say she 'suffered' and was 'punished' during the procedure?"

"Using such an altered definition yes," Wetherby says with a nod, fully understanding where Harry was going with this.

Harry then sits up straighter as his Potter Head Ring flashes upon his finger. He then says, "Which is why the House of Potter, who she has wronged, considers the matter to be solved once she completes her community service this year." A pause, "The House of Potter also recognizes that this will be the last scheduled meeting we need on this topic, with any further updates on either the community service or Healing being relegated by message or dialog updates."

Giving Harry a nod, Arthur Weasley sits up fully, flashes his Weasley Head Ring and says, "The House of Weasley accepts the fact that Ginny Weasley did wrong. We also accept the fact that the healing process was part of the process of righting the wrong she did. We also accept the fact that her performing community service both during this summer and during this upcoming school year would suffice on dealing with this situation." A pause, "The House of Weasley accepts that this is going to be the last scheduled meeting about this topic and that any updates we or our Healers need to give will be done by message or conversation."
There is silence for a moment as the magic flows and the comments are allowed to settle.

Ragnok then speaks, "With that settled I do believe we can call this meeting to an end."

With that said the meeting comes to a close and everyone starts packing up their files to head out.

Before Bill could make it to the door Harry moves next to him and says, "Hey Bill, before you head out I was wondering if we could schedule a meeting. There is something cursebreaking related that I would like to get your input on."

Bill nods then tilts his head in thought and says, "Are you available in an hour for a meeting here at Gringotts?"

Seeing a nod from both Remus and Ragnok leads Harry to nodding himself, "of course." He then chuckles before adding, "In fact that would be quite useful as I have numerous business matters to go over with."

This gets some laughter as the group begins packing up in order to head out.

8888

"So the Valerius naval base expansion has done wonders for your bank account," says Ragnok as they are discussing matters of economics.

"It also helped with employment across the board," Remus adds a moment later.

Harry nods at that before tilting his head in thought, "Would it be possible for us to expand the naval base construction, and its terrain expansion, to my other Houses?"

Remus purses his lips at that in thought, "though its not entirely a common occurrence it has been done before." A pause, "How did you want to go about this?"

"The House gaining the improvement pays for it while Valerius would gain temporary basing and operation rights in the new land. This way the benefits exist even if the Houses stopped being linked by me." Is Harry's answer to that.

A nod from both Remus and Ragnok on that. It is Remus that says, "I will gather the information so you can decide where you want the ports to be constructed at."

Whatever Harry was going to say was interrupted by a knock at the door and Ragnok saying, "Come in."

It was Bill, which was not actually a surprise to anyone as the timing made perfect sense.

"Hey Bill, come sit," Harry says with a smile and a point to the seat nearby.

"Thanks Harry, so what can I help you with?" Is Bill's answer after shaking the hands of those present.

Harry gives a smile at that before saying, "There is a series of standing stones in a part of the Forbidden Forest which is, surprisingly enough, a Potter holding." Seeing the confused look on Bill's face Harry nods, "yeah I know, weird right, but nonetheless it is true."

"How strong are the wards?"

"Epic level strong," is Harry's response to that. "But what makes it even more interesting is that
while the outer layer is House Potter from what I can tell the inner portion is something else, something ancient."

"You would like me to work on it?"

A nod on that, "Gringotts accepted the contract and I would like you to head the team who would go there and figure out what is going on." A pause and a grin, "Included in the work contract are deals with numerous Hogwarts professors whose fields overlap with whatever your team may find."

"Oh," Bill says shocked but happy, "That is brilliant actually." A pause, "so I can visit Hogwarts?"

"Yes, I was able to get the Board to support granting you the necessary permissions to visit the school even outside of the event days."

"Sounds perfect Harry," Bill says with a nod. He then turns to Ragnok and says, "I just need the mission assignment from Gringotts and the document about the project and we will be good to go."

"Here you go," says Ragnok with the orders.

While Harry smiles and says while passing his own file over, "And here are the project details."

"Great. So give me a few days to read over everything and we can meet again to discuss the matter."

"Sounds great!" Harry says before changing the subject slightly in order to make sure this wouldn't effect any of Bill's other work. Which it wouldn't Harry would learn as Bill was temporarily between assignments.

8888

"I have to say I am quite glad that the matter of Ginny's actions are done with," Harry says with a smile as he talks to Charlie over mirror. The fact that he was talking to her brother about it had long stopped being an issue, if it ever was Harry thought.

"While I agree I must say you handled it superbly Harry," Charlie says with a smile. "You didn't let friendship cloud your judgment but rather used logic and magic to make sure you did right by everyone. So good on you Harry, good on you!" He then stops, chuckles and adds, "oh, by the way, you having her do community service as the final part, brilliant."

"It was, wasn't it," Harry says with a chuckle. "Anyway, its done now, so hey Charlie, hows it going?"

Which leads the two to discussions that last hours before they both get pulled away by people who are physically around them. Much to their amusement.
Grand Circuit

Chapter Notes

Surprise!

Yes, that's right, it's Wednesday and you are getting a new section, a very special section, of the Fourth Book ahead of schedule.

No this isn't a change to the schedule, no this doesn't mean you won't be getting something Sunday.

What it does mean is this - after a three day marathon session of writing all five missing sections of my Book Four were written. That is all four tournament sections and the graveyard scene which you all figured would come since why else have a tournament if its not going to end in a particular person's rebirth. *grin*

The point is, they are done, written, which means BOOK FOUR IS ENTIRELY WRITTEN AND COMPLETE!!

Now, unfortunately, that doesn't mean I am going to be posting all the sections at once, sorry. But it does mean its done and written and thus it can be posted when the time comes with no gaps or interruption or worry of writers block.

Before I leave you to read this section I wanted to give some numbers, because I am proud of them. Collectively the four task sections contain 29,000 words, 8.2k for first, 8.5k for second, 7k for third, and 5.3k for fourth. Additionally, the graveyard section is 2.6k, all very respectable (hehe) numbers.

But yes, here is the GRAND CIRCUIT section, earlier than planned as a sort of gift and reward due to my finishing the missing sections long before the point when I required it.

I do hope you enjoy the somewhat long, 12k, journey that is covered in this section.

Later all!

:)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Grand Circuit

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Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Early July

Gazing at the two wizards sitting in front of him Harry says, "Right then. I guess its time we go over the last minute preparation check list." A pause as the nod at him. "Right, Dobby, please attend."

Pop.

"Does the greatest master ever to be alive have need of Dobby?"
Before Harry can say anything Remus laughs and adds, "You know Dobby you don't need to put it that way."

Dobby nods many times then grins, "Dobby knows but Dobby thinks its funny, and the dogfather agrees."

Eyes turn to Sirius who grins unrepentantly at the claim, mostly since its quite true.

"Good to hear you are having fun," Harry says in response after giving his own grin. "Anyway, I called you here to ask, how are you with gathering what we will need once the Circuit begins?"

"Dobby has everything for the normal moments but is still missing a few of the more specialized items. They are designated to arrive in a few hours so we will be good by the time the great master says go." Is the happy comment from Dobby.

"Our tents?" Is asked by Remus coming into the conversation.

"All cleaned then filled and packed. Dobby is going to do the connecting magic once the ritual starts so Dobby magic doesn't interfere in Merlin magic." A pause, "Dobby doesn't think there will be any issues but Dobby wants to make sure."

"Sounds great Dobby, thank you for what you are doing." Harry stops and then smiles while saying, "Honestly your help is going to make everything flow so much better. So thank you."

"Dobby only does the best for his most special and amazing and awesome and great and kind and awesome - "

"You are repeating yourself Dobby," Sirius interjects smoothly.

"-and nice master there ever is and will be!" Dobby finishes without missing a beat. He then grins at the group and pops away to the chuckling of the three wizards.

"He showed you!" Harry says in response to what just happened.

Amused, "He did, didn't he." A laugh, "I honestly have to say, I like the guy, I really do."

"Yeah, so do I," Harry says with fondness. He then shakes his head, "Right. So how about you two, how are you on the gathering?"

"Well I have coordinated with everyone as required. I do have to say I am extremely grateful for the work Merlin put into the ritual. It has made my life easier since the messages are basically form letters." Remus then smiles before adding, "so basically we are good on an administrative standpoint."

Seeing the others look at him Sirius says with amusement, "the hat I'm wearing for this is as the Lord and Head's senior representative. Which is interesting as it gave me all sorts of information on the dynamics of the ritual." A pause and a grin, "more than I think most 'senior representatives' get due to my status as the Heir of House Black and your oath-bound godfather."

"Which makes you magically recognized as a parental figure right?" Harry asks.

"Yep!" Sirius says with an affirmative nod. "So my access is somewhat like yours, which is brilliant actually." A grin then, "soo it has allowed me to basically work out the ritual elements while you have been dealing with everything else you need to do."
"Good to know. We can go over that in a bit so I am fully up to speed and then, well, we can start."

"Understood." Sirius says, "especially since before we do there is something political I want to go over with you both." Which starts a somewhat sideways conversation for a while.

A little ways into the mirror call has Harry saying, "so yesterday I was contacted by Bailiff Renee Rosemary." A pause, "she is the Bailiff of the Chateau Lumiere in France." Another pause before, "as she wanted to inform me that a number of muggle children - two boys and a girl - managed to find their way into the magical estate."

A shocked look comes to Charlie's face, "wait really. But how did they bypass the wards that I know that estate has?"

A grin, "because even though they are muggles they were young enough that their pure belief in magic let them mimic a magical."

"Oh," was Charlie's shocked answer. Then he grinned and laughed at the nature of that. "That's, honestly, that's brilliant. It means muggles could get into our places if they find children who believe that magic is real." A shake of the head, "how has this never happened before?"

"I know right." Harry says with a grin of his own. "Honestly I was so amused that I ordered Baliff Rosemary to provide them with free passes to come back." A pause, "after we called upon some Potter Obliviators that is."

"Of course," Charlie says with a laugh. "So how did your ritualists react to the order you gave to come up with ward enhancements that would remove such loopholes?"

A soft smile at the fact that Charlie knew him enough to know that was basically his immediate reaction. "Well, they complained about being overworked but I truly knew they didn't mind. They like the fact that since I took up my Headship they have been given many opportunities to utilize their skills."

"I figured on that." A pause, "so when are you planning on releasing the information to the other Great Houses?"

A sly grin, "well not until my own Houses have already completed the rituals that's for sure. Though I do plan on granting the ritual as a boon to my allied Houses, especially Weasley and Longbottom." A pause then with a grin Harry adds, "and yours of course as well."

A chuckle, "thanks." A pause as Charlie stretches a bit, "well I need to head out. It's my friend William's birthday later and I have to head to the hall to aid in the set up. Talk to you later."

Harry smiles at that before it suddenly got sad. "I just realized that for me it will feel like two years before we talk again."

Eyes widen at that, "oh, right, your Grand Circuit." A pause, "hmm, well, okay." A shake of the head and then a mischievous grin comes to Charlie's face, "well, don't worry about it or dwell on it." Another pause, "but yeah I have to go. But as I said, talk to you later, and have a good start to your circuit."

With that said Charlie gives one final nod, a big smile, and then ends the call the moment Harry gives his own nod.
"So am I the only one who didn't know about this random secret chamber next to the floo room?" Asks Remus as the three wizards and Dobby walk into said room.

"I only learned about this room two days ago," says Sirius in response. As they look towards him Harry says, "honestly that's because up until three days ago this room didn't exist here." At their confused look he explains, "the Grand Circuit chamber is normally located in a pocket space next to the central Foundation Core of a Great House's chief manor. It manifested up here not long after I made the House magic aware of our timetable for the ritual."

"I love magic," Remus says with a shake of the head. "Especially since despite living here all my life there is still more to know." He then gestures to the room around them. "Despite visiting here as a child, living here for the last few years, and being your Seneschal for two I didn't even know this place existed."

The resulting grins and chuckles is combined with Sirius adding, "honestly, though I knew of the Grand Circuit even I didn't learn the full details, and I have been the Heir of Black for almost two decades now."

"Honestly, I wouldn't be surprised if there are even other matters we won't learn about till the time is right. Magic protects its own." A pause, "anyway, with that said I think its time we make any last minute double checks as the ritual needs to begin."

"I'm not going to worry about any personal supplies as I trust that Dobby has handled that," says Sirius with a smile. Which only gets bigger as Dobby nods quite excitedly in response. "But I did want to make sure we have all the appropriate paperwork and other such matters." A pause, "since I am pretty sure once the ritual starts we will not gain free reign of Potter Manor again till the ritual completes itself."

Remus grins at that, "this is where I come in." He then gestures towards his amulet of office. "Once Lord Potter here," a smile, "officially informed me of the Grand Circuit a whole list of preparatory spells and rituals came to me." A shrug, "most of them were magics I already knew but the few I didn't aided me in making sure everything we needed was brought in an official chest." Another pause, "I cast said spell like a dozen time just to make sure."

Sirius grins at that before reaching over to hug his mate, "sounds perfect love." He then nods, "I triple checked myself, especially in matters of your Houses dealing with other Houses and the Ministry. So I am good to go with all the necessary materials as well."

A nod, "same with me." Harry then laughs, "it seems I got a similar list of spells pushed onto me as well, though they were boosted in potency by my Head status." A pause, "they also double check the work performed by my officials, as a just in case thing." A pause to let the shocked looks lead to grins and laughter. When it stops he adds, "the main area I needed to make sure of was in financial organization as I won't have access to Ragnok during the Grand Circuit."

Nodding at that Remus says, "that is unfortunate." A pause, "so what now?"

A chuckle, "well if we all agree we are good to go then we shut the door I activate the magic of the ritual and it all begins."

Blinking at that Remus then looks at Harry and says, "wait, is that all?"

Harry grins, "honestly, from our perspective yes." A pause, "from magic's perspective, not so much."
For there is much going on behind the scenes for the effect."

Sirius, noticing something in Harry's voice, asks, "how much of the ritual do you know about?"

"All of it." Is Harry's steadfast answer. Seeing their shock he adds, "I am the Heir of Merlin after all." A grin one which turns into a full blown laughter at the gobsmacked looks they get on their face."

Eventually, with a shake of his head, Remus says, "right. Of course you are. How silly of us not to realize that." A pause, "okay, well, no use in delaying the inevitable, let us begin."

Which is exactly what they do. Harry takes the moment to inform the local House Elves of his start, with him getting a response of a warm hug. Grinning Harry then goes to the front set of double doors, the one that links to the present, and closes them. A drop of blood, well three actually, and a channeling of some magic followed by him speaking of words of power and the ritual begins.

Magic appears and rises before flowing over them all, encasing them in a warm blanket of protection and power. The room starts glowing which grows more intense moment by moment till it becomes pure white, and blinding.

Then they feel it, the transition point, the moment where they leave normal time and get wrapped up in a bubble of altered space-time. Though they don't feel any different they know they are restricted in location till the end of the rite - their magic tells them that.

Just as they begin wondering 'what now' the back wall begins glowing brightly before shifting, revealing a double set of doors. At the same exact time the double doors they came in shimmer and disappear as an indication that they may only move forward.

The new doors open up as Harry says, "well, we might as well head out."

So said the four move through the doors and into what is clearly a portal-portkey chamber. Though the room is decorated in mostly Potter House designs hanging on the walls is a tapestry for each of Harry's eleven Great Houses, as tradition dictated. In front of them lies the portal doorway, which is shimmering and granting the view of what Harry knows is Thornhedge Hundred, which Magic picked as his first step.

As the others looked at him Harry goes, "first Remus will go, as my High Seneschal, so he may announce the arrival of the Lord and Head of House Potter. Right after him Sirius will arrive."

Harry is interrupted, "am I your High Chancellor, Heir Black, or Parental Advisor?"

"High Chancellor for ten of the Houses but Heir Black for the House of Black, as you assumed." Harry then gives his godfather a big smile, "while your parental status is important to the ritual your official status as my Chancellor has precedence." He then stops and nods towards Dobby, "after I walk through you will walk through yourself, but invisible."

Dobby's eyes widen at that before he nods fervently, "Dobby understands, Dobby will do." A pause, "who may Dobby let know of his presence?"

"Eventually anyone but at first only the House Elves. You will know when magic accepts your reveal." A pause, "so any questions?" Silence for a moment then Sirius breaks rank and hugs his godson, an act quickly followed by Remus doing the same.

As the group pull back and get into position Harry gestures towards Remus, who gives his own grin before walking through the portal archway.
"When is Lord Potter going to arrive?" Asks Advisor Jeremiah to his boss the Sheriff of Thornhedge Hundred.

With a chuckle Sheriff Lance Louis says, "Lord Potter will arrive precisely when he means to, not a moment sooner or a minute later."

Just then the archway which had manifested a few days before in the gateway chamber begins glowing. Then, as if walking from out of a door, comes none other than Remus Lupin. With a smile he says, "hello Sheriff Louis, and folk," the later part added when he notices the rest of the entourage presence, "the Grand Circuit has begun."

Which was the exact moment that Sirius Black then appeared from out of the gateway. He nodded towards those present before moving to the side so he was standing next to Remus.

Once he had gotten situated the gateway glowed one final time as Harry Potter, decked in the proper robes of a Lord and Head of House, walked through the gateway and appeared in the manor house.

"The Lord and Head, Harold James Potter," Remus Lupin says with nobility in his voice.

Though nobody took to knee the whole room bowed low to honor their Head of House's arrival. Then, once they stood up, the group began moving forward to kiss his ring. Though it was High Seneschal Remus Lupin who introduced Potter Sheriff Louis after that it was Louis himself who introduced the rest present. Which included the officers and staff of both Vane Manor and the whole of Thornhedge Hundred.

Once introductions were out of the way the tours, meetings, and events would truly begin.

"Every year a competition is held where residents of the hundred are able to send in their proposals. The runner ups get rewards while the winner gets to see their design built." Says the Sheriff as Harry and his entourage as they walk through the room with all the nominations.

"Oh, wow, that is quite interesting." Harry says with a smile as he walks the table. "That is a great way to get the residents involved in community actions." A pause, "I might see about getting other hundreds to have something similar," another pause, "not the same, that wouldn't be fair to you, but similar."

"You honor us sir," says the commoner standing behind one of the maze set ups.

Harry smiles at that before saying with a gesture covering all the gathered nominees, "so I am wondering your thoughts on why you set up the mazes as you did."

Which basically got them into a conversation that lasted the afternoon.

"I must congratulate you Sheriff Louis for the nice visit and splendid hundred you have here," Harry says on Sunday after breakfast as the visit comes to an end.

"You honor us Lord Potter," says the sheriff with a smile and a slight bow.

In response Harry reaches out for a quick handshake, not with Louis only but all the gathered men
and women in the entrance chamber. Once that is done Harry gives a final nod before heading through the portal in order to return to Potter Manor.

As soon as he is in the Circuit Ritual chamber he moves slightly to the side in wait for both Sirius and Remus. The wait isn't long but he knows that they are finishing the standard political talk and update now that the Lord is out of sight.

"So that was interesting," says Remus as soon as the two arrived.

Sirius grins, "one down and seven thousand, two hundred more to go!"

Giving a chuckle Harry says, "it's not that bad Sirius." A pause, "but your right, we have so many left to go that we should move on."

So said Harry manifests his Head Ring which causes the portal to shut off, the wall to shimmer for a moment, and the room to shake. When it calms down two minutes later a new portal activates.

Harry gestures, "time for us to do it again!" Which is exactly what happens.

8888

"You have both a beautiful and function facility here Sheriff Lambert," Harry says gazing down upon the work floor from the second floor balcony office.

"Thank you sir," Sheriff Jocelyn Lambert says with a smile. "We have worked hard to make this place the best such facility in the land."

"I hear that its over a thousand years old?" Asks Sirius with a smile.

A nod, "indeed. This facility was first built in the dark age before the coming of King Arthur." A pause as proudness comes over her voice. "The facility was built in tandem with Priests and Acolytes from the three great recognized Faiths of Albion."

Gazing down where the craft-priests and artisan-singers were working their combined spiritual and physical work Harry nods. "The combination of prayer and science is simply marvelous."

"Through a quite secret technique," pause, "though you know it by Ring and file," another pause, "this facility produces pots and urns designed to enhance faith and protect against evil." She then stops before adding, "though we could replace some of the people and magic with more 'advanced' techniques that reduce crew and increase productivity we have long believed that to do that would take away the power of the operation."

"Considering how much the economic life of not just this hundred but three others means your decisions on this are perfect." A pause, "which means you will hear no arguments from me in favor of you increasing productivity by using new techniques that reduce the workforce."

"That said," Remus adds, "is there anything that you feel would increase capability and productivity but without reducing the other advantages?"

"Yes," she says with a wide grin at the question. "If its possible can we be added to a list that might get enhanced by Valerius-based seafaring expansions. While the naval base is pointless we would benefit greatly from the presence of longer seabeds to house our clay pits and fish beds."

A nod, "interesting." Harry then gestures back to her office, "let us sit and discuss the details for though I didn't realize this place was available for such ritual I see no reason not to consider it."
"Thank you Dobby," Harry says with a smile as the house elf brought him a cup of hot chocolate as he sat in the comfortable chair in the living room of his tent.

"Dobby knows Harry Potter could surely use it!" Is the happy comment he says before popping away to complete other duties.

"Don't I know it," Harry says with a small laugh as he goes back to his book. He only gets a few pages into it when he hears the beeping of his Mirror communicator. "What," he says with a shocked blink then, "Mirror who is calling."

"Charlie Weasley," is the calm answer as if this is not supposed to be impossible.

"He is." Silence, as the mirror doesn't know sarcasm, "right, answer."

A moment later a happily grinning Charlie Weasley manifests in light in front of Harry's seat. "Hey Harry," is his first comment, "miss me!"

A blink followed by a wide grin, "Charlie, wow! How am I even talking to you now?"

A sly grin, "well, this has been something I have been working on." A pause, "at least since you told me about your Grand Circuit. See I knew there had to magic that could link our places, even if it was temporary."

"Wow." Harry says still a bit shocked. "How did you get it to work?"

"Don't know," is his simple answer, which is followed by a grin and shrug. "I can say its a Merlin and Sidus combined ritual and thus was marked Monarch approved by my Head Ring. It somehow creates a link between two time streams." A pause, "though its a bit intense to use it is nothing we can't handle due to our House magics."

"Wicked!" Harry says after hearing the explanation. "That is totally and completely wicked." A pause, "so does that mean we can talk like normal?"

"Yes mostly," Charlie says with a wide smile. "Though I have to tell you besides this time you will be the one who needs to contact me."

A nod, "is there a ratio?"

"Kind of," is Charlie's answer, which comes with a grin since he knows how its kind of less than helpful. A shake of the head, "probably once every four trips or eight days for you at minimum."

"Nice!" A tilt of the head, "so can we link when we are talking to each other?"

"No," is the firm answer, "like the stretched time part of Albion's history there is no actual connecting our conversations to actual moments in time."

"So how are we doing this?" Harry has to ask.

"Magic brings us temporary into sync at a moment that makes sense."

A nod, "right, okay, that makes sense." A pause then a laugh, "well it makes as much sense as any such advanced application of magic can." A shake of the head. "Right then, so enough of how awesome the magic is, and how brilliant you are for finding it."
"Well who says we have to stop talking about my brilliance?" Asks Charlie in a cheeky tone of voice.

"Ha," Harry says with a grin. "Seriously though, this is a great opportunity for us to just talk!"

Which is exactly what they do, for over an hour before Harry needs to head to bed since the next day is going to be a long one for him.

8888

"So what are they protesting?" Harry asks Randal Odo, the local First Watch Captain.

"They are upset that Sheriff Ives recently closed down the Emerald Eye Inn." Seeing the confused look on Harry's face the captain explains. "We discovered that Emily Fulk, its owner, was not just lying but a wanted fugitive hiding from local, hundred, House, and Royal law a dozen fold."

Eyes widen at that, "I see." A shake of the head, "so did we catch her?"

"Yes," Odo says with a grin, "in the act of trying to destroy evidence." He then chuckles, "it seems she was so used to the muggle world she forgot we can recombine evidence with either a few spells or one potent ritual."

"Good," Harry says with a nod. He then gestures, "so what is going to happen with the inn?"

"Sheriff Ives is currently in negotiation with Frederick Eden, the son of our local winemaker, to reopen the inn under his authority. They don't know that but we figure once they do they will stop the protests."

"Right," Harry says, "so is that why you are leaving them be?"

"Yep, that and not only are they peaceful but honestly its bringing them outside which is good for their health."

"I see," Harry says with a chuckle as the First Captain grins and the two change conversations.

8888

"So the local Mayor was telling me they are struggling to maintain the local library," Sirius says one evening as they are standing on the manor walls looking over the nearby village.

"Oh?" Is Harry's response.

"It seems that the nephew of the last librarian stole a large amount of money from the library coffers." A pause, "more money then can be replaced by the locals easily."

"Have any of them told the Sheriff?"

"No," Sirius says shaking his head. "Which led me to explain to said mayor that if the Sheriff doesn't know how could either her, or us, expect to fix it." A pause, "the mayor had no answer."

"Right," Harry says in disbelief. "So what did you tell him?"

"That once we return to Potter Manor we will be granting them the funds they need to replace the money stolen." He then grins, "I also made sure he knew that he needs to go to the hundred court or House government when such matters occur."
"Good. Thanks Sirius."

"Not a problem Harry," he says with a smile.

8888

"Beep. Beep. Beep. Incoming call, incoming call." Says the mirror as Harry is sitting in the lounge of the tent being used by Sirius and Remus. "Who is calling?"

"Ragnok of Gringotts," is the answer the mirror gives.

"What?" Harry says shocked, then with a shake of the head, "answer."

"I bet you didn't expect this!" Is Ragnok's first statement as a vision of his body manifests before them.

Harry blinks, "no, I can truly say, I did not expect this." A pause, "how are you talking to me?"

"It seems that as your official High Treasurer, let alone as your senior account manager at Gringotts, Merlin established a loophole in the magic of the Grand Circuit in order to allow us to talk." A pause, "I admit to only being able to access it when Lord Charlie Weasley came to my office."

Sirius lets out a bark-like laugh at that, "so it is Charlie that we have to thank for having access to you?" A wide grin, "brilliant!"

"Yes it is." A pause, "though I must say that I am restricted in what I can put into effect as I am not a part of the time loop." A sharp tooth grin follows, "that said, due to those loopholes you now have access to your financial accounts in a way that you did not think you would have."

"Which is going to come in handy," says Remus with a smile. He then grins, "in fact before you go there are some questions, comments, and orders I wish to go over with you."

Another sharp tooth grin is all the answer given before they lead into a multi-hour long conversation.

8888

"Our hundred is most famous for its status as existing as part of a territory of Britain which is currently under water in the muggle land." Says the tour guide explaining the history of the hundred to Harry and the others.

"Oh wow," Harry says after the guide stops speaking, "that's actually quite interesting. Do you know the nature of the move over?"

He nods at that, then gives an exited grin, "I don't normally get asked the details but if you really want to know then I have them!"

"I want to know," Harry says truthfully while also understanding how the tour guide would be reluctant to get into such details.

"Well," he says with a start before launching into an in depth, and quite interesting and informative, explanation of the whole process.

8888

Stretching out a bit Sirius grins at Remus before saying, "here, with you, its like the whole world doesn't exist."
Remus smiles, leans over to kiss Sirius, and says, "I know. Its like the past didn't happen and beyond that door will be Hogwarts!"

"Its a lovely dream," Sirius says with a soft smile.

"It is," Remus says with agreement. He then grins, "but the present is brilliant as well. You and me, together again. A good job, with a boss who doesn't care about my status." A pause, "but even more we get to be there for Harry."

"Its brilliant," Sirius says with a smile. His grin then gets naughty as he says, "but enough of that, let us use our free time for more fun pursuits."

Which is exactly what they did.

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After listening to the debate between the two potential mayors Harry turns towards Ernis Anselm, the chief advisor for the local Sheriff. A man who had been called away due to some pressing magical business. "So they couldn't be any more different could they?"

A chuckle, "quite. Though the most amusing part of it is that they are actually married, have been for the last fifteen years." Seeing the surprised look on the faces of the three wizards he laughs, "yeah I know, but honestly outside of their politics their love for each other is legendary in the hundred."

"Really, well that's wicked." Harry says with a smile.

Before he can say anything else he hears Audry saying, "if I was elected I would work on expanding the territory of our community through magical means. There is no reason for each of you to have small properties."

Her husband, Ronald, then says, "I do believe that we should focus our attention on more economic benefits. Which is why I will work to make sure that more Albion money flows through our coffers."

The moderator then says, "okay folks we will now head into the question and answer session of this meeting."

This leads to Harry saying, "I look forward to hearing the result of the local election."

"Yes sir," the advisor says. He then pauses before adding quietly, "do you have a preference."

Harry simply shakes his head before adding, "it's not my place to comment on the free and public elections of the mayors of my hundreds." A pause, "well, unless they are instigating rebellion which neither of them are." A grin, "but I am looking forward to hearing about the conversations they have with your Sheriff."

A little while later, as they are walking towards their next meeting place, Harry says to Remus, "consider the potential of us supporting both expanded space and added careers."

The nod from Remus and the grin from Sirius are comment enough on their thoughts.

8888

"What is that?" Sirius asks while pointing to a warded zone next to the ruins of an old structure near the edge of the community.

"Its the ruins of an ancient temple. For the last thousand years its been warded against entrance by
some of the strongest wards we know." Is the answer that Mabel Walsh the Sheriff of Fairiron
Hundred.

Before Harry can speak Remus says, "have cursebreakers ever looked at the site?"

"From our records yes, two centuries ago but they failed in getting beyond the third tier of the
facility. Since then we have left the site alone."

"Right," Harry says in response to that. He then manifests his Head Ring for the hundred, which is
that of Pevensie, in order to see the history of the project. "Hmm," is his next response as the
information flows through him. He then blinks and looks at the gathered around him, "the House did
not have an active Head at the time and the one that came after was weak."

"What would you have us do sir?" Asks the sheriff curiously while also only barely hiding his glee at
the prospect of maybe healing the site.

"Gather all the information you have on it and forward it to Potter Manor for our read through. I am
thinking a new attempt at curse breaking and ward weaving will need to be set up."

"Of course sir," says the sheriff. "You will have the information by next week." A pause as she
gestures for one of her advisors to come forward. "This is Jerald Page, the official Warder for the
hundred, and he will be your main point of contact for any operation you might set up on this topic."

Harry nods before turning to formally greet the official. Once that is done he stops and then suddenly
chuckles. At the wide eyed looks he goes, "I just realized that despite all our curse breaking and
ward weaving operations being conducted I do not have a High Warder." A pause, "it is something
that I will need to rectify as soon as possible."

Remus, quite amused by the realization, nods at that while adding, "I will add discussing that matter
to our next operation meeting."

Harry grins at that before gesturing to the sheriff to continue the tour.

8888

"Rings, rings for sale," a woman says as she stands in front of a stall near the town commons. Seeing
the party, though at this point not recognizing them, she says, "you sirs, please come here. I have a
number of objects that I think you might find interesting."

A quick glance between Harry, Sirius, and Remus, and following a nod from local tour guide Jamie
Padilla sees them moving forward to her stall.

"Thank you kind sirs for looking at my wares," the woman says. She then smiles kindly at them, "if
you find yourself liking anything I have hear I also have a shop on Rosemary Corner."

Harry nods at that before beginning to glance at the various rings she has on offer. At quick glance
they look nicely carved and are clearly of a fine material. As he picks them up in succession, to look
in detail, he feels their built-in magics, which while of low level is brilliant in its complexity.

But before he can comment he hears a gasp and turns to see Remus looking shocked at the woman.
He then says, "I know this design, I have seen its style before."

At this point she actually leans forward and peers at the group, she then turns her eyes towards Harry
and blinks for a moment. "Oh, you have her eyes!" She then gives a little bow before adding, "hello,
my name is Cella Murphy and I sold your mother some rings when she visited Blueborough
Hundred during her Grand Circuit."

It is Sirius who chuckles at that point, as the others look at him he grins. "Harry, what she is not stating is that one of the rings she bought from her was the wedding ring she gifted to James."

"Oh," is Harry's response to that. He then gins before reaching out to shake her hand, "then it is quite nice to meet you Madam Murphy, quite nice." He then pauses to add, "after my tour of the town finishes we will be by your shop. What time will you be there?"

She bows her head at that before adding, "you honor me sir. That said, besides market days, of which I am here from ten to one, I can be found in my shop between nine and six." A pause, "I look forward to seeing you if you choose to shop at my store."

Harry gives a nod at that before gesturing towards the guide to continue the tour.

8888

"So I just met the ring smith that my mother purchased the wedding ring she gave to my dad," Harry says to Charlie when they talked a small number of visits later.

"Oh cool," is Charlie's response. He then tilts his head curiously, "would I be correct in my thought there is more to it." He then grins.

"Of course," Harry says matter of factly, which is broken by a smile. "Mum met Madam Murphy during her own Grand Circuit and walked away buying half a dozen rings of various types and magical matrices. She loved them so much she contacted her to craft the more personalized ring she wanted to give to father."

"That's wicked!" A pause then, "so have you seen those rings?"

A negative shake of the head, "mum magically set it so they would travel to her magical lockbox upon her death." A pause, "its a bit deeper than the fourth tier that I have managed to get through so far."

"Don't knock that success," is Charlie's immediate answer. "If your mother used the Clarke Scale of magical tiering you are actually farther through it then a person your age would be expected to be."

Harry grins at that, "yeah I know, which is wicked." He then laughs, "honestly, I am keeping myself one or two tiers ahead of the baseline average. I'm finding it leads to her notes being more useful to me than if I jumped to far ahead."

"Oh," Charlie says with widening eyes and a curious grin, "what did you find?"

A smile filled nod. "My most recent breakthrough gave me another private journal, two craft folders, and four project worksheets." A pause, "as well as a few personal items of hers that, well, were brilliant to see."

"Good for you Harry." A pause, "you know when you first told me about her hiding her work behind layers of security I was at first angry. But no more."

Harry smiles softly at Charlie then nods. "I understand, and I was the same way. But what is nifty about it is that in this way I am actually more connected to her and her work." He then clears his throat before saying, "so I wanted to pick your brain on something." Which leads to the switch in conversation, which was not the last for this mirror call.
"The fact that estates like this are considered equivalent to hundreds still amuses me," Harry says to Sirius and Remus as they stand on a balcony in the manor overlooking the grounds.

Quite extensive grounds, for all that it is an estate and not a hundred.

"It is interesting." Remus says, "that is for sure."

"Well think about it Harry, it is places like this that serve as the central territories of a House." At their curious looks he explains further. "Everybody here works for you, or is a family member of those who do, there are no unattached citizens here."

"Oh, I see what you mean," Harry says with dawning comprehension. "The House magic is everywhere here, nothing is free of its touch."

"Exactly." Sirius then points to the small collection of residences next to a corner hill within the estate. "Even those homes aren't owned by their residents, like homes in a hundred are, they are owned by you and assigned to the workers."

A wide grin, "Right, thanks Sirius for putting it that way, I hadn't thought of it like that."

"Okay," Harry says hours into the meeting after meeting, "you have been clearly telling me all the good things, now tell me what you are hiding?"

The officials of the hundred look at each other all shifty eyes in response.

The Sheriff, an older wizard by the name of Gerard Ryan, gives an amused grin before speaking. "You are not wrong on there being an issue. A year ago an ancient property document was found which gave indication that many of the current property boundaries are not actually accurate."

"Which is causing social instabilities I assume," is Harry's next comment.

As the sheriff nods Remus says, "why wasn't this brought to our attention?"

"Oversight on our part," is the simple answer. At the raised eyebrow he shakes his head, "no seriously, oversight. The discovery happened, we began analyzing it, someone released the information to the locals, and they began arguing about it."

"I see," Harry says then gives a nod, "so what are your plans on dealing with the situation?"

"We are still investigating the legitimacy of the tome. I find the find to be too convenient and thus don't want to jump on redistribution of land."

As Harry nods at that Sirius asks, "does it alter any of the lots traditionally owned by House Levant?"

"No," a firm shake of the head on that. "Which makes perfect sense for if its real your lands have been the same for thousands of years and if its fake, well, who would want to anger the Lord of a Great House."

"Good to know," is Sirius' comment on that.

Remus and Harry make eye contact before the later says, "I want you to gather all the information
you have on the topic, including interpretations, and send it to Potter Manor." A pause, "to assist you in figuring out the truth of lot distribution I will be opening the Potter Library to your agents, temporarily."

"Thank you sir, the aid would be appreciated." A pause, "I am sorry for not bringing it to your attention and will make sure such matters don't repeat itself in the future."

"I would appreciate that yes," Harry says with a firm nod, one with a smile at its edges. "Now, before we change subjects, I would like to hear your thoughts on who, exactly, would benefit the most if the lot allotments were changed."

A nod is the response given right before the sheriff, and his agents, leap into giving their thoughts and facts on what is going on.

8888

"I never thought I would say this in an update, but the hundred is too rich for its own good." Sheriff Gerard Davis comments during one of the update meetings.

"Oh," Harry says curiously, "what do you mean?"

"Our stone is perfect for crafting, our earth is attuned with farming, our hills have more metals in a square inch then most places have for miles. What is even more amusing is that when we expanded the territory the newly established lands also took on the better quality."

"Wow." Is the response then, "but how does this cause problems?"

"Our people are sleepy backwater fishermen, farmers, miners, and hunters but due to the opulence they are required to play politics with a dozen different corporate, social, and political entities. I try and head the foreign entities off at the pass but then they cry foul, they cry that I am trying to dominate the economic life."

"I see," Harry says with a nod as he starts to get the picture. A pause as he thinks, "right, so there are numerous ways this can be handled. Which particular way I actually use is not something I will know till I speak to the locals who are effected by this."

"If they ask for help?"

"Then the full might of House Vidian will be brought to bear helping them cope with the cutthroat politics that they find themselves wanting to deal with."

"Thank you sir," says the sheriff gratefully. He then gestures towards the documents arrayed around them, "though before that meeting may I go over some of the files we have accumulated on the situation so you may understand it in greater depth."

At Harry's nod the group begin focusing deeper on the issues present.

8888

Pointing towards a dark forboden obsidian tower in the distance Harry says, "so what exactly is that gothic looking place doing in a North American hundred?"

A grin, "well its our own little moment to fame." Seeing the curious looks the sheriff goes on to explain. "Its where Carole Baldwin, the Dark Lady of Clearwater Hundred, lives."
"Dark Lady?"

"Just an amusing name given to her because of her gothic demeanor and magical focus." A pause, "not because of any affiliation or political activity."

"Right." Harry says with a pop to the 't'. "So what is her magical focus?"

"Necromancy," and then seeing the dark looks come upon their face he shakes his head, "no, not what you are thinking. Though she sometimes raises skeletons her most useful action is to calm the restless dead and speak to the departed in order to solve crimes and soothe the hurts of the living."

"Is she left to her own devices?" Asks Sirius curiously on that.

"No, not at all for she has graciously accepted a monitor from House Black to make sure she doesn't get corrupted."

"Sounds intriguing," is Harry's next comment, "and I look forward to meeting her in order to know more about her talents and abilities."

"That meeting can definitely be set up Lord Potter," the sheriff says with a firm and happy nod.

8888

"Though I know we talked about this previously but one of the major parts of this visit is for us to see with our own eyes why you are loosing so much money." A pause, "and maybe come up with a solution to fix that." Is Remus' comment to the local sheriff.

Without delay Sheriff Preston Davis says, "any help would be appreciated on this sir."

"I wonder if its a curse of some sort?" Is Harry's next comment a moment later. As the others look at him he shrugs, "well nothing they seem to do fixes it and its not theft, Gringotts is quite sure, or disloyalty, my Head Ring is sure on that. So a curse might make sense."

"Well if it is we will need to figure out its cause," says Sirius in response. "Though such an act isn't going to be quick."

"Which is fine," the sheriff says, "since we have lived with it for so long already what is a few more months or so."

"While that is understandable I do not wish to make you all live with the problem for any longer than necessary." Harry says firmly. "Which is why once I return to Potter Manor I will immediately authorize the formation of a curse breaking team to look into the problem."

"Thank you sir," says Davis. "We appreciate the help on this and the thought that not long from now we will actually be able to use the resources we have without such a large loss."

"That is a hope that we all have," Harry says with a smile. He then pauses, tilts his head, and asks, "so, what is the next topic for us to go over?"

8888

"So wait," Sirius says in a tone both shocked and amused, "have you really lost the magical key to access to the ancient Citadel Tower?"

This was a revelation learned a few hours ago while the group was on a private tour of the hundred. Though it pained him he kept the question inside till the actual sit down meeting, since he figured it
would be the best time to focus on it.

A sheepish look comes to Sheriff Ismael Bowers face, "ah, yeah." A pause, "though in my defense it's not my fault as it happened two centuries ago long before my birth."

"Still," Remus adds, "it happened. Your people lost access to one of the most potent magical artifact towers in the whole region."

"Well," he says with a shrug, "can I say that at least nobody really knows about it outside of the hundred."

At this point Harry simply chuckles, "you are taking it in good humor, I like that." A shrug follows, "I want in but I don't want in through methods that ruin the wards so I figure an investigation and puzzle solving operation is needed."

"Are you thinking of a sort of hundred wide tournament?" Is asked by Sirius with wonder in his voice.

"Yep, that is exactly what I am saying. Everybody in the hundred can propose a method of gaining access to the tower without blowing it up. The ideas will be rated and tested in various ways. The best idea, or ideas, will then be tried on the actual tower. Winner will be rewarded."

The eyes of the sheriff widen at that, "that's a brilliant idea sir." A pause, "may I expand it to include both the Rayville Hundred and the Oakmeadow Hundred as the Citadel Tower was designed to connect with them as well as my own Silvercest Hundred?"

Harry nods, "sure if that makes sense for the magic of the tower."

"I would suggest," Sirius says firmly, "that we enact a privacy ritual so that only residents and associated officers would be aware of the tournament till the tower gets accessed."

"I agree," Harry says with a firm nod of his own. "The last point we want is for outsiders with no love for Albion to fully learn of the disaster that is your loss of access to the tower."

"Understood Lord Potter," says the sheriff with a nod. "We will coordinate with your office to make sure the ritual is conducted to your satisfaction." He then gives a nod before pausing for a moment to flip through some paperwork. "If it pleases you sir I would like for us to move onto the next part of our meeting schedule."

Harry grins at that, since he knows its also due to the sheriff wanting to get off the topic, but gives a nod on that.

8888

"So I meant to ask Sheriff Hodges, what is going on in the corner of the hundred where a new settlement is being built?" Harry asks curiously as they pass by a road sign labeled 'Elfhedge village'.

Gail Hodges, the sheriff of the hundred answers by saying, "a few years ago a massive influx of magical refugees arrived into the hundred after being kicked out of their old home."

"What happened?" This was Remus asking rather than Harry.

A sigh, "while we don't know what exactly happened from what we gathered House Carrow had some sort of internal uprising."
"Which saw its people come here?" Harry says shocked. "Merlin, wow."

"Did you double check to make sure they weren't spies," Sirius asks curiously.

A nod, "of course. We even hired House Black Shadows using the old traditions, for all that we are House Valerius."

"This was before I claimed the Head Rings, wasn't it?" Harry wonders.

"That is correct sir," the sheriff says, "which is probably why you didn't get an active report on the situation, it happened before your return."

"That's fine." Is Harry's answer on that. "So how is the community developing?"

"Better than expected actually. Especially considering the large number of useful skills the refugees had when they arrived."

Eyes widen at that which leads to Harry saying in a shocked tone, "do you have a list of skills we gained that the other House lost?"

A nod, "not on me of course but yes, we do have said list. You will be pleasantly surprised for I will say we gained a number of masters and archmasters due to it."

A grin, "good for us." A pause, "so if the refugees are being good, productive citizens then I figure we should speed through their naturalization into full citizen residents."

The sheriff nods at that, "with your approval on that we can begin the process." Seeing their look she shrugs, "we were hamstrung without having a Head provide us with the necessary full House magics."

Harry nods at that, "well I can understand how you wanted to wait for me to see the situation for my own eyes." A smile at that followed by a gesture to continue with the tour, which is what happens.

"So how does it feel to have just passed the 200th holding of our visit?" Remus asks Harry as the two are sitting in Harry's tent relaxing for a bit.

"Wicked," Harry says with a chuckle, "though also weird in how while we have two years worth of memories our body, mind, and magic have had nowhere near that amount of growth."

"It's that which makes this Grand Circuit as perfect as it is." Sirius says as he walks into the room from the side door. He then kisses Remus on the lips before moving to sit down. "Though our memories have grown we are still who we were at the start."

Harry sighs at that but then grins as the two look at him surprised. He then says, "well it means that technically I am still only fourteen rather than having gained years."

"I looked that up," Remus then says. "Due to the artificial nature of this time loop there are restrictions on what skills and abilities we can actually sustain learning." A pause, "which is bizarre but also really nifty."

Which gets nods from the other two as Harry grins and says, "Well now that Sirius is here, lets play a game."
While on a stroll about the town with Sirius and Remus they are set upon by a large number of people. Said people began shouting demands and angry statements at the three. Harry let it flow over him for a moment as he got a gist of what was going on.

"STOP!" Harry says with a raised voice, much to the surprise of Sirius and Remus and the shock of the rest of the people.

That said, in truth, this was not that outlandish of an action considering the ruckass as the locals were basically yelling to Harry and demanding to be heard.

As the sounds start to quiet down Harry takes out his wand, reaches into House magic, and lets out an aura of magic. The area, which was a small courtyard, suddenly expanded into a large plaza hall. But that wasn't all, for there was now seats around where the people stood gathered and a question podium. As the magic returned to Harry the place he, Sirius and Remus, and the senior officers of the hundred were gathered became a platform with chairs and a speaker's podium.

Into the silence Harry then says, "right. Now its obviously that you have some issues with the current government and administration of the hundred. I will, one by one, allow you to come forward and ask your question and make your concern known." A glare then appears as his power can be felt by those around before he says, "but don't forget to keep yourself polite." A pause, "good, you," and Harry points to a particularly loud person, "can begin."

The first man comes up saying, "I have many problems with the way this hundred is run!"

"Tell me the top two right now and I will agree to speak to you personally later on." As this causes a round of sound Harry raises his hand, which gets silence. "I saw him directing many of you and thus know to listen to him is to listen to many of you." Harry then gestures for him to go on.

"Right sir," pause as he thinks on what to say. He then nods and says, "well, my name is Loren Brady and I am the local court cook." Another pause, "a major issue is over work and underpay - many of us work fifty hours while getting paid for thirty."

"Unless there is a magical reason that requires such work schedule," Harry then stops seeing some anger. He continues a moment later with, "I visited Summeracre Hundred which requires a state of constant singing within a particular sub-area due to ancient pacts." He then nods as this gets most people to calm down. "So, as I said, unless its required magically that will be something that ends. Next comment Mr Loren."

"Well sir, over the last few generations our lot sizes have been forcibly decreased though shady political actions."

"I will look into the matter of land rights for the hundred." A quick shake of the head follows that, "unless there is something I am unaware of the hundred is vast and thus large properties should not be rare." Harry then stops and says, "before the next person gives their question I have one my own." Seeing the nods he continues, "who do you consider to be the ones causing the most problems?"

The woman who had come up to the podium speaks, "sir, if I may, I can answer that. My name is Robin Mgee and I am the main Matron of Gertrude Ivy Manor." A pause as Harry nods at her before she goes on, "on your question I would have to say its Seigneur's Cristina and Chester Turner, the niece and nephew of Lord Sergio Webb."

Remus speaks up at that, "I have spoken and met Sheriff Sergio Webb and believe him to be one of the good ones."
Which, to the three's surprise, gets a nod from her as she gestures to those around her. "We don't actually disagree with that High Seneschal Lupin. The issue is that with so much going on he turned towards family for aid."

"With those family members causing you problems?" Sirius says leaning forward. He looks towards the group of people and says, "how long has this corruption been going on?"

"Decades now sir," says Mcgee.

Harry nods on that before adding, "Matron Mcgee, what is your complaint?"

"That I am being forced to use substandard equipment and resources in maintaining the manor since the two Turners have redirected tons of gold to line their pockets."

A nod follows that statement. "Duly noted. I will open a wide scale investigation on them and their actions." A pause, "though this meeting is far from over do know that I will get to the bottom of what exactly is going on."

Harry lets those gathered around cheer at that for a moment before he smiles and says, "okay, so whose next?"

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"Ragnok, the Clearwater Hundred has fallen to level of corruption beyond what I have seen in any of the other hundreds or holdings I have visited during the Grand Circuit."

A blink at that, followed by a sharp-tooth grin, "what would you like for me to do on that Lord Potter."

"I am going to send you the accumulated files and memory records I have via pass tin." Is Harry's answer.

"Even though we are separated you believe this will work?"

Harry grins, "of course. Right now we are in a bubble of connected time and thus linked," a pause, "but you know that."

"I do, I do indeed." The grin that appears says wonders. "So, once I read through it how do you want me to proceed?"

"I hold no loyalty to those who are corrupt, but great loyalty to those who have been hurt or manipulated by the corrupt." A pause, "I am authorizing you to be as harsh as legally, magically, and spiritually we can be."

"Duly noted Lord Potter, duly noted." A pause and then a firm nod, "I will begin work on this immediately and expect a notification of request of meeting the week after you return to normal time."

"Thank you Ragnok," Harry says with a nod and smile. "May your gold rise and darkness fall upon your enemies."

A fierce grin is the response, followed by Ragnok pushing some paperwork around, clearing his throat, and commensing a business meeting. At Harry's look, he shrugs while making it known that since he is here, they might as well talk.
"How did this happen?" Sirius asks shocked as they gaze at the giant crater to the side of the central square of Eastville in the Greywolf Hundred.

The sheriff, a man by the name of Chester Erickson, clears his throat, "it was an accident, or at least that is what Master Nicolas and Mistress Gwen, of the Doyles, always say."

Harry gives him a look, "while they might say that, what is it that you say?"

A shrug, "her potions work mixed with his enchanting work and it led to explosion. They only survived due to the potent wards they set up to auto-portkey those present away."

A blink as Harry gestures towards the large sized hole, "this is bigger than a single property. How many homes and shops were lost."

"Also were there any fatalities?" Remus then says.

While Sirius adds, "and when did this happen?"

"Fifteen years ago and no deaths." A pause, "eight homes slash shops were lost in the explosion. So lots of economic loss but no life lost."

A nod, "thanks to the protection wards, correct?"

"Yes, exactly," Chester says. "We provided those who lost property with reimbursement and access to magically expanded lots we created around the village green."

"So is it an accident or deliberate decision to keep the crater present?" Sirius wonders.

"Both, at first the magical aura was too weak for us to fix but as time went on it became a matter of local amusement."

Harry chuckles at that, "well that is quite nifty to hear." He then gestures towards the road in indication for them to continue the tour.

"Hey did you realize that this is our 365th holding," Sirius says as the three are sitting relaxing in the tent that particular Friday night.

Harry blinks at that before grinning, "oh Merlin, wow, it really is." A shake of the head, "who would have thought huh?"

"Which means technically we have been doing this four almost four years now," Remus says matter of factly.

Which gets the two others to sit up shocked at that realization.

Harry then chuckles, "wow." Seeing their look he continues, "its funny because the fact that time would flow together was one of those concepts I didn't exactly get. But, well, having experienced it I can clearly say it hasn't felt that long."

"Your right, it hasn't," Sirius says as he nods in agreement.

"Which is honestly great," Remus says with a smile. "All the benefits of time but none of the
drawbacks." A pause, "like full moons!"

Which leads to grins of agreement on that, for yes, it is one of the main advantages of what they have been experiencing.

8888

"Oh this place is gorgeous," Harry says as he gazes from a balcony on the pyramidal shaped manor house. To his sight is a river delta, greenery on both sides, and desert sands extending beyond it into the far distance.

"Thank you sir," says Asim Abasi, the sheriff of the Deepsands Hundred. "We have long prided ourselves on us being a microcosm of the greater Egyptian territory."

"How far do the sands go?" Sirius asks curiously, since it's clear they extend beyond natural sight.

A grin, "that is the brilliance of their magic for you see technically they extend infinitely in all directions." At their surprised looks he nods, "yes, though the farther you get from this and a few other river tributaries we have the less and less manifestations are present."

Remus then tilts his head and asks, "are there pyramids in the sands?"

A nod, "of course. Some are natural, are real, while others are physically present but magically manifested as part of certain ritual effects we have present."

A chuckle from Harry, "let me guess, the later are tourist sites?"

"Of course," Sheriff Abasi says with a grin. "It is the presence of said pyramids which bring in a large portion of our economic viability."

"Well it is a nifty system and I look forward to the greater tour you will be giving us," Harry says with a smile.

"Oh you will like it, especially as we choose to include a few of our tourist pyramids." Is what the sheriff says before gesturing for them to head back inside, so the tour can officially begin.

8888

"Oh you are not going to believe this Charlie," Harry says with some amusement as they are nearing a talk near the end of the Grand Circuit.

"Well of course not, not when you start that way." A pause, "so what happened?"

"Well I am visiting the Drakebridge Hundred," Harry starts by saying. He then tilts his head, "which I do believe is right next to the preserve?"

A nod, "yeah it is, closer in fact then even the hundred that I reside in." A pause, "so what did they want to do?"

"Well," Harry says slowly, "it seems that certain factions dislike what dragon keepers represent and so wanted to increase tariffs and such on you guys."

Eyes widen at that, followed by a shake of the head, and a humorous snort. "But that doesn't make sense, our reserve provides a huge amount of trade to the hundred. Why would they want to ruin that."
"Well," Harry says with a slight grin, amused despite himself, "it seems that one of your dragon keepers said no to the daughter of an important local and so the mother pushed to try and ban you all."

A shake of the head, "from the way you are amused and the fact I haven't been informed of the banning, I assume you stopped it?"

"Of course," Harry says with a smile, "quickly in fact once I heard about it and why they were doing it." A shake of the head, "oh they tried to hide the true reason by using security as a reason but I saw through it immediately."

"Well," Charlie says slowly, "as a person who enjoys the food and music of Lightfield Bar and Grill I am glad to still be able to visit it." A pause, "while as a employee of the preserve its nice that we will still be able to trade our resources and purchase our goods from them."

Harry nods, "yeah, definitely." He then stretches, "well, that was the last story I wanted to tell. So anything interesting you might want to talk about?"

Charlie nods with a grin, "actually yes, an amusing story from my childhood." Which is what he subsequently talks about, to the enjoyment of both.

8888

"Oh this place is soothing," Harry says happily as he gazes at the warm beach in the California hundred.

"I'm honestly sad we can't simply stay here, relaxing in beach chairs and enjoying the warm rays of the sun." Sirius adds a moment later.

Steve Drake, the local sheriff, who was playing tour guide as most did, gives a grin at that. "Well you are somewhat in luck for we put time into your schedule to simply sit and relax at the beach."

"Really," Sirius says with a smile. He then wraps his arms around the sheriff, much to his amusement. "Remus, Harry, just so you know, Steve here is my new favorite!"

Which gets a chuckle from the other two wizards and amused smiles from the other gathered officials of the hundred.

Once amusement fades Harry says, "well then, let us get through the the business so we may enjoy ourselves at the beach!"

Which is exactly what they did.

8888

"Sirius, Sirius Black, is that really you?" Says a voice as the three wizards are walking the streets of the Deerton community.

This gets the three to stop and turn towards the voice. Sirius blinks at that before getting a big grin on his face, "Rosalie Alvarez, as I live and breath. What are you doing here?"

"I should ask the same," Rosalie says as she comes over to them in order to shake Sirius' hand. As soon as she gets close she stops before grinning, "is this the Remus Lupin you long talked about." Which leads to a big grin on her face.
"Yeah he is, and this young wizard here is my godson Harry Potter," Sirius says immediately.

She grins at the confused look on Remus' face before adding, "Sirius here never stopped going on and on about you during the year we worked together during Auror training."

As soon as he heard that Remus tilted his head as a realization came over him, "oh, wait, aren't you the one who stole the pants off the Auror Captain."

"Allegedly, allegedly stole the pants off him." Is her next comment as she reaches over to shake Remus' hand in greeting. With them meeting her the plans the local officials had were slightly derailed, though not to the level they were worried it would reach.

8888

As they are being shown around the item vault Remus starts to chuckle. He then gestures at the minor assistant who suddenly looked like a deer caught in a headlight. "I hope you really weren't going to palm that pocket watch?"

"Ah," the young man says shocked at being caught. "It was my mother's," he suddenly exclaims loudly.

Without pause Alan Coleman, the local sheriff, calls for the guard to come.

"Wait," Harry says intrigued despite himself. "Now, Mr Willis, please explain to me why I should believe you, rather than send you to jail?"

"If you look at it you will see A.W. engraved on the backside. That was for my mother, Alice Weaver."

"So how did the watch get into the vault?" Sirius asks.

"The watch had been given to her by my biological father, Harold Simon," a pause, "Lord Harold Simon."

"That doesn't tell us why its in the vault," Remus says matter of factly.

A gulp as the lad gets quite nervous. "Not long after my mother was fired from her job at the manor the watch disappeared, stolen. I recently learned that the Lady Geraldine Simon had put it in the vault."

"So you decided to use the fact that I would be visiting to take it back," Harry says amused. At his nod Harry reaches out and says, "give me the watch." Which the young man does. "I will keep it till we get to the bottom of this, which we will do after the tour of the vault finishes." A pause, "Sheriff Coleman, please continue the tour." Which is what happens.

8888

Plopping down in the seat he hears, "what would master Harry wish for?"

"To be done with the circuit Dobby," Harry says tiredly.

"Well then master Harry be in luck for he has only three more hundreds to visit and then we be going home!"

Harry grins at that, "yeah, that sounds great, only three more." A pause, "so Dobby, sorry for the lateness as I meant to ask earlier, but how goes your own investigations?"
"Dobby doesn't mind the delay for Dobby knows how busy master Harry has been." A pause, "Dobby has been writing out his discoveries for Dobby has a lot of them!"

Harry's eyes widen at that, "wait, really, wow. I admit to not expecting a written report but its great that you will be doing that for me."

He nods, "Harry deserves the best and so Dobby will give master Harry only the best! Dobby knows a written report with annotations and magical video and pictures will make him learn sooooo much more than a simple verbal update."

Harry chuckles at that before nodding, "well, you are right on that, it will be quite helpful."

8888

"Your hospitality has been quite appreciated," Harry says as a parting comment to the officials of Shadowbell Hundred, right before he heads through the portal back to Potter Manor.

Moments later Sirius arrives, then Remus, and then Dobby, the later invisible before appearing in front of them all.

Seconds later Sirius says, "That's it, right, I think that's it, we are done with the Grand Circuit."

Harry grins at that, "Yes, yes we are, the Grand Circuit is over."

Remus then tilts his head and gestures at the now closed doorway. "So how do we get out of the ritual loop?"

"Like this," Harry says with a smile as he manifests all his Head Rings and magic begins building up all around him. The white glow intensifies till it becomes blinding, so blinding that the room fades from view completely. Then they feel warmth circle around them, wiping away their weariness while at the same time making them shiver as a feeling of moving sideways comes over them.

Then suddenly the light fades, the feeling disappears, and the room returns to normal. The back wall, where the portals to the various hundreds had appeared, was bricked off and gone. The front wall, which had long been forbidden to them, was now a door, an open and welcoming double door.

Giving them a smile as he gestures towards the open door, "Now we are done, now we can go back to normal."

Sirius chuckles at that before running through the door saying, "Oh Merlin, thank goodness."

As Remus and Harry stare after him the later suddenly starts to chuckle as the former shakes his head.

Remus then says, "I think I am going to go after him."

Harry nods at that but moves forward to take Remus in a hug, a deep hug. "Thank you for being here for me, I really appreciate it."

A huge hug back, "Not a problem Harry, not a problem!"

As Harry smiles at him Sirius then can be heard saying saying, "Are you two coming or what?"

Which gets smiles of amusement from both wizards, right before they follow the suggestion.
Chapter End Notes

Now I plan on finishing up the writing of my Book Five before working on the outline and ideas for Book Six and Seven, though it's going to be a while before I actually start focusing on writing them.
"So how is sitting going to be arranged," Harry asks Remus while sitting relaxed behind his desk.

A slight chuckle is the response which is followed by an explanation. "The fact that there are three couples getting married is a cause for a bit of confusion and change to the status quo." A pause then, "so the three newly married couples are each getting their own two-seat tables in the front of the hall on a slightly raised dais. In front of, but slightly to the side, are two tables each containing half of the marriage party, plus significant others." Another pause, "Then comes the rest of the tables, some of which are circular and others are rectangular."

"Oh, wow," is Harry's response.

"Yes, it was the only way they could fit the thousand plus people into the room."

"Wait, how many people are going?", Harry asks a bit awed.

It is Sirius who speaks as he comes into the room, "A few thousand people. Family, of course, but also the Heads, Heirs, children, Seneschals, Chancellors, and the spouses of the above from all of the Great Houses of Albion. The professors of Hogwarts, plus the married couples year mates. The Minister, senior department heads, and important staff." A pause then, "Oh, and the senior officials of the various most honored guilds and organizations of Albion."

"That is," a shake of the head by Harry, "wow, just wow."

A chuckle from Sirius, "honestly, this is standard. Expect something similar with every one of your noble classmates, and pretty much all other nobles you might know." A pause, "Oh, and of course when you get married it will probably be even greater."

A blink then a soft question, "Did you two go through that?"

Two nods are given in answer. Sirius then explains with a wide grin on his face as he reaches for Remus. "It was in the summer before our sixth year and the Potters were the ones who walked me down the aisle." The smile fades as a sad thought comes to him. A moment later he says, "That was eight months before they died." A shake of the head, "Anyway, it was one of those moments where peace reigned even among those sides fighting it out." A wide grin comes to his face as he reaches over to take Remus' hand, "It was also an amazing, beautiful, and terrifying day that I am incredibly glad I will never have to do again."

Which gets a chuckle and an agreed nod and smile from Remus. Who, once he figured that Sirius wasn't going to say any more speaks up, on a slight change of topic, "As the last of the core line of Potters you will be seated with the other Heads, despite them thinking you are 'simply' an heir."

A smile towards Sirius and then a nod towards Remus, "I assume they will have Sirius sitting next to me as the recognized Head of Black?"

"Yes, with me next to him as his spouse." Remus says with a smile. He then adds, "That status technically supersedes my High Seneschal one." A pause then, "Which actually benefits us a bit in our attempt to keep the secret still a secret."
"Though we don't need to work as hard as we used to on that," Harry says with a nod. Then he tilts his head and says, "So who who will be taking up the defacto spots for the Heads of the Houses I also lead."

"For those Houses without an active Head it is customary for the Seneschals and Chancellors to take up that role when it comes to marriage ceremonies." A pause then a slight shrug, "that way every House can say they were present, so nobody feels snubbed." A pause, "It’s also why you haven’t had to attend any weddings since your return to the magical world, for the majority your House officials take up the responsibility in such a way that it counts as you for all cultural purposes."

A smile at that, "That's kind of brilliant really and does much to showcase the fact that Albion has customs over a thousand years old." A pause then, "So who will be on my other side?"

A sideways look between Sirius and Remus, then Sirius says, "We are not sure pup. It might be the Minister, who is considered the equivalent of a Head of House, or it might be one of the others, there is some jockeying for the position."

A tilt of the head in thought as he realizes that yes, he can see the benefit of being next to the 'Boy Who Lived' for the evening. "How cutthroat is the competition?"

"Very," Sirius says with a chuckle, "One that I sort of fell into before even realizing what was going on." A pause then, "unfortunately I came late to the discussion or I would have been able to influence it more." He then smiles at Remus and says, "Not that I am blaming Moony here as most of the heavy politicking took place over the school year."

"Which saw him occupied," Harry says with a nod and a smile. He then turned to Remus, "Know that I would never say you are not putting in your all. On a personal level you are amazing and on a professional level you are spectacular. Merlin knows there is nobody that would have been able to do any better of a job then you."

Remus smiles gratefully at that then says, Thank you Harry." He then clears his throat and says, "But yeah as Sirius said the competition is steep."

A nod at that, and a willingness to go back on topic, leads Harry to saying, "I could handle Minister Fudge, so that would be fine." A pause then, "Is there any chance it could be Umbridge or Crouch?"

"No," Sirius says firmly. "The first because she is not even attending the wedding," a pause then, "long story but the snub is not a mistake," another pause, "and on the other his House is not even trying to get the seat."

"Good," Harry says firmly. He then chuckles and at their looks he says, "Well, how much imaginary gold do you want to bet that its probably going to be Lucius Malfoy."

"No deal, as your suggestion is not that far off. He is currently in the running for the seat." A pause then, "I do believe there are rumors of him using a lot of his sway to get the coveted slot."

Harry chuckles again, "Yeah, not surprised. He would get, what, six hours of potential talking to me time. Why wouldn't he want that." A pause then a look, "Arthur and the Weasley's are attending, yes?"

"Yes," Remus says firmly. "While they were always going to get invited the fact you have a connection to them brought them back up." A pause, "But its not possible for him to get a seat near yours."

Sirius then says, "Nor Neville, though he will be at our table as he is recognized as the defacto
Head."

Seeing Harry's thoughtful look Remus says, "Ehat are you thinking Harry?"

"Welll," Harry says with a smile, "what about us pushing for Charlie, as he is the Head of House Sidus."

Two raised eyebrows at that, then a pause, then a thoughtful tilt of the head, then some nods.

Sirius then says, "That's actually not a bad idea."

"It would probably get a lot of support among the other nobles, especially if it leads to Lucius getting the seat next to Charlie." Remus says as an additional comment.

"I will make some sly comments on that as it probably is one of the most acceptable suggestions put forward by anyone so far." Sirius then gives Harry a sly look while adding, "Now its not because of any other reasons is it?"

Harry chuckles and then gives a wide eyed innocent look while saying, "I don't know what you could possibly mean Sirius."

Which gets all three laughing.

8888

"So how shocked would you be if I said that I was informed that House Sidus was assigned the seat between House Malfoy and House Potter." Charlie says almost immediately after the mirror call was put through.

Harry widened his eyes in a playful representative of innocent shock, "Quite shocked, how would such manipulations happen."

The two then laugh.

"Honestly," Harry says when they stop moments later, "I mentioned to Sirius that while it wouldn't be the end of the world to be near Lucius Malfoy or the Minister, I might consider it better to have the Head of House Sidus sitting next to me."

A nod at that, "And since House Sidus is in completely good standing with all factions due to its ancient and Sacred nature there would have been little resistance from any of the factions." A pause then, "Did you also see about making sure Lucius was next to me?"

"Not directly no, but yes, Sirius worked the crowd so that nobody had an objection to such seating." A pause then a chuckle, "You know the fact that the seating chart at a wedding is actually not decided by the people getting married is so bizarre to me."

Charlie chuckles at that as well, "It is amusing, though it only applies to the Heads and Heirs of the Great Houses, everyone else is placed at a table by the staff of the House sponsoring the ceremony." A pause then, "Another bit of good news is that since I have to come to Britain for the marriage I am also going to be on the Isle for the final game of the Quidditch Championship."

"Really, wicked, so which House box will you be sitting in?" Harry asks happily.

"I combined Sidus with Weasley, Black, and Potter," Charlie says with a laugh and a smile. "Did you really assume otherwise?"
"I had hoped that was what you did, but at the same time I know how tough political dealings could be so I didn't want to automatically assume," Harry says with a smile. "Honestly though, that's brilliant."

Charlie chuckles at that while thinking, 'oh Harry.' He then says, "So how many of the Houses of your other friends are nearby?"

"All, and not even side segregated by light and dark. I was able to nudge the planners so that the Houses mingled." A pause, "Example is Longbottom and Malfoy are next to each other and so is Diggory and Zabini. The same can be said for the other Houses as well."

Charlie shakes his head, though it is in good humor. "Only you Harry, only you."

"What!", Harry says with a chuckle. He then gets serious, "Honestly, it was actually quite easy to do, mostly because with me being friends with so many nobles I was able to reduce the time of discussion from weeks to hours. The seating people set me a gift basket in thanks."

"Wait really, wicked," Charlie says both amused and surprised.

"Yep, it was quite amusing." Harry says with a smile. "But also quite delicious, as some of it was a bit exotic to me." A pause, "I tried to save some for you but that didn't work, though I can say I got their names."

A chuckle, "Thanks for that." A pause, "Anyway, enough about politics." A smile then, "So did you finish reading the most recent 'Wheel of Time' novel?"

Which leads to a few hour long discussion on the nature of the novel and their opinions on it.

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I have to say that this was a particularly enjoyable section to write. Especially considering the mix of events that occur in it.

So yeah, I hope you enjoy!

Oh, PS, as of this moment there are five sections remaining for Book Five, all of which are outlined and generally known on what will be in them.

My problem is now coming up with interesting and fun elements to showcase in both Book Six and Book Seven. As I figure let me outline and develop them both at once before I continue writing the sections in them.

As a note, any random ideas would be welcomed, though no guarantee they will be in the story, there is also a good chance that the ideas will!

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Sibling Wedding

Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Mid July

"How is Sirius not ready yet," Harry asks a Remus who is coming down the stairs of Potter Manor.

A shake of the head, "you haven't seen this part of him before. He can be a bit of a primadonna in how long it takes to have him get ready. Even with house elf aid."

"I head that," Sirius says as he comes down the stairs, "and I am done. All we need to do is wait for our guest and we can go."

"Who are we waiting for?" Harry asks curiously as he wracks his brain trying to think of the schedule given to him about the day.

All he gets is a grin from Sirius as he feels the wards shift as a highly familiar person comes in by floo. Which was why Harry was not surprised when Charlie walks out of the floo chamber and says, "hello gents, sorry for the lateness I had to take an urgent business call from the reserve." After a pause he continues with a chuckle, "despite the way they explained the situation the actual dealing with it was easy." Another pause, "anyway, ready to go?"

Three nods at that followed by Harry grinning widely at seeing one of his most favorite Weasley's.

8888

"Wow," Harry says as he walks into the vast open aired Roman style Temple that will be housing the actual marriage ceremony.

"Majestic isn't it," Charlie says with a smile towards his friend. He then tilts his head towards the 'sky' in a way that has Harry looking as well before saying, "despite it not looking like it there actually is a roof over the hall."
"Wait really," Harry says shocked. He then squints before extending his magic in such a way as to sense the roof, which he does. "Oh wow, it does." A pause, "not that I doubted you."

Which gets a chuckle, soft though it maybe, from not just Charlie but also Sirius and Remus who are standing on his other side.

8888

As they were escorted to the seats those of their status were being honored with Harry commented, "this place probably could fit tens of thousands."

"If not more," Remus comments with a smile. "Though it hasn't happened in our lifetime there are histories of moments with almost a quarter of a million Magicals came for a service."

"That's pretty brilliant," Harry says with a nod as they finally reach the pew.

8888

"How are we so close to the front?" Charlie asks a bit after they sit down in the row assigned to them.

"That's what you get for joining us rather than your family," Sirius says with a smile.

"Which I meant to ask about," Harry says with a raised eyebrow. Then with a slight gesture at all the movement and conversation flowing says, "and this is as good a time as any."

"Trying to get rid of me," Charlie says with amusement. He then shrugs, "it made sense both professionally, as I will be sitting at the table you are at, and personally, as it will be fun." He then moves to stand up, "but if you don't want me I can always go find my family."

As Charlie sits down, since it was a joke Remus comments, "the Potters are patrons of the Temple and holders of the manor and lord of the hundred the area is attached to."

"Ah, right," Charlie tilts his head, "actually that rings a bell, you might have mentioned that before."

Harry smiles at that, "it is amusing to realize we are basically as close as one can be and not be immediate family."

8888

About an hour later a hush falls over the giant hall as a soft ballad starts playing to indicate they will be starting soon.

"Ooh," Harry says so softly that only those right next to him (plus Remus with his shifter hearing) can hear him, "I'm looking forward to seeing how they organize so all three can get married at once."

The three wizards only have time to nod before the music gets a bit louder and the lights begin to fade. But this action is followed by everyone turning around in their pews so that instead of looking forward they are looking backward, towards the entrance area. This was an area whose wall was flat over its two story span, a fact which was no longer true for now six shimmering stairwells existed. They all started on the second story balcony before slowly making their way down to the center aisle.

The music grew even more intense as a regal holy hymn began planning. Then came a number of altar servers followed by two Priests and two Acolytes, each garbed in the holy robes of their office
and surrounded by floating orbs spreading incense. Once up front the alter servers moved to the sides and took their places around the altar while the four clerics stood at right at the end of the path.

The music changed once more for it was time for the wedding procession to begin. From between the six stairwells came immediate family and close kin of all six people getting married. Once they made it to their seats and were able to comfortably turn to see the stairwells the music got more ornate as the wedding party began descending downward, including the flower girl and boy and the numerous members of the wedding party.

As the last in this group made their way to their seats and turned towards the back the music shifted towards the customary wizarding wedding march. Though it could be recognized as familiar by a muggle, if they were present, it was also different enough to raise some eyes. Not out of wrongness but rather due to how right and beautiful the music sounded.

Which made perfect sense for it was at this point that all six participants in the ceremony appeared at the top of the stairwells. Each being flanked by their parents, which was interesting since three of the group shared the same sets of parents. Without missing a beat Harry realized that the Priests and Acolytes had used magic to duplicate the Steward parents, so they could escort all of their children down at the same time.

The six people then slowly, majestically, began walking down the stairwell ramp from the second floor balcony and onto the temple floor. Upon reaching the floor they walked down the aisle, an isle suddenly big enough for all eighteen people with elbow room to spare. Once they reached the front the parents kissed the cheek and hugged their children before moving aside so that the couples could move next to their partner. It was at this point that the duplicated parents smoothly flowed back together moments before they headed to their seats.

Once that was done the four clerics moved forward and with arms wide they began the ceremony.

"Wow," Harry says to the three wizards next to him as they walk out of the temple and down the road with everyone else towards the party hall. "I don't really have words to describe that."

"I agree," Charlie says with a nod, "beautiful and awe-inspiring doesn't seem to cover it."

As Harry glances over he sees Sirius, with remnants of tears in his eyes, take Remus' hand in his and raise it up for a kiss. He then smiles at his godson and says, "it reminded me of our wedding day and how amazing it felt to have our love recognized."

"One of the best days of my life," Remus says with a smile. He then tilts his head and gives a smile, "its up there with you first telling me you loved me and when you first showed me Padfoot." He then pauses before continuing, "but also on the list is your birth Harry and when I received your letter saying you wanted to talk to me."

"Aww," Harry says with a smile, "how romantic and cute." He then tilts his own head and asks, "you don't include being reunited?"

"No," Remus and Sirius say at the same time.

Remus then adds, "because though we were physically apart we were never truly separate."

Harry gave them a smile for there was no words that he could say on that.
"Please remind me," Harry says with a smile as the four make their way down to the manor hall, "how are the tables set up again?"

Remus grins at that before saying, "there will be a few Head plus spouse tables, a few Heir plus spouse tables, a Professor of Hogwarts table, a few tables for their school mates, a few Seneschal and Chancellor tables, and a great many scion tables to house everyone else."

Sirius comments, after giving a nod towards what Remus just said, "out of your classmates only Neville is considered as a defacto Head for reasons we don't need to talk about right now."

Harry nods at that in full agreement as talking about how Neville's parents are in St Mungo due to the effects of crucio is not something he considers a good conversation. Which is why he says instead, "it will be interesting to see how some of my year mates are at the Heir table while others are at the scion table."

"Well if they are at the Heir table," Charlie says, "then they might be sitting next to Bill which could make it easier for them."

Nods at that followed by Remus asking, "oh Sirius I meant to ask, what was the result about the debate on having Dowager Lady Longbottom being next to Neville or at the Seneschal seat?"

Sirius gives a grin, "I was able to get him a seat between you and Amelia so he is going to be fine."

"Oh brilliant," Harry says with a smile, "so two people from me, that's not bad. Not bad at all." A pause, "good work Sirius."

"It was not a problem at all, for this guy," Sirius says pointing to himself, "is a genius!"

Which gets some amused laughter as they finally manage to arrive at the hall.

8888

"Congratulations to you all," Harry says as soon as he gets up to the front of the receiving line where the three newly married couples are present.

"Oh Lord Potter," says Curtis, "thank you for that."

A nod from his brother Eden, "we appreciate your presence here."

"Especially as we know you haven't attended such events before," their sister Keira says.

There partners also give similar comments, though clearly with heavy amusement on the 'twin' speak the three siblings do. Though Harry smiles at it himself he doesn't let it stop him from shaking their hands. Once that was done he says, "well there was no way I was going to miss out on this, I hear its the party of the century." A comment which gets a large amount of laughter. He then continues, "again, I wish you good fortune and happiness." With that he bows a little before moving forward, so as to not slow down the receiving line.

As soon as he stepped into the wider hall an attendant came forward saying, "Lord Potter, Lord Sidus, Lord Black, Lord Black-Lupin, if you would follow me I will escort you to your table."

Harry gives a accepting dip of his head and gestures for the attendant to lead the way. As they move through the vast hall Harry can't help but admire the way the chamber had been set up. As they reached their table and the attendant was bowing Harry spoke, "please inform the rest of the staff that what you all have done here is marvelous and that I look forward to speaking to you all at a later,
more inconspicuous, time."

The attendant bows at that before saying, "no thanks are needed Lord Potter, it is I, we, who should thank you." He then gives a slight shake of the head before saying with a gesture towards the area, "please feel free to head to the buffet table for the appetizer." He then points to a little bell, "if you have any needs beyond what you see at the buffet table please ring the bell and an available attendant will come to you." One last bow he heads away.

At the tilt of Sirius' eye Harry says softly, "what, he is a Potter employee how could I not greet him thusly."

Sirius grins, "you did good pup."

"Yeah cub," Remus says softly, "you handled that perfectly.

"Contrary to what it may seem like, I do pay attention to what I have been taught." So said he hooks his personal bag onto his seat and his outer robe onto the chair before smiling at the others. "So, lets head to the buffet table."

As they nod at him Charlie comments, "expect a meet and greet with everyone."

Harry chuckles, "its fine for it will be similar to how I greet all new first years and say hello to parents at the end of each year."

8888

"Hey Bill, hows it going," Harry says with a smile as he came upon that particular Weasley getting food at the buffet table.

"Not bad Harry, and yourself?" Is the answer Bill gives.

"Well I have been approached by dozens of Lords who have seemed to forget that this isn't my special day," Harry chuckles with a smile. He then says after Bill grins at him, "so how is your seating arrangement?"

"It could be worse," is Bill's answer. "Though Heir Malfoy is to my left to my right is the quite lovely Heir Delacour." A pause, "her stories about France have been quite interesting to hear."

"Great Bill," Harry says with a smile, "well good luck getting to know her." He then pauses, "I see some people coming my way that I need to speak to so later."

Bill chuckles at that before nodding and heading off as well.

8888

"Hello Lord Potter," says Lord Marcus Steward, the Lord and Head of House Steward, and the father of those getting married today. "I do hope you are finding yourself enjoying the festivities."

Harry smiles at the other lord before accepting the handshake, "of course, its quite beautiful and awe inspiring."

"I am quite happy to hear that," then a pause, "I did mean to personally thank you Lord Potter for accepting our request to make use of this manor."

"It was not a problem at all Lord Steward and in fact it was the least I could do to honor the long centuries of good will and friendship between our two Houses." Harry says with a smile
Before he could say anything further his wife, Adriana Steward nee Marshall, came up and linked arms with her husband. She then says, in a musical tone, "I hope you weren't talking business dear husband."

He chuckles softly at that, "of course not I was simply thanking Lord Potter here for letting us make use of this manor. Its politeness rather than business." He then pauses, and in a cheeky tone of voice, says, "now if I was to talk politics I would have said 'Lord Potter, once this event is over please expect further contact between my House and yours, I have some deals I would like to discuss with you.'" As Harry gives a nod at that, Lord Steward turns to his wife and says, "but obviously I would not say such a thing as this is a wedding not a place for business."

Though Lady Steward gives a soft smile and a chuckle at the remark she doesn't say anything beyond thanking Harry and gesturing her husband to come with him in order to greet certain other people.

Not even a minute after he walked away Remus comes sliding up to him saying, "should I be expecting some messages."

"Yes," Harry says with a smile of his own, "you should." A pause, "may I add that was quite tastefully done."

"It was, it was indeed," Remus says with a grin towards his godson, friend, and boss.

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"Hey Ron, Hermione," Harry says with a smile as he comes up behind his two friends gathering some fruit.

"Hey Harry," Ron says after he finishes swallowing the piece of fruit he was eating. "Fancy meeting you here," he adds with a chuckle.

"Hello Harry," Hermione says with a smile and a slight hug towards his friend. "I am so glad that Percy was able to get me an invite, its been an ever so amazing experience."

Harry nods at that, "I'm glad as well as I don't think this is something that any of us should have missed."

At that point Percy comes up and hands Hermione the drink he got her from the bar while she hands him the small plate of food she got him. After the two exchange grateful smiles Percy turns towards Harry and moves to shake his hand, "hello Harry, hows it going?"

"Its going great Percy," Harry says with a smile, "oh, I know I said this by mirror but this is the first time we physically have seen each other since then." A pause, "congrats on the Ministry job, I know full well that you will do quite well at the Department of International Magical Cooperation. It's right up your ally."

"Thanks Harry, I appreciate that," Percy says as he starts to explain some of what his new job will entail.

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"Greetings Lord and Lady Malfoy," Harry says upon coming up to where both of them are standing near his table. "I do hope this day finds you well."

"Greetings Lord Potter," they both comment before reaching over to shake his hand in the standard
There is a slight pause as an attendant brings the drink that Lucius had asked for which has the Lord nodding in approval. Once the attendant walked away, though not before he asked if Harry wanted anything, Lucius speaks again. "I must say after that splendid ceremony I am finding this day quite enjoyable."

Harry nods at that, "I quite agree on that."

What Harry was going to say next was interrupted, happily, by Sirius coming up and saying, "hello Cissy, Lucius. What a surprise to find you at our table."

After they shake hands, for the proper greetings must be honored, Narcissa comments. "Really Cousin, you are going to pretend you didn't know we were assigned to this table."

This causes Sirius to laugh slightly while Harry grins and Lucius raises an eyebrow. Sirius then says, "well I figured this way we didn't have to stay all formal and stuffy." He then tugs at his collar, only to have his hand slapped away by a gently smiling Remus.

"Hello Remus," says Narcissa who despite appearances actually looked back fondly at Lupin during their Hogwarts years. "It is nice to see you again."

"The same Narcissa," Remus says with a smile and a nod, and a gentle handshake.

"Remus Lupin," Lucius says matter of factly. He then pauses, "I do want to say that I heard many wonderful things about you from Draco this past year."

Remus tilts his heads shyly, though the smile he gives is genuine. "Thank you for that and I must say it was quite a joy to teach last year. I do admit that if I didn't have my current job to go to I would be willing to keep teaching."

"Congrats by the way," Narcissa says with a smile, "you were always among the best in organization of those of our year."

Harry smiles at that before gently saying, "Remus here is the best High Seneschal a person could have."

Lucius gives a Slytherin smile at that before saying, "considering how he orchestrated the events against the most recent attempt to impose racial restrictions, I can only wonder what he would be like fully focused."

This gets a broad grin from Harry, a sharp nod from Sirius, and a shy smile from Remus. Right before Narcissa changes the subject to talk about something less politically charged.

"Harry, if I could borrow a moment of your time?" Is said by Professor Flitwick as Harry is making a small circle around the room, technically to get some additional food.

"Professor," Harry says with a smile, "of course you may. What can I do for you?"

A smile as he moves up to Harry and says, "I wanted to 'officially' introduce you to two people you might have heard of before."

"Oh?" Harry says with a tilt of his head.
"Yes," Flitwick says as they move to where two people are standing, backs to them, talking to Professor McGonagall. "Nicolas, Pernelle, I found him."

Carefully not smiling, though by the slight upturn to their lips he was only partially successful at, he finds himself physically face to face to the Flamels for the first time.

Before Harry could speak Flitwick says, "Harry, these two are the much famed Nicolas and Pernelle Flamel. Nicolas, Pernelle, this is the also famed Harry Potter."

Harry, deciding to play it up slightly, widens his eyes and goes, "greetings Lord and Lady Flamel, it is quite an honor to meet you."

"Greetings Lord Potter," says Nicolas with amusement in his tone, "and I could say much the same."

He gives them a gentle smile before turning to look at Professor McGonagall, "Professor hello, sorry for not greeting you first."

A slight nod, "that is quite alright Mr Potter, though only because it was quite amusing to see the little theatrical production you just performed."

"Oh," Harry says putting his hand to his heart in pretend shock, "whatever do you mean." He then grins widely, much to the amusement of the others.

With a smile Professor McGonagall says, "I am aware of your studies with the Flamels, Mr Potter. In fact I have been aware since your second year."

A blink at that, honest this time, "wait really." A look towards said Flamels followed by, "I must admit to surprise at such information."

"Oops," says Nicolas, followed by a grin. "We never told you did we?"

"Don't blame my husband too much Harry," says Pernelle with a smile, "as it was purely by accident. Minerva here messaged us about something and before we knew it we were talking about you. It sort of slipped out."

"Well as long as it was only good things you were talking about," Harry says with humor in his voice. A slight pause, "I must admit to being surprised that you two decided to attend the wedding."

"Oh there was no way we were missing this, its one of the most expected events of the decade." Says Nicolas.

While Pernelle just adds, "plus we like to party just as much as the next couple." Which leads to some laughter and a slight switch of conversation to much more lighter material.

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"Are you treating this like your walkabout on the Hogwart's Express?" Asks Terry as Harry comes up to the table he is sitting at.

Harry chuckles, "of course, though hopefully not in the way most people would recognize."

"Don't worry Harry," says Justin from where he is sitting nearby, "we only could tell as we know you. Otherwise it seems natural, like you aren't even realizing what is going on."

"Splendid," Harry says with a soft smile, "that was what I was hoping for." He then grins widely before adding, "so how are things going for you all so far?"
"Its wicked," says Seamus from where he is sitting a few seats down. "The food is quite delicious."

"It reminds me a lot of the parties I have had to attend with my family," Justin adds softly. "A fact which I find interesting."

As Harry is nodding at that Mandy says, "by the way thank you for getting us invites. I didn't really expect to be able to attend this event."

"Speaking of that," Sophie says, "how did you get us seats?"

"I didn't," Harry says simply before adding, "honestly, it wasn't me or anyone associated with a House I lead."

Confused looks come from that as Sally-Ann comments, "but if not you then why is our entire year here?"

"I can answer that," says Zebadiah Priest, a recent graduate from Hogwarts and the friend of Harry's who introduced him to occlumency. After shaking their hands he continues, "so while going over the invite list someone noticed how many nobles there are in your year. A small bit of conversation later and they brought the fact your year is quite close to the attention of the Stewards." A pause, "deciding it would be beneficial in the future they choose to invite your entire year."

"Spilling secrets are you now Zeb," says a wizard as he comes up to them and wraps his arm around the other wizard in a clearly non-platonic fashion.

A small grin, a quick kiss and Zebadiah is saying, "you know it. So hey all, let me introduce you to Karolus Quinn, younger brother of the now Kayden Steward, and also my fiance." A slight pause, "and before you ask he didn't go to Hogwarts but rather the Omphalos School in Greece."

After the proper greetings are given and congrats are offered about the engagement, the group begin talking about something much lighter, the nature of the school Karolus attended in Greece.

As soon as he sat down at his assigned table he heard, "so you finish the walkabout?"

A smile and a turn, "hey Neville." He said first before adding, "and yeah I did, well mostly that is. I didn't speak to all the groups, there are over a thousand people here after all, but I did speak to those I most wanted to speak to."

"Did you at least enjoy it Mr Potter?" Questions Lady Amelia Bones with some humor from where she is sitting next to Neville.

"It was interesting that is for sure," Harry says but then nods with a grin, "but yes, in general, it was fun." A pause, "for example did you know that Lord Ollivander recently discovered that basilisk venom freely given could be added to increase the potency of a wand. As I sure didn't know that."

This gets a bit of tittering laughter at the complete randomness of the statement.

"Wait," says Sebastian Shen from where he is sitting next to Lady Bones, "you walked about meeting everyone?"

Sebastian Shen, as Harry had learned not long ago, was the most recent recipient of the Order of Merlin. The honor was awarded due to his many additions to the field of defensive magics, over a hundred spells and rituals have his name attached to them. Including, to Harry's interest, his work
enhancing the Fidelus Charm in numerous ways.

Harry grins at that, "well no, not everyone, as I said." A pause, "the truth is more than half the time people came up to me rather then me going to them."

"I wonder why," Sirius says in a way that is not a question.

"Yeah," Neville adds, "its like they think you are a celebrity or something."

Which gets a smile or chuckle from most of those sitting around the table. Including Minister Fudge and his wife who are sitting between the Shens and the Malfoys.

Before anyone could add to the conversation the lights dim for a moment before going back to normal and a voice can be heard asking everyone to head to their table, the dinner was about to begin.

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When the organizers felt that the majority had reached their seats the lights dimmed and orchestral music started playing. At the same time a series of lights turned on bathing the red carpet lined middle aisle in a glow that seemed to cause everywhere else to fade out of view.

The music reached a crescendo point which saw the four sets of parents appear from the back entrance and walk down the carpet. Following them were the flower children and ring bearers and other such ceremonial participants. Once they had reached their seats, with the parents being placed at four of the closest round tables, the music changed in pitch and nature. This then led to appearance of the wedding party and their partners slash spouses as they walked to the slightly raised platform which housed their tables and the tables of the couples.

The music suddenly stopped and the room was brought to almost pitch blackness. Then woosh, woosh, woosh as three spotlights appeared at the back. Everyone stood up as the music began playing again, a song that was a mix of traditional wedding songs but at the same time added to. Then the couples appeared, the music reached its peak, everyone started clapping, as the three siblings and their spouses made their way down the aisle. This movement wasn't done by them walking but rather them being brought by three pegasus drawn carriages.

As they made their way to the front, and the three small personal tables they had, Charlie leans slightly over and says, "when I get married I want dragons to bear me afloat."

The chuckle that draws forth from Harry is thankfully hidden by all the clapping, though from the amused tilt of both Sirius and Lucius' the comment wasn't as soft as he had hoped.

Once they reached the end the three couples were helped off their chariots and made their way to their seats. The pegasus themselves gave a horse-like neigh before extending their wings and taking off, carriage in tow, out the back window whose glass had suddenly disappeared before returning the moment they passed through.

The three couples then move to stand next to each other before gesturing everyone to sit down. It was obviously time for speeches.

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After a slight gesture brings an attendant to his table Harry says, "would it be possible for me to get another salad, that was spectacular."
A slight bow from the attendant followed by, "of course sir, coming right up."

As he digs into the somewhat large plate of salad that was brought to him, after the thank you of course, he senses amusement in those around him. Looking up he says, after finishing the bite, "what, its enjoyable and since I am pretty sure I know who is cooking it is also a compliment to the chefs."

Which gets nods from all those around the table as they can agree on that, if its house elves cooking asking for more food is always a compliment.

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"I don't understand why people consider it beneficial to let them in," says a wizard Harry does not know to his friends as Harry comes upon a balcony.

The group stop talking as he comes close which leads Harry to say, "oh don't mind me I came out here for some fresh air, it was getting a bit stuffy in there."

"Would you like to join us Lord Potter?" Questions another wizard standing next to the first one.

"Only if that is what you all want, otherwise I can just catch some fresh air before heading back inside."

A third friend, a witch says, "no please join us. I am Giselle Gervase and these are my friends Maynard Mercer, Radames Ptolemy, and Jarvis Fleamont."

"Nice to meet you all." A pause, "now I would obviously introduce myself but as you know who I am we can skip that part." This gets some amused laughter, which Harry is pleased to hear. He then says, "so what was it you were talking about before I came out here."

"It was on the benefits of letting the other magical races attend our places of entertainment," says Jarvis.

"Ah, I see." Gesturing towards Mercer, "so the them in your comment was shifters, vampires, veela, goblins, and giants. Right?" Which leads to a nod of agreement on that. Harry then grins and says, "let us ignore the social element of them having magic and thus having just as much a right to our world as we do and go for a more economic foundation for the argument." Seeing the confused looks on all but Radames' face leads to Harry saying, "if they have money, which they do, isn't it to our benefit to let them use said money in the businesses we own."

"That's actually a good point," says Maynard with a nod. Which was something Harry had figured considered he was a Mercer, and they were all about economic activity. "I hadn't thought about it that way." A pause, "even though I might not like them personally it doesn't mean their money isn't good."

"Exactly!" Harry says with a smile and a nod. "I would add that this has been the longstanding Pevensie philosophy which is why they are doing so well. You see they seek to increase the wealth of the magical world so that people feel its good to use it at their places."

Though they nod at that, seeming to find some agreement in what Harry says, before they can continue discussing it further an attendant comes out and says, "pardon me Master Mercer but your father wishes to introduce someone to you."

"Of course, thank you," he then nods once towards Harry before heading inside, with both Jervase and Fleamont following him.
"I will be one moment I want a bit more fresh air," Ptolemy says leading to the others nodding as they head inside.

This leads to Harry tilting his head in question, which is followed by a slight chuckle from Ptolemy in response.

"Obviously I wanted to talk to you alone for a moment," Ptolemy says with a smile. "Nothing bad or anything, rather I just wanted to say thank you for the way you handled that. Maynard isn't a bad person he just has an old fashioned attitude towards those who are less than pure Magical." A pause, "that said your use of an economic benefit was genius."

Harry grins at that, "thank you. I figured that as a Mercer money and economics would talk more than social issues."

"It can't be easy," Ptolemy says honestly but at a tilt of Harry's head explains further, "not only is your High Seneschal a shifter but you have a number of highly placed officers who are married to them. So it can't be easy acting like the social aspect doesn't matter."

A nod, "you are right it is not always easy. That said I have little issue with using various alternate conversation points when talking to those with different motives from me.” A smile. “Especially when said people are, as you put it, generally good folk.”

A blink at that followed by, "why are you saying this all to me, aren't you worried that I might tell others?"

"I see your soul Radames," Harry says which causes the other wizard to gasp in shock. A moment of holding it in ends as Harry smiles and laughs and shakes his head.

"Oh your joking," Radames says with a chuckle himself. "Good one though." A pause, "so how did you know I could be trusted?"

"It's for a much simpler reason. You are good friends with Rawlin Sewal and he speaks highly of you, quite highly."

Eyes widen at that, "oh Merlin, wow." A shake of the head, "all his stories now make even more sense." A pause, "you know he was quite pleased when you hired him full time as the House Warder for Levant."

Harry grins at that, "it made perfect sense after my agents asked for an update and he gave us over a hundred pages of information." A pause, "the House of Levant is situated on a remarkable zone of unstable magical patterns."

"Its the same with House Ptolemy," says Radames with a nod. He then pauses, "it is also why we let muggles visit the sites of our ancestors, their presence brings a certain level of stability we lack without a Monarch."

Harry nods at that before saying, "so how do you like Britain?"

"Its interesting, different but interesting. I am quite grateful for the opportunity given to me by Gringotts to work here. Though I admit to missing Egypt a bit."

Harry nods at that, "so what are your plans when the internship is over?"

"Not sure truthfully. Though I don't plan on taking up my Father's offer to aid in House politics." A grin, "a benefit to being the second son."
Harry grins at that, "well if you find yourself looking for a job send your resume via this." So said Harry hands Ptolemy a card that is clearly giving off the Potter magical sigil.

Eyes widen at that, "wait really?"

"Yep, really." A pause, "now before we head inside I was meaning to ask you about something Rawlin said you knew." Which leads to them talking for another ten minutes about a number of different types of ancient magic.

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"There you are," says Daphne a little while later as Harry was moving about, "its time to dance!"

Harry was given but a second before she grabbed his hand and yanked him towards the dance floor, much to his amusement. As they moved they passed by a Charlie talking to the twins and so Harry gestured towards them. Charlie shook his head but was grabbed by Harry and made to join them.

Which was how Harry found himself on the dance floor and putting to use the lessons he had gotten from his year mates since second year. It was an hour later, interrupted only by a quick appetizer course, that Harry finally made his way off the dance floor. A dance floor which had seen Harry dance with hundreds upon hundreds of people - male and female, young and old. Thankfully, for all that everyone recognized as Lord status, they also realized he was only fourteen and so nobody crossed the line onto indecency.

Thankfully.

As he was walking back to his table he was stopped by a voice saying, "wow, Lord Potter, that was brilliant."

Turning towards the sound Harry smiles at seeing it was Kayden who spoke, but with Curtis standing right next to him. Harry then says, "it was fun that is for sure." Then since he hadn't seen them before, "congrats by the way, the ceremony was beautiful and you two look stunning!"

"Thank you," Curtis says with a smile as he wraps his arms around Kayden, "I will admit that the planning was difficult but in the end it was quite worth it."

"Though I wouldn't have objected to having it be a little more lowkey at parts," Kayden says with a smile. He then shakes his head, "anyway, we just wanted to stop and say that the dancing you did was marvelous. Especially considering you danced with nearly everyone who moved to the dance floor."

"Thanks," Harry says with a smile, "I tried to get away but they pulled me back in." A pause, "I think said person might have been Lady Zabini actually." A shrug, "but it was fun. Though I am looking forward to sitting down for the main course soon."

This gets a laugh from both men. Curtis then adds, "I must admit the fact that you led no matter who you danced with was interesting."

Harry shrugs shyly at that, "honestly, that is what came natural. There were a few who a part of me thought it would be politic to let them lead but within minutes I was leading without either of us realizing it."

They chuckle at that, reach out to shake Harry's hand, and then begin heading to speak to another group of people. Harry heads towards his table and plops himself down with a slight sigh.
"Tired Lord Potter," says Narcissa from where she is sitting a feat seats down from him.

"A bit yes," Harry then gives her a cheeky smile, "for reasons that you are entirely aware of since I danced with both you and your husband at one point."

"That was quite splendid Mr Potter," says the smooth silky tones of Professor Snape. He then gestures towards Lucius, who is standing next to him, and says, "I haven't seen him be willing to let someone else lead in a quite a long time."

This gets a laugh from Sirius and Remus as well, and a mirthful look in Narcissa's eyes.

With a smile on his own face Harry says, "I couldn't help it, I just did what came natural."

"You lead," was said by Neville with a grin in his voice. As eyes turn towards him he sits up straighter and says, "even when he is sitting back quietly and letting others speak and organize he is leading."

"That reminds me of the time I happened to visit his previous residence," says Lady Bones with a smile. "Here he is, a boy of almost thirteen walking past a line of muggle police in order to come to speak to me and my Aurors. With a glance the muggles simply nod leaving him be. After we talk he offers to provide assistance, just like that."

Harry chuckles at that, "I wasn't entirely sure what I could do but still it felt right to ask."

To the surprise of many Cornelius Fudge speaks up saying, "I have a similar story. At the end of last summer I hear word that Lord Potter has shown up at the Leaky Caudron. So I head there with a staff of aurors to make sure not only is he, but they, are safe."

"From ME," says Sirius with a humorous tone of his voice.

"Well that was before we realized about the magnitude of the travesty propagated against you Lord Black," says the Minister smoothly. He then continues his story, "so I come through the floo but before I make myself known I see Lord Potter here both chastising and calming the men and women around." Another chuckle, honest since he did find it amusing, "I especially liked it when he said 'what do you expect Black to simply pop out from the door yelling boo.'"

Slight chuckles and amused glints come to everyone's eyes at that. Harry though shrugs, "I stand by that statement since even if he was guilty and after me why would he show up in Wizarding London. A fact which I am sure hundred year plus wizards and witches should have realized."

Harry then pauses before turning to look at Professor Snape in the eye, "so Professor I meant to say, congratulations on getting your potion published in Potion Potentials. From what I understand its going to revolutionize the work St Mungo does in aiding those patients with nerve damage."

After Snape gives a slight bow and a quiet but firm thanks the group begin talking about said potion for the next little while.

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"The Head of Lestrange is coming this way," Sirius comments softly to Harry int he interlude between dishes.

Harry gives a nod and turns towards Neville saying, "how do you want to handle this?"

Neville's eyes widen at that leading to him breathing out, "for real?"
"Yes, you get to choose how polite I am going to be with the House of Lestrange."

Neville swallows his first statement, which was going to be something like 'screw them', because he KNEW it wasn't right. Though it was a Lestrange who cursed his parents it wasn't those who currently lead the House. None of them were Death Eaters, and Neville knew this wasn't in the same way that Lucius Malfoy wasn't a Death eater, though he was. "The House of Longbottom has not broken ties with the House of Lestrange."

Harry nods at that before saying, "then neither shall the House of Potter or those I lead." All this is said moments before the current Lestrange elder had arrived in order to share with the Malfoys an interesting and amusing tidbit that occurred at their table.

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"So the dragon jumped over the fence and the new recruit begins panicking and shouting that 'the dragons are escaping, the dragons are escaping.' I try and tell him its okay, don't panic, which just leads him to screeching even louder about how I didn't care we were all going to die when the dragons attacked the wall."

Everyone at their table is staring at Charlie as he tells the story. After a slight pause to chuckle at the events he continues. "So, after getting over the ranting I take out my wand and stun the recruit."

"What about the dragon?" Narcissa asks curiously, just as enthralled.

"That's the thing, so the dragon wasn't trying to escape rather he was attempting to get his ball which had flew over the fence the last time we played."

"Dragons play catch?" Minister Fudge asks shocked.

"Yep, most of them are basically overgrown children. The barriers on the Reserve aren't to keep them in but to keep most humans out." A pause, "any dragon keeper or scholar will tell you if the dragons wanted to leave then they would leave."

"As simple as that?" Sirius asks curiously.

A nod, "as simple as that." A pause, "the Sanctuary in Romania is there not because we choose to put the dragons there but because a long time ago wizards noticed dragons like to go there and so we figured, 'well, let them have it'."

Lucius gives a slight chuckle, just enough to be within the acceptable side of a Slytherin pureblood, "just when you think you know what is going on you realize that one of the most powerful species out there are basically overgrown children."

The amusement the table feels is real.

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"Oh I like this," Harry says with a smile as another course appears in front of their places.

"Why is it," Neville says with amusement in his tone, "all the food we have been getting are ones you enjoy."

At first Harry doesn't say anything, simply taking great enjoyment at the food in front of him. But then he finishes the bite, wipes his mouth, and says, "I haven't the foggiest notion what you are talking about Lord Longbottom." He then goes back to eating, while carefully hiding the grin.
It is Shar who looses it first as he chuckles in laughter at the reaction. Once he lets loose he is followed by many of the others. Even Lucius tilts his head in amusement at the antics going on.

"You know Harry," Charlie says into the momentary silence of the table, "I would really like it if you enjoyed a nice baked potato."

"Hmm," Harry says with a glint of humor in his eyes, "I do like my baked potato."

Pop.

Is the sound they hear before a number of plates of baked potatoes appear on the table all around them.

"Do you like sweetcorn?" Narcissa asks before continuing, "because I wouldn't some sweetcorn."

Harry chuckles, "actually I do, they are quite delicious."

A minute later, pop, as a number of places for corn on the cop appear around the table.

Harry raises his hand, slightly, before saying softly, "please don't go overboard or anything."

"Lord Potter," asks Lady Bones, "why are the kitchens responding to your requests."

Sirius chuckles, "though this manor was once a royal retreat it was granted to House Potter in perpetuity some six centuries ago."

Blinks at that followed by grins, some big others small, but still grins.

As Harry turns back towards his food he does comment, "for the record the kitchen is also listening to the comments from the newly wed couples and their marriage party."

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It was a bit later when Harry was stopped by as he was coming back from the restroom. "Pardon the interruption Lord Potter," says August Lestrange, "but if we could have a moment of your time."

Looking between both the Lestrange and the man who he knows was William Silverstine, Harry gives a small nod.

It is William who says, in a slightly shaky but still strong voice, "thank you for getting me out of Azkaban."

Harry tilts his head at that before reaching out to take the hand of the much older William. "I didn't really do anything actively, but that said I am sorry that you had to go through what you went through."

"You didn't block the attempt," says August as he gazes at his lover before turning back to Harry, "which if you had done would have stopped the event before it even began."

"As I almost lost my godfather to the darkness that is Azkaban you can believe me when I say I do not approve of people being thrown in there without full blown, ironclad trials." A pause as he reaches to shake both men's hands, "I wish you well and hope you can get the healing you need. If you find yourself discovering that it is one of my Houses which has the resource you need do not hesitate to contact me." A pause, "you may do so directly."

They nod at this before the two start to turn around to had back to their table. William then stops and
turns to face Harry, "I don't believe it was your grandfather who manipulated the evidence to send me to jail."

Harry nods and says gently, "I can attest to that since the Head Ring would have recorded the operation if there was one, and there is not."

A growl from August, "then it must have been Hanse." As he finishes speaking William gently puts his hand over August's.

Harry simply looks over them before stating simply, "if they did then it was done without official House support or even knowledge." Which gets a nod from them before they head away.

"Enjoying the evening Lord Malfoy," Harry says at one point when its basically just them at the table for the moment.

"Quite Lord Potter," is Lucius' quick response. He then gestures towards the gathering around them. "This is the sort of battlefield I find the most enjoyable to participant in." A pause for them both to fill in what is not being said. "Oh it has all the moves of the other sort, up to including the potential killing of a person's career, but its done with word and gesture rather than by wand."

Harry nods at that, for he can definitely understand where Lucius is coming from. "The problem Lucius," the personal name slips out almost unconsciously, "is that this sort of battlefield only exists when the other does not. But even more this environment only exists when Albion is strong." A pause followed by, "and Dark Lords do not make for a strong Albion."

A nod. A sharp tiny nod. Which leads to Lucius saying, "I have started to realize that Lord Potter."

"Which is all that one can hope for Lucius," Harry says with a nod and a glint in his eye that Lucius would swear came from someone much older than almost fourteen. He then shakes his head, the moment is gone, as he asks, "oh, so I meant to honestly ask, why is it that your House always asks for basing rights in the Butternut Tree Hundred?"

This actually gets a humor filled glint in Lucius' eyes as he begins to tell a story of three centuries ago and a Malfoy who had a dream and a Potter who supported it. Of a father who refused them both and a hope of later generations of Malfoys for the dream to not truly die.

At the end of the story Harry's eyes widen, "wait really, okay wow. That is a lot more interesting then I expected this to be." A pause, "if you would Lord Malfoy please send me the information you have on this as I don't believe the Potters' kept hold of it."

"It would be my honest pleasure," Lucius says with a smile and a nod. "I would quite like being the Malfoy who aided in the completion of the three century old dream of my ancestor."

Harry grins at that, for he is in full agreement that such an act is in fact amazing.

"Hey Cedric hows it going?" Harry says as he comes upon his friend by a fruit bar to the side of the hall.

"It's been great Harry," is Cedric's response. "How about you? How are things up at the special elite table of eliteness?"
A small chuckle followed by, "good. Its been quite a pleasant evening I must say." He stops to carefully hide a yawn, which he is mostly successful at. "But long and tiring."

Cedric nods at that as they step away from the table, "I know we got here at noon and from what I know still have a few more hours before the event is over."

Harry nods at that before saying, with a smile, "well see you on the dance soon!"

A grin is the only response.

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"Harry," says Blaise Zabini coming to his table, "a bunch of us are dancing and we want you to join us."

Harry sighs a put upon clearly fake sigh before smiling and getting up to join Blaise and the others for some more dancing.

As Harry eyes Charlie the later says, "soon, I just want to finish my cup of tea and this quite delicious apple pie!"

Nodding at that Harry accepts Blaise's hand and heads to the dance floor, but not before pointing a finger and saying, "you better come over soon."

"So Lord Sidus," Narcissa says in her smooth tone, "how long have you and Lord Potter been acquainted with each other."

Charlie doesn't even bother to hide the smile that comes to his face. "Since his first year. Events occurred which required my unique assistance."

"Surely there wasn't a dragon at Hogwarts?" Asks the Minister shocked as the thought of his Dragon Keeper skills being needed at Hogwarts.

A shake of the head, followed by a boldface easy to say lie, "of course not, that would have been dangerous. That said, there was a dragon egg that someone was trying to sell, illegally of course. The egg was confiscated and turned over to Hagrid as the official gameskeeper of Hogwarts. I got called since they knew I worked for a Reserve."

"There was no danger?" Lucius questions in such a way that no one can tell his actual thoughts.

A shake of the head, "no, not at all. In time, yes of course, but not at the point I was brought in." A pause and a look towards the Minister, "for the record my participation in this was legal under numerous Royal and Imperial Laws."

Narcissa wanting to change the point says, "so in the aftermath you met Lord Potter?"

A small grateful smile followed by, "yes I did. He was quite inquisitive and interested in hearing about my work and so we struck up a friendship."

"That is how we got into contact as well," Remus says with a nod towards Charlie. "He wrote to me after some of the pictures I had sent to Hagrid were added to a photo album he received for the Holiday."

Lucius tilts his head before saying, "though we first met Lord Potter when we went to pick up Draco at the end of their First Year between all the letters my son sent me I felt I had already met him."
Which caused some laughter at the table at that point.

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It was around midnight and the party was wrapping up. The three couples had just finished making the final rounds around the hall and moved towards the dance floor for one final dance. Said dance started slow, just the three pairs, before increasing in tempo that was followed by a gesture which led to many others standing up to join the newly married couples in dance.

When that was done five minutes later silence descended upon the hall as the three couples waved once more before turning around towards the large window at the back of the hall. Then, with a mighty neigh, the three carriages and their pegasi appeared through the glass and stopped in front of each couple. The couples waved at everyone once more, thanked everyone for a good evening, took their seats in the carriages and flew out of the room.

To silence. Which was quickly followed by clapping, not just for the married couples but just as a general sign of enjoyment.

As people started moving about, since with that the party was officially over, Sirius turns towards those around him and says, "now that is how you leave!"

Agreeable laughter comes from those who heard what Sirius just said.

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It was an hour later before Harry, Charlie, Sirius, and Remus made it to the floo chamber so they could head back to Potter Manor.

"It always frustrates me on how the goodbye process is an event in and of itself," Remus says with a shake of the head.

A slight chuckle from Charlie who adds, "its always that way." He then gives a smile, "which is why I often start making the goodbye sounds an hour or so before I really need to leave, that way I get out around the time I wanted."

Grins at that followed by Sirius deciding to pretend whine, "I'm tired, why can't we stay here?"

Harry chuckles, "well we could as I do own the manor after all and there is a private wing for my family available."

"But then the Potter elves wouldn't make your favorite breakfast tomorrow Sirius," Remus says with a chuckle of his own.

"Right, so lets go," Sirius says with renewed energy. Grabbing the floo powder he steps into the fireplace and says, "Potter Manor."

The others laugh at that before Charlie steps forward to do the same which allows for Harry to hold back Remus for a moment as he flashes his Head Ring.

Pop.

"How can Matty help the great Lord Master Harry Potter sir?"

Harry smiles at the house elf and says, "before I leave I just wanted to make sure that everything is good with you all and the manor."
Nods, many, "everything be good master Harry sir, nothing be damaged we couldn't fix or dirtied we can't clean." A pause as she thinks over, "though Matty wouldn't object to help from other Potter house elves as this is the first party of this size we have had here in over a decade."

"Understood and thank you for being willing to ask for help, I appreciate that." A pause, "give me five minutes and I am pretty sure I can get other house elves assigned to you from my various other holdings."

"Thank you master Harry, Matty be grateful," with that, and a slight hug to Harry's legs, she pops away.

At the raised eyebrow from Remus, Harry shrugs and says, "this manor used to have three times as many house elves assigned here but they were moved to other sites when the number of parties dwindled."

"Right," Remus says with a nod, "then its only fair that we provide the backup for an event of this size." A pause, "why didn't we do that earlier?"

"None of the house elves said they needed the help," Harry said gently. He then reached into his Head Ring, contacted the house elf who served as his High Chamberlain and made his needs known. The nod and slight hug informed him that this wishes would be taken care of.

"Right then," Harry then says, "lets head back to Potter Manor before the two wonder why we were delayed or random people come here to talk to us." So said, so done.

8888

"Thanks for letting me stay the night," says Charlie as the four sit around in the lounge having a sip of something to drink. With it being hot chocolate for Harry and Remus and some beer for Charlie and Sirius. "I know I could floo or apparate or Ring portkey to my residence but, well." At the last bit he trails off.

Which leads Remus to say with a smile, "why do that when you can stay here for a night or two and simply relax."

"Yeah," Sirius adds, "with good company and great friends!"

Which leads to Harry raising his hot chocolate and saying, "to good company and great friends!"

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"Were there any issues with the manor in the aftermath of the wedding?" Harry asked Remus. While they were going over various administrative topics in his office.

"Not really no." Remus responded with a grin. "In fact, the house elves report that the Stewards left the estate in a better state then when they first arrived." A pause, "I think someone involved didn't want to get on your bad side."

Harry raises an eyebrow at that. "Really, wow." A shake of the head then, "I'm not really sure what I could have done to make them worried." A pause, "Unless it was done out of kindness, that I could see."

"Yeah I agree." Remus says distractedly as he flips through the paperwork in front of him. He then looks up with a grin while saying, "I think you will find this amusing." A pause, "So due to the various conversations you had at the wedding We have begun receiving more business deals and political offers than we have ever before."

Eyes widen at that, "Wait really?" A tilt of the head, "How are you and the staff handling it?"

"Mostly okay, though I have to admit to having to hiring new staff to aid in the increases we are seeing." A pause, "We are still going over many of the requests which is why you haven't received the files yet."

"Do you think most of the offers are legit?"

"Yes, mostly anyway. A few are clearly let's talk to Harry Potter though none of that type are from the Great Houses."

"That is great to hear. Especially since with how busy I am, I can only imagine how much they have to do." A pause, "Well I look forward to reading the proposals, as well as the reports your team adds to them." Another pause, which occurred at the same time as he was looking through some paperwork, before Harry asks softly sadly, "How many did we lose in the Blue Ridge Hundred?" A pause, "Also did the disaster effect any of other hundreds in its eastern European prefecture?"

"Eighteen. While the physical devastation was great, the local aura managed to activate in time to prevent even more deaths." A pause as well, "Not really no, mostly because your hundred was at the epicenter of the event."

"Which I'm thankful for." A shake of the head, "Between the two of us and Sirius, I will state that the rapid response of the aura was only because of my status as Head of House Emrys. My personal magic tapped into the royal wards of Albion just enough for it to enable the wards of House Potter to be boosted."

"We are lucky that you only got a slight headache from that," Remus says a bit awed at what he heard.
A nod, "Yes, we are. The Royal magics were never designed to be tapped into by a “regular” Great House. If most of the others had tried it, well, let’s just say more than a headache would be the result." A pause, "Still, I would have been more than willing to take on even more hurts. Eighteen deaths, though painful, is a much smaller number than what it could have been."

"I concur," Remus says with a soft smile. "The hundred has almost fifty thousand people permanently inhabiting it. Which could be doubled, even tripled, depending on the market day."

A slight sign of agreement then, "How are the repairs going?"

"Okay. Within minutes, the Watch and Guard forces of nearby Hundreds apparated over to Blue Ridge to aid its people. We have already gathered care packages and provided temporary shelters for the residents."

A nod then, in a voice of a lord, Harry says, "I will be visiting the hundred later today. Though there is little I can do by wand there. There is much I can do for morale, they need to know their Lord hasn't forsaken them."

"Sounds good Lord Potter," Remus says while giving a bow of acceptance. For at that moment he knew he was not speaking to his godson and friend, but rather the wizard who would one day be a King, if Fate and Magic required it.

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"Warders, cursebreakers, geomancers, fabricators, and healers. Who do I have to thank for being so organized and efficient." Harry says a few minutes into their tour of the impacted section of the Blue Ridge Hundred.

Sirius tilts his head in the direction of a particular wizard while saying, "That would be Master Adrian Cornel, he is the local carpenter. When the quake occurred, he was nearby but in an area not struck by it and so he was able to basically take charge."

A nod, then Harry lowers his voice and says, "how is Sheriff Garnel?"

"The Healers say she will make a full recovery. Though it won't be a quick one due to the bit of magic which exploded in the lab next to where she was standing when the quakes hit." Remus says from Harry's other side. "In fact, she is already talking about retirement."

At this point, they made it up to the main table from which Master Cornel and Mayor Albright were overseeing the recovery efforts with First Captain Stevenson of the Watch and First Captain Jackson of the region's House Guard detachment. As soon as they saw Harry coming by, they stop what they were doing and snapped to attention.

Harry smiles at them a moment before moving into handshake range while saying, "At ease all. For I'm not here to disrupt your operations. In fact, I would like to know how I can help?"

The group of leaders exchanged looks before Master Cornel moved forward and says, "Ah, well, honestly sir just your presence walking about the camp will be helpful." A pause, "People are feeling downright depressed sir and seeing you here will help them."

Harry chuckles before saying, "Aw, you want me to play figurehead." A pause as their eyes widen at that which calms a moment later as Harry continues by saying, "Sure. If it can help, it’s the least I can do." A pause, "That said, before I leave today, we will need to go over in detail what exactly you need, and want, in terms of resources and personnel. So that the recovery operations for the citizens of the hundred is swift and easy." He meets all their eyes, so they know how firmed he is on
that, before he gestures towards one of the locals, "So Lieutenant Carry, please show me where I can provide the most good."

"Ah, yes sir, just this way sir." Says the lieutenant while gesturing for them to follow him.

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As the small group are moving between sections of the camp Harry speaks. "Remus, I am quite pleased with what Master Cornel has been doing here. If Sheriff Garnel feels that retirement is in her future, I want Cornel to become the new Sheriff."

"That is not a problem Harry." Remus then gives a sly grin on that before adding, "Honestly the moment reports started coming to my desk on his actions. I began the process of vetting him for the position." A pause, "Give me a few days and I can give the formal report on his promotion."

Harry grins at that before adding, "Really, brilliant. Now that is being proactive Remus, thanks a lot." So, said they enter the next of the camp sections and so Harry begins his presentation.

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"So, I said to them, “If you magic up the eggs the omelets they will be bitter.” As the group of people laugh at the punch line of what, Harry thought, was a pretty good joke, he feels a vibration in his Head Ring. Moments later the vibration turns to an actual beeping sound, which has Harry blinking. A gesture of surprise, he realizes soon after, shared by both Sirius and Remus. "Ah, pardon me, I seem to be getting a call."

Harry then pauses in order to activate the Head Ring, which shows the appearance of Warden Donald Mivvins, of the Forest Hill Hundred.

The Warden speaks first, "Pardon for the interruption sir, but there is a situation in my hundred that I think you are especially suited to solve."

"Oh?" Harry says in question, "Do tell, what has happened?"

A nervous head scratch and then, "Well sir, you see, there are reports of the presence of a basilisk den in one of the forests of this hundred." A pause, "ah, and I can confirm said reports as I have personally seen signs of her, of them actually."

Eyes widen at that, not just Harry but most of those gathered around. Most are thinking the same thing - that a basilisk, in the modern world, found outside of a zoo of some sort is simply unbelievable!

"Have any lives been lost Warden?" Harry then asks.

"No sir, just some field livestock. The moment I knew there was something big out here, even before I knew what it was, I used my authority over the hundred wards to, well, seal the area."

"Good thinking Warden, good thinking." A pause, "As you are calling me, may I assume you have need of my talents?"

"Yes sir." He says with a nod, no shyness in his speech for this is his area of expertise. "Now between my tracking and hunting skills and the wards trapping them in the area, I could deal with the problem." A pause, "but considering your special talents I do believe you might want me to work a different angle than the standard."
"You would be correct on that Warden Mivvins, so very good thinking." A pause as he thought things over, "Right now, I am at the Blue Ridge Hundred. After a meeting with the local leaders, I will make my way to your hundred for a more personal meeting." As the Warden nods at that Harry smiles, "Until then do not do anything about the basilisks, keep the wards closed tight."

"Will do sir," says the Warden. "I will be here in the local manor house researching the situation both lore wise and magically. As I want to know how and when a pack of basilisks might have gotten into here."

"Sounds perfect Warden, see you in a few hours." With that said Harry closes the connection, leading to the visage of the Warden blinking away.

Though Harry turns towards the locals before he can speak one of them, a younger male, says, "Is it true Lord Potter that you can speak to snakes?"

Harry smiles at that before giving a nod, "Yes, that is quite true. In fact, it is that very ability, and my bonding to the serpents Loki and Isis, that made the Warden contact me." At the speaking of his name Loki moves his head a bit so that those gathered about can clearly see he was not simply a wristband. He lets Loki hiss at them for a moment before he says, "Well, as you no doubt expect, I do believe this is going to cut my visit a bit short. I need to aid the residents of Forest Hill in their basilisk problem."

Though Harry says that he doesn't simply rush out of there. No, he finishes his meets and greets with the locals, before heading back to where the leaders were gathered. Not only to get their updates, which he did, but also to appointed Master Cornel as Sheriff. All in all, it would take him a few hours. As he had mentioned to the residents of Blue Ridge Hundred, before he would get to Forest Hill.

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"Right," said Warden Mivvins as soon as the three were sitting down in an office in the local manor house. "From my quick investigation, it seems that two basilisks managed to use the storm conditions that occurred two years ago to slither inside here at that point." He pauses as he gazes at not just them but the local Sheriff before adding, "Before you worried, as natural magical creatures, the wards wouldn't panic as they would if say they were undead or something dark."

"It would have helped at that moment most of our attention was focused on the flooding that happened on the east bank of Raddle Lake." The Sheriff says as a justification for his not noticing it.

"Exactly, so nobody's fault." The Warden says. "Once here they, well, propagated themselves naturally." A pause, "Without a firsthand look, I can't say exactly how many little ones they had. Though from general studies on the breed, which states that most of offspring die young." Another pause then, "I can say that only the two adults have the death stare and that offspring won't get said ability for centuries."

"Which is good to know," Harry says with smile. "At least we don't have to worry about dozens, or hundreds, of tiny crawling things that can kill with a look."

"Right," Warden Mivvins says in total agreement at Harry's comment.

"So, what are you thinking," says Remus towards Harry.

"What I am not thinking is ordering their slaughter, that is for sure." Harry says firmly, though with no anger as nobody in the room had remotely suggested that option. Which neither he, nor Sirius and
Remus, were surprised by - Harry's affinity for snakes were, by this point, well known. "Beyond that I think a conversation is in order. I can either get them homes somewhere else or, if they like it here, I can ward their territory, so humans and pets can’t go there."

"I should mention sir," Mivvins says with a smile, "that if you needed or wanted to, the local area could be magically expanded, as there is still some pull to the local aura."

A wide grin comes to Harry's face at that bit of news, "Splendid and perfect all at once and thus very much an option." A pause, "Okay, so let us plan and decide how to best go there." A pause, "For the record only you, Warden, and Sirius and Remus will be accompanying me." A gentle hand raise, "This is not up for discussion, there is no need for armies."

Mouths close and nods, some less than pleased, come in response to that.

"Oh, they are so cute," says Sirius Black as he sits on the dirt floor as a few of the baby basilisks crawl around him. "They are like puppies!"

Chuckling at that Harry says in parseltongue, "my godfather Sirius," a pause, "the one who smells like dog to you, likes them."

"I can tell," says the female basilisk with a hiss of happiness in her tone. "They like him too," she soon adds.

"What will come of us," says the male basilisk to Harry from where he is laying in a perfect position to strike if needed.

Harry grins at that, not surprised the male was all business. "Well, now that depends on you both. The worst option is you fight me, an encounter that you will not win, trust me on that." A pause to let that sink in then, "But at best you can get a forever home with me as an ally. Said home can be either here, at a menagerie I own, or even Potter Manor which is my main residence."

"We will not attack unless attacked first," says the female basilisk as one of her babies climbs up Harry and sits on his hair while crooning out happy sounds.

"You speak, which the humans here do not, so I want to come with you!" Says the male basilisk with a rumbling hiss of approval at what this means for him.

Harry grins widely, "That sounds perfect and I accept." A pause, "Are your children able to safely be moved by magical means?"

As she hisses in affirmative the male moves from his position overlooking it all and wraps around her in a gesture like a hug as if they were humans.

Smiling Harry simply says, "Well, it looks like Potter Manor is getting a few new residents."

Which gets amused looks on the faces of Sirius and Remus and pure awe on that of Warden Mivvins.

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Chapter End Notes
I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
Birthday Trip

Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Late July

"Get off, get off!" Harry exclaims loudly as he is woken up upon being licked in his face by a canine Sirius Black. "I'm up, I'm up," he then adds with a laugh.

It seems, Harry then thinks, that despite it being his birthday, him having a slow leisurely morning was not in the cards.

After a single lick to the face Sirius backs up jumps off the bed and transforms back into a human. Laughing, "Good, get up, breakfast is almost ready, and your birthday waits for no man." A pause, "including the birthday boy!"

Sirius then gives Harry a quick grin before heading out of the room, to allow for Harry to get ready for the day.

"Come out Dobby, I know your lurking," Harry says with humor in his voice.

A slight swish and Dobby becomes visible. "Dobby is not surprised that the great master knew he was here." A pause then a grin, "Dobby wants to wish his bests master ever a happy birthday." Another pause, "Can I help you get ready?"

Seeing that Dobby really wants to help Harry smiles at him and nods, which leads to Dobby snapping his fingers. Moments later his bed robes are replaced by his running clothes.

"You know me too well Dobby," Harry says as he smiles at his running clothes. Even though it’s his birthday, it’s not Sunday and so he is going to go for a morning run. As his tradition.

Dobby nods, "Dobby knows. Dobby also told your dogfather and godwolf that you would run first. Dogfather's comment about breakfast was a lie!"

Harry chuckles at that as he finishes getting ready.

8888

"HAPPY BIRTHDAY!" Harry hears upon walking into the room that he knows Sirius and Remus are relaxing in.

What made it even more amusing was that Harry couldn’t tell which of the two were louder in their greetings.

After a smile and a great big hug to them both Harry says, "thanks guys." A pause, "Honestly us being here together is truthfully the best gift I could have ever been given."

There is a moment of pause as the three make a hugging circle. Then Sirius puts his hands down and says, "Go on your run. That way we can finish preparing for your birthday!"

Harry smiles at that, gives the two men another hug, and then nods as he heads off to run.
"Incoming call." Is what Harry hears from his message mirror a bit into his run.

"Answer if its Charlie." Harry's respond which is followed by a beep and then the visage of Charlie appeared next to him as he runs. "Hey Charlie," Harry says with a smile.

"Hey Harry," Charlie says in mimic. He then grins, "So a birdie told me today happens to be someone special's birthday."

"Oh really," Harry says with a grin, "Is it anyone I know?"

A chuckle, "you know it." A pause, "Soooooo HAPPY BIRTHDAY!"

A grin, "Thank you Charlie, I appreciate it."

"Well you deserve it." Charlie says, he then pauses in thought. "So hows it having a birthday surrounded by people who actually care about you?"

Giving a slight knowing smile, Harry clearly picking up on the hate for the Dursleys, he then says. "Brilliant, though tiring." At the intrigued look, he continues, "Sirius as Padfoot woke me up this morning by jumping on my bed."

A chuckle, "Oh that must have been different than normal."

"It was, it was." Harry says.

"It’s great though." Stating the next comment. "So besides wishing you a happy birthday, I wanted to update you on the various bits of 'business' that required me to head back to Romania rather than join you for your birthday."

Harry gives him a very interested look, followed by a smile, and a gesture to go on. Which is exactly what Charlie does for the rest of the run.

8888

Leaning back in his chair at the kitchen table Harry says, "Wow that was pretty good." He then burps, which he didn't mean to let out.

Chuckling Sirius says, "It wasn't it." He then grins, "It seems the cooks wanted to make sure you knew how happy they are to have you here."

Harry grins as well, "thanks guys," he says while directing the magic to the house elves who work in the kitchen.

"Your welcome!" Is what he faintly hears in response from them.

After grinning one more time Harry says, "So any final updates on today's plans?"

Grins from both wizards.

It is Remus, obviously, who then speaks. "I worked with George and Elizabeth on the restaurant plans. We will meet with them for lunch at 12:30. They are looking forward to it just as much as we are."

"Wicked." Harry says with a smile. "Thanks for doing that."
"Not a problem Harry." A pause, "Plus its only right that someone else coordinates your birthday events." A smile comes on that.

Sirius gives a grin into the silence, "I have to say I'm looking forward to meeting them as well. They helped you where none of us were able to, and I want to thank them for that." He stops then shakes his head and says, "On the matter of the zoo trip, I finished coordinating with the parents of your year mates, Lovegood, the Diggory's, and those who play Quidditch with you." A wide smile, "Its actually has been pretty fun. A lot less cutthroat then my dealing with the Wizenemgot."

This leads to laughter.

"Speaking of that body," Harry says a moment later, "I meant to ask what in Merlin's name is going on with the Mercedes Report?"

Which leads to a bit of conversation on the matter of politics. A conversation that was mostly humorous and entertaining rather than worrisome.

8888

"Talia's Bar and Grill has some of the highest ratings we could find in the area," Remus says with a smile as the three made their way to the bar from where they apparated to. He then laughs, "We choose it mostly because the Wallace’s mentioned that they wanted to visit it at some point." A pause, "Plus they were in the area already and it was quite easy for them to get to it."

Harry grins at that before saying, "Makes sense, makes sense."

"Of course, it does," says a voice coming near to them, "Why would you think otherwise."

Looking up Harry gets a wide grin on his face as he reaches to hug both. "Coach, Elizabeth, hello." He then pauses before gesturing to his 'escorts' before saying, "You already know Remus, and this man here is Sirius Black. My godfather."

"Remus," George says with a smile at the man who he had already met. He then turns towards Sirius and grins in greeting before moving to shake the man's hand. "Sirius, hello."

Before Sirius can say anything Elizabeth, who having already shook Remus' hand, is in his face and giving him a piercing look. A judging look one that speaks volumes on what she thinks of Harry. She must have found something she approved of because she then nodded and smiled. "Hello, Sirius Black."

Giving her a wide-eyed stare, somewhat shocked, Sirius nods and says, "Well met Elizabeth. I have heard many wonderful things about you." He then gestures towards Remus and adds, "Thank you for being there for Harry when we, I especially, couldn't be."

She nods, then adds simply, "I am going to assume that you had a really good reason for doing what you did that had you arrested." She then smiles before adding, "Well then, with that out of the way, lets head inside."

Which is what they do.

8888

"So, what was your reason?" Elizabeth says while she was sitting alone with Sirius, the other three having gone to listen to the music from the piano man.
"I had just learned that my blood brother, along with his wife, had been murdered. I had just seen the scar on Harry and lost my damn mind." A pause as he gazes at her. "Not my finest moment, I will say but I got so mad I chased after the friend who I knew had led our enemy to the Potters."

Silence for a moment, "What made you escape?"

"I had read in a paper that the traitor had found a way to visit Harry’s school. I couldn't let that stand and so I," he trails off at that point. Mostly since anything else he would have said would have magic as part of it.

"Got the motivation," she finishes the statement. "Okay, I understand. So bad decisions on your part and a misleading but honestly made decision on Remus’ part led Harry to being placed in a home where nobody loved him."

Sirius closes his eyes and lets out a deep breath before opening them again and nodding. "Yes." A pause, "I will say that this was not something his parents would have ever wanted. They would have figured putting him up for adoption or placing him with other family friends would have been better. But," again he trails off.

"What done is done," Harry says as the three come back to the table. Giving both a smile he adds, "I have asked questions, I have researched, I have investigated. Nobody foresaw this being my life but my life it is. In fact, I often joke that I am Fate's punching bag for the random stuff that happens to me." A pause, "But that said, it's the past for now I am living with people who love each other as much as they love me surrounded by trusted friends and mentors." Another pause as he makes sure meets the eyes of both Wallace’s, "It is in thanks and to honor you both that I continue to seek you out."

There is a moment of silence before George clears his throat and says, "So you two need to hear what the piano player told us!"

This clearly led to the dropping of the old subject and the picking up of the new one.

8888

"So, what are your plans for the rest of the day?" Elizabeth asks Harry as they walk out of the bar.

Harry grins, "I'm meeting with my year mates for a trip to a zoo." The grin gets even wider. "It’s going to be amazing!"

Chuckles from all around before George says, "Good for you. We’ll have fun with that and take care of yourself till the next time we see each other."

"Most definitely." Harry says with a smile as he reaches to shake hands and then hug both Wallace’s. "Till next year then, though let us not be strangers."

"Especially since you have our number," says Remus with a smile as he shakes their hands.

"Exactly," Harry says with a nod towards Remus as the meeting wraps up a bit.

8888

"So, what are your plans till we head out to the zoo?" Sirius asks curiously as Remus and he walk with Harry towards one of the rooms of Potter Manor.

Harry chuckles, "Though my friends will no doubt be giving me their cards and gifts at the zoo."
There is still the rest of the world to deal with." This is said as he reaches the room and with a wide gesture opens the door to the sight of hundreds upon hundreds of packages on the table.

"Oh!" Says Sirius, not having seen this sight before. "Are those all for you?"

Giving him a sideways grin, "Unfortunately yes. It seems as if the whole of Albion wishes to thank me for my actions and continued existence."

"More will come Sirius," Remus starts to say, "As the day progresses. This was just the morning batch forwarded to us after the basic check."

A shake of the head, "I see." Then a grin, "well, there is no reason you have to do this yourself, so how do you want us to help?"

Harry gives a wicked grin at that before beginning to explain the process to Sirius which is then followed by them doing. At least till they needed to get ready for the zoo trip.

8888

"The Imperial Menagerie," Harry says reading the giant letters over the double gates. "A Royal Holding of House Pendragon-Emrys." He blinks at that before turning to Remus to say, with a laugh, "How did I not know the place we were going to visit today was mine?"

Remus grins at that, "Because talking about this trip I called it a 'zoo' rather than the Menagerie as all the files you read called it."

Sirius then says, with an amused smile, "but the real point is that you trusted me enough on organizing this that you didn't investigate it."

Harry laughs at that then gives a nod, "Well okay truth is truth." A shake of the head then, "So I assume this isn't costing anyone?"

"You would assume correctly," Sirius says in a noblesse tone that has the others staring at him in shock before he grins and lets the posh speak go. "Though I admit that was a happy result, the truth is that we choose to come here as its Albion's finest historical animal museum and menagerie."

Harry grins at that, "wicked!" A pause as he looks around the gateway area they are standing in the corner of. Seeing some of the people around looking in their direction Harry says, "We should probably move to a quiet place before too much attention."

Moments after he finishes saying that a wizard comes towards them and says, "Ah, pardon me sirs. But are you Harry Potter?"

"Too late," Harry mumbles low enough that only Sirius (and Remus as well do to his enhanced senses) could hear. Harry then grins and nods, "Why yes I am, how do you do?"

This confirmation leads to the few dozen people in the gateway area moving closer, so they could speak to the three.

8888

"Will you sign an autograph," says a voice that seems familiar a little while later.

Which leads to Harry looking up at the voice and giving Blaise a grin, "Of course Blaise, how would you like it written?"
"To Blaise, I admire you so much. Your best friend, Harry." Is the cheeky response, one which gets a laugh from those around them.

This includes some of the strangers who can clearly tell them that two wizards know each other. Most assume, correctly, that since they seem to be the same age, it’s because they go to Hogwarts together.

Once the amusement dies down Harry smiles at those gathered and says, "As my friends are arriving I am needed elsewhere. For those who couldn’t get personalized messages, I do have some cards that I pre-signed. I hope you accept them in the spirit of goodwill they were made with."

The response is mostly positive, which leads to Harry (and Sirius and Remus helping) passing out the cards and shaking a few more hands. All the while he can see more and more of his classmates and friends arriving.

8888

"The fact that pretty much every mundane species known to muggles has one or more magical versions intrigues me," Hermione says as they stop in front of the magical squirrel enclosure.

"It’s brilliant isn't it," Harry says just as enthralled at the sights before him as she is. "I can't get over how rich the biology of magical life is."

"What's more," says Mandy as she moves to stand next to them, "is that almost all of them are naturally magical rather than man made." A pause, "Which is wicked."

Nods on that.

"So, does this menagerie have every type of magical creature known to Albion?" Asks Justin curiously a few moments later.

"Mostly," says Draco in his posh, and yet clearly friendly to those who know him, voice. "The exception being dragons."

"They do have a section for them, but in the present, none are here," says Hannah with a smile.

"Oh, how do you know?" Ron asks curiously.

She smiles and holds up the pamphlet, "It says so on the official menagerie scroll!"

Which gets some laughter as the group continues their tour of the park.

8888

"They don't lack for space do they," says Dean as they read the sign describing how the giant elephant like magical creature present before them has an enclosure that is basically a few square kilometers of expanded wizard space.

"That's brilliant, so much nicer than muggle zoos?" Justin says.

"Don't blame them too much though, the muggles are trying!" Says Megan Jones loyally in response.

"What I find most fascinating is that it's nearly impossible to say how big the complex actually is due to its nested enlargements." Harry says while holding up his recently gained scroll detailing zoo information.
"People are here, let's show off!" A younger looking foxlike creature says to those of his kind sitting near to him.

Moments later, to the amusement of Harry and his friends, the dozen or so creatures begin moving about, playing, and dancing in fun and enticing ways.

"You heard him, right?" Ron says quietly from where he is standing next to Harry.

Harry nods, "It's a gift we have gained." That they have gained from their animagus transformation is something left unstated.

Hermione than asks, "Does that mean that the workers actually speak to the animal residents?"

"Yes Ms., we do," says a man standing nearby, a man clearly wearing the uniform of a Menagerie employee. He tips his hat, "Pardon me for interrupting but I figured you wanted to have an answer." He then grins friendly.

"Thank you, and I did." Hermione says with a smile. Her eyes widen as she contemplates the information. "But really, wow, that's wickedly brilliant. So, you don't have to use magic to get compliance when you can speak to the animals?"

A nod, "Most of them anyway, some are hostile no matter what and certain spells are needed to pacify and give us the power to command." A pause then, "Those are few and far between of course, most of the residents really like being here."

"Well," Harry says with a smile, "the fact that their 'cages' are many kilometers in size and actual copies of natural landscapes would make it hard not to like it here."

A nod, "The griffins, for example, have about fifty of them in two tribes that in all cover roughly sixteen kilometers of space." A pause, "Which is honestly larger than what they would have in the wild."

"Oh, that's brilliant," Harry says with a smile. A pause as he looks at the animals around them, "Also it's no wonder they look so happy."

"We have at least one expert who can speak to every type of animal and magical creature present in our care. One of their many responsibilities is to ask the 'residents' what they think of their areas." He then chuckles, "I will admit that we do ignore some of their more outlandish requests."

Which leads to them hearing some intriguing stories about the 'needs' the animals demanded be met.

"Hey, Harry, what are we doing for food?" Asks Ron at one point in their travel around the zoo and the amusement of those gathered around.

Harry laughs before saying, "From what I know, the food sold in the food hall is free for us. So, whenever we want to eat, we can do that."

"Ooooh," Ron says with a smile, "I want, let's go now."

"Let's find some others and maybe we can go as a large group, it could be fun." Says Hermione in response, which gets nods of agreement from just not Harry, but the few others gathered around
them.

Which is what they do.

8888

"Harry you need to come now, a show is starting up, and I hear it’s going to be brilliant," Draco says as he runs up, but in a posh way, to Harry.

"What?" Harry's answered as he is being dragged, mostly willingly, by Draco towards the show tent.

It is Hermione who answers, in her lecture tone, "I learned from my reading, that it seems that the animals participating in the circus act are doing it for the sheer joy they feel in performing."

"Really, wow, brilliant." Harry says with a smile. "I guess that is another benefit of being able to speak to the animals." Seeing confused looks he says, "They don't need to be pushed into acting they can be asked and then trained, like a human would."

At that point the lights dim as the circus act begins, which means talking stops.

8888

"Hey Justin, have you seen the rest of our friends?" Harry asks as he comes upon said friend standing near to a door.

Justin simply nods and gestures towards the door, which when Harry walks into the room, gets him a loud, "HAPPY BIRTHDAY!" Following that is the happy birthday song.

Chuckling, "Wow, okay guys, thanks. So, I guess this is why you have been slowly disappearing." This causes some amused laughter as nods are given in response to that.

"It's time for cake and presents!" Sirius says moments later with a big smile on his face.

"Okay," Harry says with a smile. He then turns so that he meets the eyes of all his friends. "First, I want to thank you all for joining me on this day. Your presence, all of you, have made it one of, if not the, best birthdays I have ever had. So, thank you."

Once that was said, he then began the fun, and slow, process of opening the gifts given to him from his friends.

8888

"Oh man, that was fun!" Harry says a few hours later while relaxing back at Potter Manor with Sirius and Remus sitting on the couch nearby.

"Tiring too," was Remus' comment in response, "but yeah quite fun."

"So, what did you two do during those times you weren't with me?"

Sirius smiles, "Enjoyed those exhibits we wanted to see but you didn't care too." He then grins, "Which makes me glad we didn't have to babysit you all day."

Harry chuckles at that, "Well, I am glad you didn't have to babysit us either." A pause, "Honestly, it was fun, extremely fun, and I am glad that we were able to do it."

"Good birthday Harry?" Asks Remus with a soft smile.
"Best Birthday ever," is Harry's response. He then pauses, "Well, okay, it's sharing best space with last year's birthday."

"Speaking of last year," says Sirius with a smile, "you got more birthday packages, you want us to help you in opening them?"

"Of course," Harry says with a smile. He then chuckles as tables appear, each with piles of letters and packages on them. "Though I don't plan on reading them all tonight. There are many I want to go through."

"Okay, let's begin," Remus says with a chuckle of his own and a big smile.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
House Meeting

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

House Meeting
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Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Early August

"So who will be attending the first official meeting of senior core branch of the House of Black since my reign began," Harry asks then tilts his head. "Wow, that sounded pretentious didn't it."

Which leads all three to laugh a bit at that before Remus answers with, "Well I can give you their names and careers, but I don't know most of their personality traits."

Sirius nods at that while saying, "However, after you do that, I can say what I remembered about their personalities and such."

"Sounds good, lets do it in the order of greeting." Harry then chuckles as he says, "And you can obviously leave the two of you out of it."

After the laughter fades Remus says, "Okay then. The first is Pollux Black, who is the oldest living Black and the head of the secondary family line. He is a famous craftsman who is well known for designing and building hundreds of unique pieces of magical equipment. He wife is Irma Black nee Crabbe and their children are Cassiopeia and Cygnus Black.

Sirius adds, "He is humorless and yet at the same time, he is someone I deeply respect. Neither James or Remus knew this but some of the equipment the Marauders played with came from him as secret gifts. He did not care that I had been sorted into Gryffindor."

"Oh really," Remus says with a smile, "that is interesting to know." A pause then, "His eldest is Cassiopeia Black, who is well known for her myriad of business interests and trade operations. She is not married and seems to have no need for such a thing."

"She is not someone to mess with, but in a good way. She was always interested in giving advice and business ideas when asked." Sirius adding to that thought.

Harry nods at that and says, "So I should consider asking her for business advice, gottcha. Next."

"Cygnus Black, a patron of the arts and a lover of all things history. His personal library is renowned throughout Albion, even among many of the other Great Houses. His wife is Druella Black nee Rosier and their children are Andromeda, Narcissia, and Belatrix."

"Don't ask him about history unless you have a lot of free time. He will want you to listen him go on and on and on about whatever topic was asked." Sirius then pauses and says, "But he was never really mean, for all that he was strict."

"Narcissa Malfoy is married to Lucius Malfoy and they have a son Draco. She is an expert in the field of sociology." Remus grins as he relays this, fully knowing that Harry obviously already knows this.

"Not much to say about my cousin Cissy," Sirius says with a shrug. He then continues by saying, "Andromeda was kicked out of the House in a way similar to me, though it had a bit more of a
magical kick to it. I heard she has done good with her life, a loving husband and a great child."

Remus nods at that, "She has. For the record, she is a standard Healer employed by St. Mungo's and is quite respected. Her muggleborn husband Theodore, who everyone calls Ted, is a Mind Healer with his own practice but ties to St. Mungo's as well. Their daughter, Nymphdora, has recently passed the Auror exams."

"Wow, nice to know," Harry says with a smile, "I look forward to getting to know the three better. Especially, once they become full members of House Black in good standing again."

Remus nods, "Then comes the third lineage of House Black, who is led by a Phineas Black. He is a spellcrafter of great renown and has hundreds of spells to his name. His husband is Marcus Black nee Silva, a spell researcher, and their children are Aquarius and Sagittarius Black."

"Didn't have much to do with Uncle Phineas, though I liked his children."

"Aquarius Black serves as a representative for the House of Black to the Wizenemgot. His partners are veela Alecia Delcour and werewolf Carhal Meara. Not much more to say about him since you already know him."

"I always liked him, he was a good cousin. I was extremely sad when I learned of the events that happened to him. When he went into the muggle world. He was also one of the few that I mentioned about my blood bonding to you. Since I knew he had an interest in politics and I wanted to smooth things over."

Harry nodded at that while gesturing for Remus to go on. As Remus had said, he already knew of the man and for the most part respected him. To the point that even with Sirius taking on most of the Black voting rights, Harry had still found an important place for him within the House of Black’s Wizenemgot operations. This included keeping him in the chamber itself with some voting privileges kept intact.

"Sagittarius Black," Remus says as he continues to explain, "is a senior Shadow for the House of Black. His wife, and squadmate, is Black nee Hayden who is also an expert in battle tactics."

"I don't know the present him, especially if he is still a Shadow," Sirius says with a nod to that.

"Finally there is Scorpius Black, the only current member of the final lineage of the House of Black. He teaches Transfiguration at the Albion School of Magic that lies in India. His husband, Otake Black nee Nori, teaches Charms in the same school. Both have multiple masteries and are experts in multiple fields. They do not have any children yet."

"I think I met him once years ago, so I can't say much about who he is as a person." Sirius then laughs, "Though I do find it amusing how he moved to India to get away from the politics of Britain."

As Harry is nodding his head, Remus shrugs briefly and says, "Well that is it, that's all the people attending the meeting."

"Thanks Remus, I appreciate the info. It's going to help me figure out who talk to and on what and such."

Sirius nods in agreement but whatever he was going to say was interrupted by his stomach rumbling, which got them all laughing. Lunch time.
"Mother, I have a question for you," Draco asked his mother at the kitchen table.

"Yes, Draco," Narcissa Malfoy as answers her son.

"Well, I was wondering why neither Father or myself were going to the Black Family meeting. When you were invited to it," Draco asks.

"Not a bad question to ask son," Lucius says towards his son.

"Thank you, Father" Draco says with a smile.

"The answer Draco," Narcissa says, "is that while I am a Malfoy by marriage. I have kept my ancestral birthright. While you, for all that Black blood does flows through your veins, are the Heir of the House of Malfoy, a status which takes precedence."

Draco nods at that, "I see, thank you Mother."

"Do know Draco," Lucius comments, "that there will be times that we both will attend Black meetings, but that is not this time."

"Understood Father, thank you," Draco says as the breakfast continues normally.

8888

"So does our invite to the House Meeting mean what I think it means," Ted Tonks asks his wife as they gaze upon the official invite letter.

"If you think it might mean us being welcomed back into the House, then yes, there is a good chance of that." A pause as Andromeda Tonks nee Black thinks of the alternates. "The meeting is backed by the Peace of Albion and so even if the new Head hated me, they couldn't harm us."

"Well that is good to know," Teddy comments with a slight chuckle.

Andromeda gives her husband a smile, "But that is not likely to happen as the invite was done in the proper ways that indicate respect."

Nod, nod. "If it does mean we are welcomed back then what does it mean for us."

"Better life, a more comfortable life. Cost restrictions if we are pursing House approved programs that will fade away." She pauses then says, "We will get to see and know family that have been ignoring us for the last few decades."

"You want it don't you," Teddy says as he gazes at his wife, "Well then, I will support you in all ways that I can."

8888

"Black Manor, not exactly a very welcoming site is it," Remus said as the three of them walk up the carved steps leading from the portkey dock to the gates of the structure.

"I don't think its supposed to be," Harry says with a chuckle as they reach the entrance platform.

"I can support that," Sirius says with a nod, "Black Manor is a citadel, a fortress and command center, not a pleasure resort. From here lies the heart of the vast Black 'empire'." 

Harry nods at that for the Head Ring he wears basically said the exact same thing. "I think that is
why Black Manor became emptied of human life when Lord Arcturus died."

Sirius nods in agreement then huffs in pretend annoyance, "Which makes me glad that once you and I reaffirmed our status as Head and Heir. We can portkey, floo, and apparate inside the manor."

Remus laughs at that, "It was the same as Potter Manor. Our initial walk was from the outermost gate, took a good thirty minutes. Anyway, it will be nice that we will not need to come this way again."

Harry nods then gets a manipulate look, "That said, I think I will make the Blacks who come for the first meeting arrive at the dock."

Sirius grins at that then says, "Well no need to tutor you in being a Black, that is such a Black thing to do."

Harry smiles at that before putting his hand upon the entrance gate's massive portcullis. He pushes his magic through the Head Ring and then from that into the door, which connects to the foundation stone of the manor. He is tested and then when he passes - as he had to since he wore the Head Ring - the gate opens up.

As they walk into the central courtyard of Black Manor there were a few pops indicating the arrival of House Elves.

"Trecher welcomes Masters to Black Manor. If you follow Tretcher, you can bond with the foundational stone."

Harry nods at that, "Thank you Trecher, that sounds perfect. After that, I ask that you show us to the grand office, we have some planning to do." Which leads to a long and busy day.

8888

As Harry looked over the hall from his balcony point, he counted eighteen people, twenty-one when Remus, Sirius, and himself would be added. This of course included the wives and husbands of Black scions, so eleven (twelve with him included) was the actual number.

A slight shake of the head as he knew that despite how small this central core family is it is still higher than all his other Houses combined. Which is a fact that still saddens him quite deeply.

As soon as he saw Sirius and Remus appear on the balcony he said, "Ready."

A nod. "Yes. It is time for us to begin the rituals," Sirius answered.

"Right then," a pause, "This is going to be interesting." A stop. "Remus please take your spot in the hall as the husband of Sirius."

A slight bow, hiding a grin, "As you required Lord Black." Remus's cheeky reply.

"Oh you," Harry says with a slight laugh before getting serious as the other left the balcony using the back route. He looks at Sirius, who quickly breaks protocol to hug Harry, which he happily returns.

With that, Harry steps out of his Godfather's arms and onto the balcony's edge. With a wave of his ring hand, the magic cloaking them fades away, a reveal which is standard. A few slight gasps and even more tilts of the head is what Harry hears as he glides from the balcony to the ground by magic.

Even as he descends to the floor he says, "I am Harold James Potter, and I am the Lord and Head of
the Utmost Ancient and Noble House of Black, among others." His ring flashes visibly, powerfully, upon his hand in support and approval for what he has said.

Next to him was Sirius. He said, "I am Sirius Orion Black, and I am a Lord and the Heir of the Utmost Ancient and Noble House of Black." His own ring flashes in a similar way, showcasing and reaffirming his position.

As soon as the two were on the ground, they began walking to the receiving line that all present had put themselves in. The actual Blacks came first in order of family lineage and age followed by the wives and husbands at the rear. In front was the secondary lineage of Pollux Black, Cassiopeia Black, Cygnus Black, then Narcissa Malfoy nee Black. Then came the tertiary lineage of Phineas Black, Aquarius Black, and Sagittarius Black. Finally there was the fourth lineage of Scorpius Black. These individuals were all in good standing. Therefore, the greeting was respectful and kind and so nothing surprising happened.

It was at that point Harry and Sirius stopped when they got to Andromeda Tonks nee Black and Nymphadora Tonks nee Black. Harry gave them a quick somewhat hidden grin before he took on an imperialistic manor. "Andromeda Tonks formerly Black, why have you come to Black Manor."

She gives a small curtsy before saying, "I have answered the call of my Lord and Head as is required of any scion of the Great Houses of Albion."

"Good. Kneel," Harry says with authority in his voice that has her moving quickly to her knees. His Head Ring flashes as he says, "Your punishment is over Andromeda Tonks for I, the Lord and Head of House Black, one Harry Potter, do declare you once again in good standing. Rise, Scion Andromeda Tonks nee Black and join your sister as is your right."

She kisses his ring once before standing up.

She doesn't move for she knows there is still a part of the game to be played. "Lady Andromeda, Scion of House Black in good standing, who is this person which stands next to you."

A small curtsy, "That would be my daughter, Nymphadora, child of Theodore Tonks, my husband."

"Tell me Nymphadora," Harry says and then flashes her a quick grin, "Why have you come to Black Manor?"

"To answer the call of my Lord and Head for when the House of Black calls. I come as honor and tradition both demand of me."

Silence, which stretches on for a few minutes as part of the game. "Rise then Nymphadora Tonks and join the House of Black as a member in good standing."

A quick kiss of a ring later and she is standing up to join her mother in taking their proper places in the Black line.

When Andromeda and Nymphadora move to their proper positions. Harry spoke again, "Cygnus, welcome your daughter and granddaughter back, Narcissa greet your sister and niece. For today, they have returned to us as fully honored members of the House of Black in good standing."

Harry lets them do that for a few minutes before he turns back to the others in the line. "I see other people who are not Blacks here. Who are these people and why have they come."

Which is an indication for the next part of the introduction phase of the House meeting. The Blacks in good standing actually move to introduce their partners. It is done in the same order that the
Black’s themselves were greeted, with two exceptions. The first is that Andromeda introduced her husband Ted after Cygnus announced his wife. The second is that Remus himself was greeted directly by Harry, which is the standard for numerous reasons.

When that phase of the House meeting was done, Harry moved to the table that lay nearby and gestured for the rest to join him around it. All the seats were clearly labeled making no doubt as to where everyone was supposed to sit.

When everyone was at the position they were supposed to be at, Harry moved from his seat and walked around the room. He stopped when he got to a particular seat, which was empty.

"There is an empty seat here," Harry says, "Which of the Black scions did not answer the call of this meeting."

It was Cygnus Black who spoke, sorrow in his voice. "That would be my third daughter, Bellatrix Lestrange nee Black." A slight pause then, "She is currently in Azkaban serving a life sentence for the many crimes against Albion. She conducted in the service of the Dark Lord known as Voldemort."

"Thank you Scion Cygnus for that information." A pause as he looks around the table. "The House of Black is not amused by the choices made by Scion Bellatrix. For I have learned that she is personally responsible for countless acts of death, destruction, and corruption. One of these acts is most personal to me, cursing one Alice Longbottom, my godmother, to insanity. To this extent, I feel I must make a decision on her continued presence within the House of Black."

There is silence around the table as everyone starts to think deeply on what their Lord means.

When the silence got as deep and long as he wanted it, Harry spoke again. "To this end, I, as the Lord and Head of House Black, fully empowered by the ancient magics, do hereby expel Bellatrix Lestrange nee Black from the House of Black as well as declare her anathema. I strip from her all that the House of Black has given her, including her dowry, vaults, and other property holdings." He then extends his wand hand, his Head Ring glows golden, and he says, "I blast thee from the House and ask that she be tested by Magic for the crimes she has committed against Albion."

Bam.

The ancient magics react, per the declared will of the Lord and Head of House Black.

In Gringotts, Ragnok feels the pulse of magic and grins sharply as a folder appears on his desk with all the vaults and other holdings that are once again firmly Black. Including one vault in particular, which he knew had a chalice of darkness within it. As the fierce grin grew even fiercer, he immediately reached for a set of orders. It was time to cleanse said vault of the foul object sitting within its confines.

In Azkaban, Bellatrix feels the pulse of magic that not only strips from her all that was Black but also snapped the marriage bonds that she held to the Lestranges. All of a sudden, she felt even colder and more alone than she ever felt before. A fact which she knew the dementors could detect. In the aftermath, she can do naught but rage impotently within her cell as she constantly begin to relive all that she had lost.

In Black Manor, her seat and placement disappeared as the utmost ancient magics of the House shrunk the table.

As the magic was acting, Harry returned to his seat at the head of the table. When it finished, he turns
and meets the eyes of everyone in the House, which is in some ways, a silent magical testing. When he finishes looking around, he smiles and says, "Well, with introductions and house cleaning out of the way, we can now begin the more enjoyable parts of a house meeting. Let us eat and talk and enjoy our time together as only family can."

With that, he sat down which signaled the house elves to begin the feast.

"You did excellent Harry, very much the perfect Black Lord," Andromeda says to Harry later on as they are relaxing.

Harry smiles, "Thank you for the compliment Andromeda, I very much appreciate it. I am not afraid to admit I practiced with Sirius and Remus in order to make sure I got all the traditions correct. It was the first meeting of the House of Black and well, it sets the stage for what is to come."

"My daughter speaks the truth," says Cygnus, and oh is he glad to be able to utter those words. "On one end, you showed kindness by welcoming family back. While on the other, you were firm on what is considered to be unacceptable behavior as a scion of a Great House. The magic you unleashed shows your power and made it clear you were your own man."

"I concur," says the elder Pollux Black, "and I can firmly state that with you at the helm, the House of Black surely has a bright future ahead of it."

"I appreciate the kind words, I really do, and I will do all that I can to live up to them. That said, if the House of Black is to prosper, than it will do so through the greatness that all of us can bring to bear."

"Cheers to that," says Sirius who then proposes a toast in honor of the past and to celebrate the prosperous future that lies ahead.

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Chapter End Notes

PS. So I know some of you might be thinking to yourself, "But what about a House meeting with the Cadet branches of House Potter?" Well to you I will say, I know, I haven't forgotten them, and spoilers. :)
Hey all so a quick update, all good things I swear. :)  

First, as of this point I can fully repeat slash say that all of Book 4 and 5 are done, as are the between stories between 4-5 and 5-6. Which is really good and means that I can basically slow down my super focus on this saga a bit, not that this will be noticeable since with two books and two betweens written there is going to be time before we get to the last of what I have finished. Which means two new sections uploaded each Sunday/Monday is going to go on for some time with little worry or pressure. (Mostly since uploading takes only a few minutes of copy and paste.)

Second, well, I have a request. So the story that lies in between Book 4 and 5, while technically complete, has the potential for expansions. This is because the story is basically an in-universe Q&A where the muggleborn students of Hogwarts get to anonymously ask Harry questions about anything and everything and have them answered - well anything that isn't something too personal or he classifies as a security issue.

Which is where you all come in. If you wish to feel free to submit questions that in-universe muggleborns might ask. If the questions are fitting then my Harry might answer them. While I will of course give thanks in the notes of the story, all questions are anonymous in-universe so no character names or anything like that are needed. If your question is asked I do reserve the right to modify the format of the question to best fit my universe.

So yeah, if your interested, feel free from now to basically the time that story is posted, to provide a question or multiple questions that a muggleborn might want to ask but either can't find in a book in a library or simply doesn't want to research it. hehe

All such questions will be put in a second section of that story, for organizational purposes. :)  

Thank you and I hope you continue to enjoy the adventurers of this Harry in this Albion!

World Cup

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Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Mid August

"So did you want us to stay the night in the field by the Quidditch stadium?" Sirius asks coming into Harry's office early in the summer.

"No," Harry says shaking his head. "Especially considering between floo, aparation, and portkeys. We are but a moment from Potter Manor."

A grin at that leads to Sirius saying, "Well those who stay can party early into the morning without
worrying about splinching or mispronouncing a name."

Harry stares at Sirius before nodding, "Well yes, that makes sense but honestly we know neither the three of us, or not my friends, are going to get wasted drunk." As the two laugh at that Harry stops and tilts his head, "Hey, I have a new idea. Since we have the room, why don't we see if my friends want to come here for the night plus the next day or two."

"Well, We have got plenty of space," Sirius says as he ponders about it.

From the door. Remus says, "It would be only a moments work for you to lock down those sections of the Manor. That you don't want random people to visit."

A nod at that followed by, "Tilly."

Pop.

"How may Tilly help her great master?"

"Well, what are your thoughts on me having say sixty some people visiting here? Say August 17th to I don't know the 19th or 20th."

"Tilly would be most happy to get Potter Manor good ready for master Harry and his friends." A pause, "Would master Harry be attending the Quidditch World Cup on the 18th?"

"Yes, we would. So only breakfast and maybe lunch would be needed depending on the schedule of the game."

"Tilly will have everything prepared for master and masters’ friends!" She then pops away with a smile on her face, quite clearly showing she is looking forward to the task.

After a slight chuckle, Harry turns towards Sirius and Remus and says, "If my friends all come here the day or so before the world cup, we could use an area portkey to get us to the field with no difficulty. Then, once the game is over and we have enjoyed the immediate festivities, we could bring everyone back here for more fun. They will all stay the night and maybe even the next night as well, why not."

"Sounds good, Harry," says Remus with a nod. He then adds, "If you make your list, we can owl or call everyone so they can be ready."

Harry nods at that before saying, "Well, I can already tell you who I'm inviting. My year, all the Weasley's, Luna, Cedric and Terrence, and of course everyone’s parents." A pause, "Though I would be more than happy to help contact everyone."

Nods from all around.

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Walking into Harry's office Sirius says, "Just so you know we received the last response. Everyone you invited is coming to not just your party but also the world cup."

"Really brilliant, so any issues?"

"Interestingly enough there were only four people on your list who lived purely in the muggle world." A pause as Sirius looks at the list, "Let’s see, Hermione of course, Justin Finch-Fletchley, Wayne Hopkins, and Megan Jones. Out of the four of them, Hermione is going to take the Knight
Bus, Dan and Emily are fine with that. Wayne Hopkins has a magical neighbor and was given permission to floor from their house. I will be picking up Justin and Remus will be picking up Megan."

"Wow, that was a lot easier, than I figured it would be."

Sirius chuckles at that before nodding, Yeah, Remus and I shared that thought. But most of your friends are pureblood or halfblood, which means they have access to magical transportation and thus can get here on their own."

"Sounds good," Harry says on that. He then sighs, "I can't wait till I can apparate about legally. It will make meeting people so much easier."

Sirius grins at that before leaning back, opening up his document folder, and beginning the political briefing.

8888

Harry was sitting in his office when he felt the wards vibrate in such a way that he could tell someone was at the gate. Focusing his magic, he looked through the lion statues to see who was there.

He was of course not surprised to see a calmly sitting on her trunk, Hermione. She was eating an apple and reading a book while she waited for Harry to come fetch her.

Chuckling at the complete comfortableness that Hermione is showing, Harry stood up, closed his eyes, concentrated on the Potter Head Ring and shifted his location within the magical space of Potter Manor. As he did, he made a temporary hole in the wards so that Hermione could see him appeared.

"Hey Hermione," Harry says with a smile as he comes up to the gate. "How’s it going?"

A quick hug later and the two are walking down the tree lined avenue towards Potter Manor, talking about life and the scenic environment they are in.

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It was a few hours later that Harry felt the wards shift again upon the return of Sirius and Remus and the arrival of two new people - Justin and Megan. Standing up from his seat in his office, where Hermione and him were chatting, he says, "Justin and Megan are here."

"Really, that's great. Let's go say hello." Hermione said as the two head down to the entrance foyer of Potter Manor.

After giving a little wave to Sirius and Remus, who were heading back to their office in order to get some work done. Before the others started to arrive. Harry says, "Hey Justin, hey Megan, welcome to Potter Manor."

"Wow, Harry." Justin breaths out after their hello handshake. "I know you told us about this place but the description really doesn't do it justice."

"Well once everyone has arrived, we can start the tour." Harry says with a smile.

"Is your home as big as it feels like it would be?" Asks Megan curiously.
"Probably yeah, if not bigger. Part of the tour is in fact on pegasus-drawn carriages. As walking it all would take hours."

"So when is everyone arriving?" Hermione asks curiously for she wants to see the manor.

Harry chuckles, "We have about a half an hour or so before the first of the scheduled floo arrivals begin."

"Is it dangerous having so many floo arrivals at the same time?" Justin asks curiously.

"Nah, at least not here. The floo chamber can expand the number of fireplaces it has. When Potter Manor is expected to have additional incoming guests." Which segues into some light conversation as they wait for the others to arrive.

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With a bit of finality in his tone, Harry finishes by saying, "And that leaves us back here in the rec room."

Though there are many sounds, mostly those of picking and sitting in chair and couch, nobody speaks.

"This place is wicked!" Fred says with a laugh in his tone a few moments later.

"You could spend years here and not know everything." George adds in response.

"It's a perfect pureblood noble residence," Percy says in a posh tone which gets everyone looking at him in shock. He keeps the seriousness for a while before letting out a smile, which turns into a full blown laugh.

Which leads into an impromptu, but quite fun, pillow fight.

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"So Harry," says Neville, "will I be allowed to see the greenhouses?"

As the others chuckle, Harry answers his friend, "Of course you can. In fact, now might be the perfect time for it." He pauses then adds with a smile, "Not to work them, but if you and those who know herbology want to see them up close sure, why not."

"Can we see the library?" Says Hermione to the much expected, and given in good humor, laughter of her friends.

In a fully deadpan voice, since he likes this joke, "Of course, well except for the super secret special hidden library where all the best books are kept. That one you can never enter."

"But that one has all the really good books," Hermione says with a frown then a childish stamping of her feet. Which gets grins moments later as they realized its all in good fun.

Grinning at everyone he adds, “There are game rooms and music galleries for those who want some fun. Those who like art can explore the art and museum rooms. There is a quidditch pitch for those who wish for some practice, same with the exercise room." He pauses in thought, "let see, oh, there is a pool and a sauna as well if you are interested." A another pause and a snap of fingers as he remembers, "oh, and I can't forget there are also numerous stables for those who wish to see the animals that live here." A final pause, "plus the library and greenhouses."
Which leads to the group discussing what they want to see and in what order, since for many of them there are multiple rooms that they want to visit and have fun in before dinner.

"How's everything going pup?" Asks Sirius as Harry walks into the sitting room where Sirius, Remus, Bill, and Charlie were gathered around relaxing and talking.

"Pretty good," is the response as Harry plops himself down next to Charlie. "Everyone has split up for some personalized fun."

Remus tilts his head and asks, "So you came here to see how we are doing in between your making the rounds?"

Harry grins, "You know it." A pause, "Though in truth, I came here to just sit for a moment without having to play host." Looking at Charlie and Bill, he says with a gesture towards Sirius and Remus, "Since they are here, they can serve that function as well."

This gets amused laughter all round.

"Cedric, Terrance, how are you two liking things?"

"Its just brilliant, Harry," Cedric says with a smile towards his friend. "We just got back from your stables and wow, just wow!"

At Harry's questioning look, since Cedric seems more giddy than normal, Terence comments with a smile of his own. "Two unicorns walked out of your forest and came right up to us. They let us pet them for a bit before bowing for a second and heading out."

Eyes widen, "Oh wow, that is brilliant. The unicorns are a shy bunch and not even all the house elves have been able to interact with them." A pause, "So where are you too off to now?"

"A quick stop to the library as I want to look up some facts on unicorns," says Cedric.

After shaking his head a bit at that, though a grin soon comes on to his face to indicate his amusement, Terence says, "Then on to the sauna for some relaxing alone time there."

A grin comes to Harry's face, "Well have fun with both." He then chuckles a bit before giving a nod and moving off to where he was going, the quidditch pitch.

"Having fun?" Harry asks Luna as he sees her sitting on a bench with a book in her hand.

She nods sweetly at that before saying, "Oh definitely. I was just with the others in the library and now on my way to see Neville." A pause, "But as I walked past here, I needed to stop and enjoy it, you know."

A grin and nod, "I do indeed." A slight gesture for the beautiful visage of the hedge bordered mini-park. "I too come here to just relax sometimes."

"The aura of this place is among the most calming of all the regions of Potter Manor." Luna says with a smile as she turns back towards her lone meditation.
Harry smiles, getting the gist, stands up and says, "Well I will leave you to your meditations, have fun Luna."

The next morning, as the group was sitting down for breakfast, Ron asks - with his mouth full of delicious food - "So what are our plans for today?"

"Well," Harry says completely unfazed by the talking and eating, "After breakfast, there will be a few hours of self-guided fun time followed by us heading via portkey to the stadium."

"What will we be doing for lunch?" the question Crabbe asks.

Sirius answers, "Since time is on our side. We made plans to meet with your parents, who are the rest of our vastly extended party, at the Via Culina. Where we booked a reservation so we will be having a private dining experience."

"After that." Arthur says for he worked with Sirius on organizing this, "You may roam for a few hours through the park before meeting back up at the stadium for the preshow. We will then see the actual show of the World Cup itself."

"Quidditch! Quidditch!" Ron starts chanting to the amusement of those gathered.

Percy, who happens to be sitting near him stops the chant by sliding a piece of bread into his mouth, to everyone's amusement and Ron's enjoyment. (He does like the bread afterall.)

"Oh man, the Via Culina is delicious." Comments Goyle, another food expert.

"It was, wasn't it," Ron says with a smile and a nod of agreement. "I especially enjoyed the appetizer platter, oh man, so many options!"

"I honestly don't know where you pack it all in Ron," Hermione says with some amusement.

"I thought you knew the secret of the Weasley's," says Fred.

"Yeah, we have a secret magical stomach that takes food in and gives us energy." George finishing explaining.

Hermione nods, clearly pretending to believe them, "Well that does make sense." She then grins widely as the others laugh in delight at the banter.

"We still have some time, right?" Asks Blaise curiously not long after they came out of the Via Culina.

"Yep, a little less than an hour," Sirius' answer as he moves near to Blaise.

"Perfect, there are a few quick stalls I want to visit now." At their curious looks he explains, "I figure if I wait then the goods I want will be gone by that point."

Since that makes sense most nod in agreement, which leads a bunch of them heading towards the area marked off a market.
"So I meant to ask Harry," Hermione comments at one point as a bunch in the group are sitting around in a circle at a small local park.

"Hmm?" Harry's answered to the Hermione's opening comment.

"How did you get seats for everyone?"

Harry grins at that before adding, "Partly by combining the seats given to all of our year's noble houses." A pause, "Which I remember I have a bunch personally."

As a few of the others realized, what that means. Justin who asks, "What did you do with the extra seats?"

The grin gets even wider, "They were raffled off to those of my Houses who couldn't, for whatever reason, get tickets themselves. A large number of them in fact went to those of Blue Ridge Hundred."

"Wasn't that the hundred hit by the flash earthquake?" Comments Draco quietly with awe for what Harry clearly did in his voice.

"Yep," Harry says, "Letting them come here gave them a sort of bright spot in what was otherwise a dreadful year for them."

"Good on you for that Harry," Hermione says in response. She then pauses before turning towards Daphne to ask her something that was clearly of an unrelated topic.

Leaning forward from where he was sitting behind Harry, Charlie says, "The veela had no effect on you whatsoever?"

Harry grins before looking back to say, "Not even a little bit." He then chuckles, "But what made it interesting was that it was not my Head Ring that 'protected' me but my sheer disinterest to their magical field."

Charlie nods himself before looking at those sitting around who were still coming out of the awe field the veela put on, including his youngest brother. "Same with me. They do not hold even a moment's of interest for me."

Sirius says amused, "Too bad that can not be said for most of men in the stadium."

Which gets some amused laughter.

"Did it effect you two?" Harry asks Sirius and Remus only to get a fierce shake of the head.

"My eyes have been firmly focused on Remus here since I was thirteen, no veela is going to effect those feelings." He then gazes at Remus with love and adoration shining in his eyes.

"Sirius has been my one and only since the first time he talked to the shy boy. That I was back in our first year." A pause then with a grin, "Plus as a shifter, my inherent magic scoffs at what a veela tries to do."

Those listening have just enough time to nod at that before the referee's are speaking out about the penalty for using veela at an official quidditch game.
"Well that was wicked," Ron says into the silence that had befell them as the game came to an end.

"Yeah, it was," Justin says from where he is sitting nearby. "But what happens now?" Which gets a bunch of laughter at the comment.

Sirius says, "The plan is for you all to be able to mingle with those staying here for an hour or so, before we all head back to Potter Manor."

Harry then stands up and says, "I would like to invite the parents and guardians of my friends to also come to Potter Manor. You aren't going to be staying over like your sons and daughters are, but you can still relax there before heading back to your homes."

Lucius and Narcissa look at each other in silent communication before the former says, "You honor us with the invite Lord Potter. We accept."

With them accepting, it became pretty much a given that the rest of the parents were going to accept. Especially when Arthur accepted the not really surprising offer as well.

Remus then says, "As enough time has passed for the majority in the stadium to head out. We might as well make our way downstairs to where the party is happening."

"Remember in an hour, we are all to gather in front of the stadium's main entrance," Sirius says as a final comment on the organization before the highly extended group makes their way downstairs.

"This is so fun," says Sally-Ann, "I am so glad I accepted the invite."

Harry who was visiting the same stall nods at that before saying, "I'm glad you came as well, having us all hang out before, during, and after the game has been quite fun."

Ernie laughs from where he is nearby, "We have seen each other more this summer than ever before."

"Yeah," adds Terry from where he was nearby, "First the wedding, then your birthday, and now this."

"A magical could get used to it," adds Blaise from the next stall over much to the laughter of everyone.

"Hey Charlie," Harry says as he comes upon his friend. "How’s it going?"

"Its going good Harry," a pause, "Especially as nothing really happened in the last thirty minutes since we were in the same room." The smile and amusement takes away any potential sting of the words.

Which is why Harry laughed at it, "Fine then, I won't say hello to you the next time I see you. See how you feel then." He then tilts his head up.

"No, no no," Daphne comments from where she is standing, "You need to add something like 'My Godfather will hear about this' if you are truly trying the pureblood insult."
"Hey," Draco says as he tries to hide his amusement, "I don't sound like that." A pause then, "My father hear about this!"

This gets laughter from all those gathered around.

A few steps away Narcissa turns towards her husband Lucius and says, "I do believe our son is in a good place."

"Yes," Lucius drawls out, "Which will come in handy when the events I fear are coming come to pass."

Narcissa nods in understanding.

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"So I said to him," Harry starts to say when he is interrupted by a scream and a feeling of heat as a magical blast appears nearby.

Not long after that they heard the shout of, "DEATH EATERS!" This is followed by the appearance of many more fireballs and other such damaging magics.

"Oh! For crying out loud!" Harry says more annoyed than fearful at what is going on. His eyes move around as he works to figure out the situation.

"What are we going to do?" Terry says as he runs up to Harry from where he was a few booths away.

"Do you want us to fight?" Asks Wayne to the shock of many.

"No," Harry says with a simple nod. He then says, "Dobby. Tilly!"

Pop. Pop.

Tilly sees the situation and says, "What can Tilly do for master?"

"I need you to gather Potter house elves and take my friends and their parents to the manor. The wards will allow my friends in no problem. Though the parents will be forced to stay in the common room till I get there."

"We will do as master asks," Tilly says before popping away.

"Dobby go find Sirius and Remus and tell them about what I told Tilly." A pause as they have to duck a fireball that came shockingly close to where they are. "Tell them I am also calling my guards for this is stupid."

Dobby nods before popping away.

"Does anyone know if this is a private or royal hundred?"

"Royal Harry," says Ernie from where he is standing pretty close by. In fact, over the time it took Harry to speak to his house elves, most of his year mates also made their way to where Harry was. They figured, rightly so, that he out of everyone was already making plans.

"Good," Harry says with a smirk, "then the wards won't stop me." He pauses as he reaches for his House magic before saying, "I call forth the House Guards for Potter, Black, and Levant. Terrorists are attacking the world cup and local security is compromised."
Not long afterward pops are heard as house elves appeared, touch the shoulder of Harry’s year mates, and pop them away. Soon all the Ravenclaws and Hufflepuffs of his friends were gone.

Seeing the look in the eyes of his Slytherin friends Harry says, "Take the out, some of your parents might be dawning the masks."

"I am not going," says Blaise, "and I know my mother is not out there with a mask on."

Harry simply nods and so the elf that was going to take him pops off to collect someone else. Not long afterward the only ones around Harry are Neville, Ron, Hermione, and Blaise. Even Draco took up the offer to get safely out, much to his relief but also pain.

Tilly pops back in, "Master Harry, all your friends but those before me are gone." A pause as the group all move to get behind a bit of tent as fire comes there way. "Many of the parents of your Slytherin friends ‘forced’ us to take them to Potter Manor."

Harry’s eyes widen at that interesting bit of news but before he can say anything Harry felt the magic shift as hundreds of pops occur as the House Guards he summoned arrive. Though they appeared all throughout the hundred, the leaders apparated near to where Harry was, all the better for them to get commands.

After a slight nod towards the various First Captains Harry says, "Secure the hundred and detain anyone either bearing a death eater mask or casting dark magic." Suddenly from high in the sky, a firework seems to go off which is quickly followed by the Dark Mark to the horror of many.

Harry growls, which causes some of those around him to back away slightly. He then pauses and makes a gesture for a particular dark robed wizard to come forth. "Shadow, find and detain the person who cast that mark." A fierce grin comes to Harry’s face, "You are authorized to use the shadow arts." The Shadow gives Harry a fierce grin at that, followed by a slight bow before disappearing to follow the orders.

"My Lord," says a guard lieutenant not long after, "You should evacuate to safety."

"No thank you," Harry says, "I will remain here till we secure the hundred."

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"So from what we can gather, only three people involved in the fighting had the Dark Mark, the rest were simply people interested in chaos and looting." Explains High Captain Michell Jones some thirty minutes later to the mixed body of Ministry officials and House agents under Harry’s authority.

"Who bore the Dark Mark?" Harry questioned wanting to know.

"Adelard Travers, Drogo Filis, and Elia Waters. None of them are on the rolls of known Death Eaters." The High Captain says.

Madam Bones comments, "I am authorizing our use of veriteserum on them all."

Harry nods as the Minister simply shakes his head at the events occurring.

Harry then asks, "Who cast the Dark Mark?"

It is the Black Shadow that speaks up. "The who is not entirely clear sir. That said, we found the wand that cast it next to a Crouch house elf. As we assumed the aura on the wand is of a wizard, which led us to do a scan. Sad scan indicated the caster was biologically a Crouch."
"That spell is in violation of my rights," Crouch says angrily.

"So bring me to court," Harry says without pause or even a slight ruffle. "As you won't be doing that, kindly stop yapping about 'rights'." He then nods towards the Shadow, "Though I am sure I know the answer does it match him?" With him being Barty Crouch Sr.

"No. In fact the divergence indicates more of a child."

"Correct me if I am wrong but don't you have a son and isn't he a Death Eater."

"He also died in Azkaban," Crouch says angrily at what was starting to feel more like an interrogation.

"Somehow I doubt that, not if he was here in the woods casting the Dark Mark." Madam Bones responses.

Sirius then speaks up, "So what it looks like to me is that three random junior wanabee Death Eaters got the bright idea to start a riot. Other people decided it would be fun and so joined in."

"At some point a person, who is probably Crouch's son but that part will be left out as we can't be sure, found a wand and cast the Dark Mark into the sky." Harry finishes the summation.

"For the official record Minister," says Madam Bones in a very dominant voice, "the Potter, Black, and Levant Guards did not come on their own initiative but mine." She then waves her wand and passes Harry and Sirius a document which basically made their presence 'legal'. A read through, a quick question, a nod from Sirius and Remus and Harry signed the documents.

Harry nods before saying, "I do believe that before we either go back to work or head home we should meet with the press. They will want an explanation and since the truth is something actually quite believable we might as well go with that."

Which is exactly what they did.

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Instead of arriving at Potter Manor in the entrance hall, the small group appeared in a special chamber off of Harry's office. At the surprised look on their face's Harry says with a shrug, "My appearing in the entrance hall would get me nothing but yells. So no thanks."

Hermione then chuckles which gets everyone to turn to her. She blushes before saying, "Well I just realized Harry here faced off the Minister, Crouch, and the press without blinking or pausing. But now he is delaying talking to a bunch of his friends."

As the others laugh at him, good naturedly of course, Harry shakes his head and walks out of the room and into the entrance hall. As soon as the first of his friends see him the gestures start as a hush fall over the crowd. "Hey all, everyone is okay, no major injuries on anyone, just some damaged property."

"What happened, Harry?" says Anthony.

"Honestly, there are two things. The first was that three wanabee death eaters from the last war decided to cause a riot. Seeing what was going on, a bunch of other people, most of them drunk, decided it would be fun to participate in the event as well. Near the end, and seeing what my guards were doing, someone decided it would be good fun to cast the dark mark into the sky."
"Thankfully," Sirius says as he moves up towards where Harry was, "The Ministry had previously asked for some assistance from the Potter, Black, and Levant Houses. That was why the Guards were quick to respond."

"Are people going to believe that?" Asks Ernie curiously.

"Why not," Remus adds, "We have the paperwork backdated and all to prove it." He then gives everyone a grin.

Harry then in a sing song voice that breaks the tension says, "Covenant secret." He then smiles at everyone, "Now we shouldn't let such events ruin our fun. So 'adults' if you wish to stay please join Sirius and Remus, they will show you the room we set up for you. Everyone else, well you know what we planned, so let us par-tay!"

His year mates, a resilient bunch, nod at that before leaping into conversation as if nothing really happened.

8888

It was a little while later and Harry was in his office, he had begged off for a moment. Since there was some paperwork he now needed to authorized, much to everyone's amusement.

"So what really happened?" Charlie says walking into the room with Bill, Percy, and the twins.

Harry chuckles at that, "Honestly, exactly what I said. The only outright lie, and I did that in a way you guys would know, was the part about the Ministry preemptively hiring my Guards." A pause at their disbelieving look. "Seriously, three minor death eaters looking for glory started a riot, crazy drunk people decided to join in, and then fourth person sent out the dark mark."

"So no involvement from Riddle?" Bill asks wanting to make sure.

"No, at least not with this. That said, you know I am constantly sending out my agents to investigate any rumor of his presence."

"It just seems too shockingly simple," Fred adds.

"Which is why we thought there might be more to it," George finishes saying.

A nod, "Yes, there is one puzzle. It seems that Crouch's son is not as dead as the world all thought." A shake of the head, "it was the son who sent out the dark mark."

"What of Crouch himself?" Percy asks worryingly, which he has the right to be considering his position in the Ministry is basically under Crouch Sr.

"He is innocent of being involved in the display of stupidity," Harry says with a nod towards Percy. "I might hate the guy but even I know he would not willingly do anything that supports the Death Eaters."

"Okay good," Percy says, "because having to worry about my boss with everything going on this coming school year would not be fun."

"What's going on?" Fred says.

"Yeah, tell us, tell us," George adds.

"Me thinks Gred," Fred then says.
"That Harrykins knows the answer as well," George finishes.

Harry laughs at them before saying, "The Ministry decided to bring back the Triwizard Tournament."

"Harry," Percy says shocked, though also secretly amused, "that is supposed to be a secret."

"Would you like them to try and get it out of you using their methods?" Is Harry's next comment.

A quick shake of the head, "No, good point, thanks Harry." Which gets a laugh from everyone as they continue their discussions.

8888

"So what were you two discussing with the Malfoys that made them the last parents to leave?" Harry asks Sirius and Remus as he walks into the former's office after escorting the Malfoys out.

"Mostly Hogwarts business related to the Triwizard Tournament. Though there was a small amount of Black business with Narcissa." Sirius explains with a nod in Harry's direction.

"We also wanted to double check to see if Lucius had any part to play in the events of the world cup," Remus adds when Sirius finishes talking.

"Well, did they?"

"No, though Lucius did admit in that sly way of his that the chatter is increasing among certain groups."

"It is what I figured." A pause, "though we all know that before too long Riddle will return. I can't help but think we are as good to go on our planning as we can be right now."

"I quite agree," Remus says with a nod, especially since much of that planning had gone through him at some point.

"Right, enough of that adult lordly stuff, so what are your plans for tomorrow?"

Harry chuckles, "I do believe after breakfast there will be some quidditch. Though some will be making use of the pool or Potter Library." A pause and a grin, "While Neville and his herbology buddies are going to be using the afternoon to ‘play’ in my greenhouses."

For the next ten minutes, they continue to talk about several random subjects before Dobby pops in to inform them. That Master Blaise requests their presence in dining room as its time for a late-night snack party.

Which is exactly what occurs till its time for bed.

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After an entire afternoon of events, it was time for most of his year mates to head back home. As Harry sees them off by floo, one by one he thanks them for coming and hopes that they had a really great time.

"It was amazing," says Terry with a nod, "thank you so much for doing this."

"Not a problem Terry," Harry says with a smile as his friend heads out.
Dean then comes up, "This trip is so much easier due to my staying at Thomas Manor."

Harry grins at that, "it is isn't it." He then shakes Dean's hand before saying, "Now don't be a stranger."

Dean smiles at that before flooing out.

A few more people make their leaves before Blaise says, "Too bad I couldn't stay the rest of the week."

"As you are going on a trip to America, I am not really sure you are that heartbroken."

Blaise chuckles at that, "Well, okay, yeah, when you put it that way." He then shakes Harry's hand, thanks him for a good visit and then floos out.

"Thanks for inviting us Harry," Cedric says with a smile. "It's been a wonderful trip."

"How could I not invite you two," Harry says with a smile of his own. "Especially considering you are one of my favorites." The last part is said with a chuckle.

Terrance then chuckles as he shakes Harry's hands before saying, "You know if it wasn't so cute seeing Cedric blush when you complement him like that, I would object to it."

Harry chuckles himself, "I understand and agree." A pause, "As I have said before maybe in another lifetime."

Its a final parting shot as the two shake hands one more time, with smiles on their faces, before they floo away.

Taking a deep breath Harry turns around only to see Charlie leaning up against the wall of the floo chamber with a smile on his face. "Tired?"

"Yeah a bit," Harry says with a smile, "I enjoyed their company and it was a bit sad to see them off. Even though, I know I am going to be seeing them in two weeks tops."

"You get used to them being around, I get that." Charlie says with a smile as he wraps his arms around Harry in a friendly hug. "But there is no need to get sad, especially not when there is something I need to show you that the Twins just did."

"Oh," a pause, "should I be worried?"

"Extremely." Charlie says with a grin that lets Harry know he is kidding, mostly anyway.

Hey Harry." Ron says upon coming to Harry's office door. "Can I talk to you?"

"Of course Ron, come in, what's up?"

"I was wondering when we were going back to the Burrow?"

Harry tilts his head, "Wait, didn't your parents tell you?"

"Tell me what?"

Harry blinks, "I'm sorry Ron I thought you knew, but you guys are staying here for the rest of the
summer."

"Wait, really, all of us?"

A nod, "Yeah all you Weasley's, plus Neville, Hermione, and Luna. Your parents are even going to be joining us for breakfast, lunch, or dinner a few of the remaining nights."

"Oh, wicked, brilliant. I thought it was weird when they told me to pack for the school year. But honestly I was so ecstatic about the whole world cup and super box and seeing Potter Manor that I kind of got tunnel vision."

Harry chuckles at that, "I understand that this place is very unique." Soon after that, they get out a chess board to play a game while discussing various recent events. It was fun and relaxing and a perfect break from all that had happened recently.

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Renovating Grimmauld Place

Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Late August

As their meeting was ending, Sirius cleared his throat all official like which had Remus and Harry looking at each other with laughter in their eyes. Harry then says, "Yes Sirius, what can I do for you?"

"I, Heir Sirius, need permission from you, the Head of House Black, to begin our plan of renovating Grimmauld Place." He then looses the seriousness by grinning really hard.

Shaking his head Remus asks, "Was the official request really necessary, Padfoot."

Sirius nods, "Actually, and sadly, yes. It seems my dear old mum locked down the house before she died and only the Head of the House can unlock it so changes can be made. Just reach into your power, feel for the wards of that house, and unlock them."

"Sure, Sirius," Harry says with a smile as he concentrates and brings forth the image of Grimmauld Place. He gets the feeling of a lock on the structure and with but a single directed thought his Head Ring turns into a key and unlocks the lock. He senses the house will now allow changes to its structure and design. He then says, "Good to go Sirius, the house will now accept your touch."

"Good, I can now begin mapping out the changes I want to make. I think you are going to like what it becomes when I'm finished." Sirius then nods.

A few days later, Sirius came into the Harry's office waving a design plan in the air. Without pause, he says, "Can I interrupt you fine fellows."

Remus and Harry both laugh at that and make a 'go ahead' motion towards Sirius.

"Well I have been working quite hard to redesign Grimmauld Place and I find myself wanting to share it with you two fine gentleman." Sirius says with a grin.

They grin back while Remus says, "Sure, go ahead, we are all ears."

"Great! So the first thing I should mention is that I discovered that with the tight way it existed that so much potential space actually was wasted. So I decided to stretch things out a bit and make better use of the magical spaces already designed within the ward structure."

"That sounds like your family Pads," Remus says, "lets keep everything tightly strung."

"I know, the Potters stretched out but the Blacks kept everything tight. But since the Blacks are owned by the Potters, I feel its acceptable for me to change things." Sirius says with a grin and a mental middle finger to his ancestors, his mother especially.

"So what beautiful design did you decide on, Sirius," Harry asks.
"Well, the front door opens into a hexagonal shaped room. Four doors exist in this room, one to the outside, one to the inside, one to the floo room, and the final to the apparation chamber. Though nice looking, its also the only place where entrance and exit is allowed and thus its is a security point, for all its a beautiful one."

"Sounds good Pads," Remus says, "so much more organized than the entrance way now."

Harry nods as well, "Its like the arches that serve as the gates to Potter Manor and the two connected Potter hundreds. So I approve," he says with a laugh.

Sirius just grins before continuing. "The main part of the house is a semicircular great hall three stories tall with six main rooms and a hallway off it. The ceiling is glass and provides an enchanted look at whatever we want it to look at. I should mention there is also a bathroom right near the main door."

"So what rooms were you planning for on the ground floor," Harry asks.

"A kitchen, dining room, conservatory, game room, sitting room, and the official Hall of Portraits. The back hallway leads to a door which opens onto the residence’s backyard space. A space containing a deck with sitting area, pool, garden plaza, a grassy field with animal pens, and a micro-quidditch pitch."

"Very nice organization, Pads," comments Remus with a smile.

"I thought so," Sirius says with a grin. "The really nifty thing is that the actual second through sixth floors of the house are all magical spaces stacked on top of each other. So each shares the same second story balcony that looks over the ground floor. Which is amusing as it means those from the ground can look up and talk to those on the balcony but two people on on different floors can't see each other."

"How fun, Sirius," Harry says with glee, "I like the idea of mixing magic and beauty." 

"Yeah, I thought so. I designed it so there is a balcony all the way around which have rooms off it. What the rooms are vary depending on floor. The second story contains a ballroom with its own dedicated kitchen, as well as three other living rooms. Both the third and fourth story are residential, guest on the third and outer family on the fourth. The fifth story is the master residence floor, while the sixth story contains a number of offices as well as the grand library."

"Wow, nifty," Harry says, "its like you took into consideration all your needs."

"Yep, and I even designed three basement levels, which is actually what existed in the house below. The first sub level has the potions lab and the training room while the second sub is storage for various types of materials."

"And the final sub level, Pads," Remus asks.

"The catacombs housing the prison cells and torture chambers which no matter how much I tried, I could not get rid of," Sirius says with a sneer.

"Ah nifty," Harry says with a laugh, "it must be a part of being a great house, Potter Manor has one as well."

Nodding at that, cause what else can be said, Remus asks. "So what were you thinking on the décor?"
"Light and airy colors, nothing dark or dreary or black." Sirius says with a grin, extremely pleased with what he was doing. "The funny thing about it is that I'm not ignoring the traditions of House Black, all the new furnishings are actually from Black vaults and deep storage. All these light furnishings are actually items we already owned."

"Well, isn't that brilliant," Harry says, "so its as if you are bringing back an older style of the House rather than making a new style. I like that quite a lot."

Sirius nods at that, "I thought the same thing, for all that I hated my mother I remembered fondly some of my extended family and I think they would enjoy what I have done."

"Good to hear that, Sirius," Harry says with a smile while Remus reaches for his mate's hand, "and I look forward to seeing the results."

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“Oh you are not going to believe, what I just found," Sirius says as he walks into the office where Harry and Remus were having a meeting.

“Since you started with that, probably not,” Remus says.

“Also we don’t even know where you were when you found said object,” Harry commented.

“Haha, laugh it up,” Sirius says with a smile. “But you will be quite happy with me when I finally revealed, what I found at Grimmauld Place. A certain particular item that we all know you are on the hunt for.”

“Okay now, you have me both half worried and half relieved, so tell us Sirius, what did you find?” Harry says.

“A horcrux,” Sirius singsongs. Now in general, this would not be a topic of singing, but since it was found and dealt with so easily he felt it was appropriate to think life was good. “Obviously one of Riddle’s which we why its now with the goblins being taken care of.”

A blink at that then, “Wow, that's incredible.” A shake of his head. “You springing it on us means its hard for me to know how to react. Its great though, that is one less we need to worry about.”

“What was the object, Pads?” Remus asks.

“A locket,” Sirius singsongs. Now in general, this would not be a topic of singing, but since it was found and dealt with so easily he felt it was appropriate to think life was good. “Obviously one of Riddle’s which we why its now with the goblins being taken care of.”

A blink at that then, “Wow, that's incredible.” A shake of his head. “You springing it on us means its hard for me to know how to react. Its great though, that is one less we need to worry about.”

“What was the object, Pads?” Remus asks.

“A locket, Slytherin’s Locket actually. Which means that it is now yours, Harry, as you are the Head of the House.” Here the smile fades from Sirius' face as he retells what he discovered, “From what I have gathered from talking to Kreacher, my brother Regulus discovered what Riddle had done and moved to stop him. It would lead to his death, but not before he managed to steal the locket from where it was originally being hidden. Kreacher couldn’t destroy it, for all that he tried to fulfilled his master’s last order.”

Remus reaches over and hugs his mate, giving him comfort as he thinks of the brother he had lost. When the moment was over. Harry asked, “So how did you come to find it.”

“The cursebreakers from Gringotts actually found it, not Bill before you ask,” which is said with a smile. “They scanned every inch of the building, all the way down to its most foundational core, both physically and magically. A number of dark objects, some useful, many not, were also found but this was the only one that is newsworthy.” A pause, “You should be getting a copy of the report in your inbox any day now by the way.”
A nod at that before Harry asks his godfather, “So is that why the last time I saw Kreacher, he seemed a bit better than he used to be?”

“Yes. The fact that his true master’s final order was carried out, by me no less, has softened his more rougher edges. He will never be like your elf, but he has become a lot better off.” A pause then, “Especially after I assigned a few other elves to assist him at Grimmauld Place, so he is not going to be alone anymore. Of course, the whole cleansing of Grimmauld Place of its dark taint has helped matters quite considerably.” He then pauses, “It also helped that I put the portrait of my mother where she belongs, in the Hall of Portraits, rather than in the front entrance way.”

While nodding at the top portion of what he just said, it is on that end that Remus asks, “How was that moving your mother’s portrait?”

Sirius grins, “It actually made me feel quite good. The fact that she was complaining the whole way but couldn’t stop me due to my Heir bond to the magic of the residence.” A pause, “I eventually shut her up by saying that if she felt me to be breaking tradition, then I could break another tradition of never destroying a portrait.”

Remus smiles at him and takes his hand, “I’m happy that you were able to finally able to put to rest that particular dark element.”

As Sirius is nodding pleased at that Harry smiles and says, “I’m happy for you as well, Sirius.” He then gets a bit more serious, “In fact, I am quite glad to hear about all of what you have done there Sirius. Especially with your find, as I am extremely pleased that we can write that off our list of objects to find and collect and destroy. It will make our lives a lot easier in the future.”

Sirius leans back with a smile for how good things are going. He then stops and turns to the two, “So whatcha doing. Can I help?”

Which leads to laughter and bringing him in on what they are discussing.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
Hey all, once more a little update. So since last time I have finished writing all the between stories - that includes the 5th-6th story on the magical nations plus ICW, the 6th-7th fading of the last monarch, and the post 7th wedding story. With the last one being 14k long and something I am quite proud of. In addition I have also written all of the Summer Before 6th Year stories, of which there are 13 sections.

My current goal is to write all the stories for the Summer Before 7th Year, which is already outlined.

My future goal is to figure out what I want to do for the 6th and 7th school years which while not empty at this time have a lot of gaps that I know need to be filled if I am to be happy at the result.

But yeah, that is the current state of affairs.

As a final note, with these two last sections being posted the Summer Before Fourth Year is now finished and we thus get to begin Fourth Year next week. :)

Till later folks!

PS. Still open to questions for the 4th to 5th Q&A story. :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

**Parisian Shopping**

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Date: Summer Before Fourth Year, Late August

"So what would you all say if I suggested that we visit Lutetia in France rather than Diagon Alley in London?" Harry asks during breakfast a week or so before school starts.

"We would need a portkey," Bill says amusingly upon Harry finishing making the offer, "which is not easy to get in such short notice."

Fred says, "portkey, shmortkey."

"I bet Potter could get them like that," George adds while clicking his finger.

"I bet Potter could get them like that," George adds while clicking his finger.

While chuckling at that Harry nods, "Well you are not far from the truth." A pause then a grin, "it's not so much me getting a portkey as it is already having them. See there is a Potter residence and shop within the market city of Lutetia." Seeing the intrigued look Harry adds, "As its just as much a part of my House as say Potter Manor, I have a natural ability to travel to it in a pretty easy method."

A pause, “though if that is not good enough,” some laughter, “I also have a personal residence in a nearby hundred which has an assortment of threstals we can use to fly to Lutetia.”

“Although that's a wonderful idea, we should probably just go to the city rather than nearby,” Arthur comments when Harry finishes speaking.
"But what about us getting the required Hogwarts supplies?" Molly asks into the silence.

It is Remus who answers, with a bit of a grin. "Harry has set up owl order contracts with pretty much all the shops and vendors in Diagon Alley."

Harry nods at that, "I will be messaging them with a request for two-third, four-fourth, and two-sixth year supplies." A pause then with a tilt of his head, "Hey Ginny, what electives did you choose?"

Ginny, reply from where she is sitting in the back, "Arithmancy, Care of Magical Creatures, and Runic Studies. Arithimancy and Runes for the reason that they give a lot of options for careers and Care because animals are cool." She then smiles.

Harry nods at that, "That is true, animals are cool, and I must admit the way that Hagrid teaches the class is fun." A pause as he looks towards the others, "but yeah it would be easy to owl message the shopkeepers." Another pause then, with a grin, "Especially, since I have been doing it quite often since the summer of our second year."

"I am not sure this would be viable," says Arthur after a look from his wife.

Harry nods at that before adding, "Well for the record, the shops will provide Ragnok with itemized receipts that we can then forward to House Weasley for reimbursement as necessary."

There are some grins at that. Especially from the older wizards who found it quite amusing on how Harry handled the 'delicate' issue of money.

Ron rapidly nods at this going, "Come on, this sounds awesome, I always wanted to see Paris!"

With everyone else nodding at that Arthur nods and says after looking at Molly, "Sure, such a visit could be fun and enjoyable." A pause, "though my permission is only granted if its on a day I can attend."

Which gets some laughter as the breakfast conversation changes to other topics.

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"Arthur," Sirius says a little while later, "if you truly have an issue with Harry getting the school supplies by owl order we also have other options."

Arthur nods at that, "I'm listening?"

After giving a grin Sirius continues, "Well some of us could make a quick jaunt to Diagon Alley in order to get the supplies. It really would be quick since many shops have prepackaged their Hogwarts supplies by year."

"You know dad," says Bill, "I could easily go with them to gather the Weasley items."

"What about work Bill?" Arthur asks.

Bill grins, "Considering who my newest contract is with, my manager considers hanging out here to be 'public relations'."

This gets a laugh from most of the men and a grin from Arthur. A moment later he shakes his head and says, "No, don't worry about it. There really isn't any reason for us not to accept the owl order method. I also trust that they will provide us with the proper receipt." He then grins widely at Sirius and Remus upon stating the last comment.
This leads to even more laughter as the group changes the subject onto other matters. Including how to best organize a dozen or so people visiting a magical city, a crowded magical city at that.

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"I can't get over how easy long distance transport is in the magical world," Hermione says as the group gathers in the transfer room at Potter Manor.

"Don't let the ease of use trick you into thinking it was easy to set up Hermione," Sirius says with a nod in her direction.

After giving his own nod Bill says, "I can attest to that. The ritual that makes it possible is among the most advanced and complicated form of magic that our world has ever seen." He then shakes his head before adding, "In fact, it really only works due to the pure magic that underlines the Great Houses of Albion."

With a smile on that Harry adds, "It also only works for those holdings that are a part of the feudal system of honors. See, I own a house in the US state of Colorado," a pause, "don't ask why cause even I don't know," another pause, "which I have to get by more normal means."

"Still," Hermione says, "those normal means are loads faster than what the muggle world has."

Nods on that leading to Ron saying, "Well yeah, that makes sense, we have magic!"

After chuckling Harry goes, "Anyway, back on topic." A grin for that. "So, once we are all situated, I will activate the magic and we will be transported to the family gateway chamber in the Potter House building in Lutetia."

This leads them to splitting off into small circles to talk while certain last minute elements are taken care before they get transported to the magical city.

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"Wow," was breathed out by someone in the group as they stood on the rooftop balcony overlooking the magical city of Lutetia.

From their vantage point, they could see the whole of the city and the nature of its geographic organization. How it took the shape of a hexagon with a central park in the middle, an inner ring divided into four rectangular plazas and four wedge shaped districts surrounded by roads, and an outer ring of four mammoth structures and for rectangular neighborhoods. The roads were wide and covered in cobblestones and the wood and stone buildings were anywhere from three stories to ten stories tall and very much romantic medieval in style.

It was Sirius that spoke first, "If we didn't come from the Potter gateway chamber, then those small triangular platforms at the bases of the wedges would be where we arrived at." A pause as he points to particular features, "That ridge is for floo, those booths are for apparation, and those platforms are for portkey."

Not long after Hermione asks, "How is this place larger than that of Wizarding London?"

It is Ron, with a grin, who answers. "Wizarding London was never truly supposed to be the central magical community for Britain." A pause, "As that role had long been taken by the purely magical metropolis of Camelot."

Hermione gets a look like a light bulb goes off, "Oh, so London basically developed in the aftermath
of the Monarchy becoming empty."

As the others nod at that Sirius comments, "Lutetia on the other hand was designed from the ground up as a magical community in the aftermath of King Arthur conquest of the region from Rome." A pause then, "Which is why this place is so vast, even in the time of the Monarch, those in the Gaul region of the Empire often came here rather than go to the even more crowded Camelot."

As the others nod at that Ginny asks the question she had been curious about. "So is the ground floor of every building a shop?"

A nod, followed by Charlie saying, "Its considered a design feature." At their surprised looks he continues, "As this market city is one where pretty much every good available in the Empire, both legal and quasi, can be found it needed to have enough space to hold them all." A pause, "Which is why even the four forums of the city contain additional shop stalls, the designers never wanted there to be a lack of space."

"Why does the statue constantly change its shape?" Fred then asks while pointing to the statue floating above the fountain he could see in the middle of the central park of the city that they had learned was called the Green.

Remus grins at that, "The debate on who to represent there ranged on for years before they came up with the brilliant idea to honor them all." At their confused look he says, "There is currently over a hundred figures the statue rotates between and locals consider it a game to try and see them all." A pause before he adds, in a sarcastic manner, "With a fee one can get on a waiting list to be able to add a form to the statue."

Harry nods at that before adding, when everyone looks at him, "It seems that to honor the Potter sacrifice, the locals got together and pushed for a statue of my parents to be added. So a statue of them holding baby me is now part of the rotation."

"Of course, it is Harry," says Hermione with a slight chuckle.

Neville grins at that before saying, "Ah, he is not the only one." As the others look at him he adds, "House Longbottom has long been a major patron of this city and so when they heard of the attack, they choose to honor my parents and me in a similar way." Seeing the sad looks he shakes his head before adding, "It's not sad guys, honestly. In truth, I find the gesture heartwarming."

Charlie then speaks, seeing the confused looks on some of their faces, "Both the Potters and Longbottoms have a presence here which means the statues represent 'friends' honoring the memory of friends." A pause, "Its sweet."

Harry nods at that, "I agree on that."

"When did you see the statue Harry?" Asks Hermione curiously.

"When I came here on Circuit." Seeing their confused look he gestures back towards the Potter's Wheel shop. "This shop, and the building its in, is a feudal holding of the House of Potter rather than a simple property we own. Which means it was on the list of places I visited during that event." A pause, "While here, the workers asked me to see the statue and the reeve got permission to 'force' the statue to show the Potter memorial statue."

"Oh, that was nice of them," says Percy in his posh tone of voice, which gets a grin of agreement from Harry.

Remus then says, "While we could stand here and look at the sight for hours. Let's actually begin our
visit to the city." With agreement from the others, the group begin making their way back inside so that the 'tour' could continue.

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Gesturing towards the shop space below the glass balcony they were walking on. Harry says, "Welcome to a major location of the Pottery Wheel, the official shop of the Potter Family. Within its numerous backrooms lie the workshops where artisans produce the expert goods that are displayed for sale in the front room."

"Wait!" Hermione says shocked. "You really sell pottery?" A pause then, "I thought that was just your surname rather than what you really did."

Through the chuckles from the others, Harry nods at his friend and says, "We still do yes. It's a much smaller percentage than it used to be, we are as diversified as the rest, but yes, we do still have a worldwide pottery business."

Remus, after clearing his throat to get attention, says, "Honestly, its mostly a just because they can sort of thing."

As the others look at him, Harry simply nods. He then gives a grin and says, "It really is for that reason." Which gets even more laughter as they continue to move down the hallway towards the stairs that lead to the ground floor.

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As the group walks down one of the colonnaded plazas of Lutetia on their way to the building housing the local branch of Gringotts, Percy speaks. "It is marvelous to think that Lutetia has four of these Roman style forums."

Marvelous was indeed a good word to describe them for each forum is a space some 60-meter-wide by 180 meters long. From the outer cobblestone road that circles them comes a five-meter-wide covered colonnaded walkway containing merchant stalls. A second row of stalls backs up to the first before opening to another colonnade walkway the same width as the first. From there comes the ramps and stairs down a few points to the massive open aired plaza. A plaza home to fountains, gazebos, sitting areas, small stall zones, and various gathering spaces for meetings and rallies of many different types.

Hermione gives a nod at Percy's comment before adding, "Its strange how vast this space is."

Sirius gives a grin at that before adding, "Well the magical world does like its big spaces."

Remus nods at that and says, "Almost forty thousand magicals call the urban center of Lutetia home."

Hermione tilts her head at that before asking curiously, "Don't they find it bizarre not having access to nature?"

Bill who answers that, "Actually they do." At the confused look since clearly there are no trees nearby Bill smiles and continues saying. "Each apartment has a 'back door' which leads to an acre or ten of outdoor space in the greater hundred that Lutetia is connected to. A hundred, besides Lutetia herself, which is entirely a rural agrarian landscape."

"Pendragon," Molly says with a knowing smile the moment she sees Ginny opening her mouth to ask a question. "The Lutetia Hundred is a private hundred of House Pendragon." A pause then,
"Which annoys the French Ministry of Magic to no end actually. As they are restricted in how they can regulate what goes on here."

Harry chuckles at that, "Oh, I can believe that. The Seneschal of House Pendragon is Lord George Butler who has been that position for almost two centuries now. He is an ornery old wizard who has put his foot down dozens of time when the Ministries, any and all of them, have tried to usurp the authority vested in House Pendragon." A pause, "It's very much quite amusing."

"This fact also made the British Ministry quite glad that Wizarding London was not a private Pendragon holding but rather a 'simple' royal territory," said Arthur said soon after Harry stopped speaking.

Soon after the conversation continues on as they finish making their way to Gringotts.

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"Okay, so what now?" Ron asks as the group meet back up after their various, and separate, trips within Gringotts.

"Well," Remus says with a smile, "We walk, and we shop."

"Though there are some streets we won't be visiting," Molly comments with a stern glare towards some of her children.

"Aww," says Ginny on that as she can tell there is so much here she would want to see.

"Honestly," Harry interrupts smiling, "that's mostly due to time rather than prohibition." A pause, "We could be here for days, weeks even, and not see everything that there is to see."

"Yeah," Neville says with a nod, for though he hadn't been here before he knew of it. "Especially, since I am pretty sure that between the shops are museums and activity centers a hundred-fold."

After nodding at that Arthur gestures towards his children and says, "So I have a surprise for you." A pause to increase the tension of the surprise and then grins before tossing money bags at each of his children. He then gestures towards Molly and says, "We decided to give each of you some pocket money for our shopping spree today."

Molly smiles at her shocked children before saying, "Now that is for you to spend as you wish today. Do not worry about saving it for school supplies or for lunch or dinner today."

As soon as the shock wears off, the Weasley children all rush to their parents, hugging them tightly and thanking them for the gift.

A little while later, as the younger Weasley children were counting what was in their money bags, Charlie silently moves to where Harry is standing. He then, in a motion that none of the other Weasley's see, tilts the money bag slightly so that Harry can see its interior.

It's empty interior.

At a tilt of the head in question Charlie mouths, "those at Hogwarts only."

Harry nods at that, since it makes sense. The older children all have income sources great enough to let them purchase basically anything they want. Which Harry knows now includes Percy, who has spent the last three months working for a higher paying department of the Ministry.
"Oh, we need to stop here!" Sirius exclaims as they pass a shop with what looks like pranks in the window.

"We do, we do!" Both Fred and George says as they jump up and down next to Sirius, just as giddy as him.

Sirius then moves to Remus' side and tugs on his sleeve, "Can we, can we!"

Chuckling at the antics of the grown man, Remus simply nods.

"Yay!" Sirius says in the same enthusiastic manner as before. He then gives a grin showing he is playing before nodding at Fred and George.

The three then dash inside the room.

"You know Remus I knew I would have to keep an eye on the twins, but I didn't expect Sirius to be worse." Molly says in a huff, a quite clearly pretend huff.

"Well mum," Charlie says before the others could speak, "you should thank Harry for diverting their pranks to more positive pursuits."

As eyes turn to Harry he shrugs and says, "All I did was urge them to realized that the best pranks are fun for all involved, including those being pranked." He then grins before gesturing and saying, "We should probably follow them inside, if for nothing else than to make sure they don't cause trouble."

Wide eyes on Molly and Remus' face as they rush into the store, much to everyone's amusement and then outright laughter.

"The store has numerous items that would be interesting in buying," Sirius says a little while later on as he moves up where Harry is standing next to Remus.

"So either buy them all or sign up for an owl order membership," Harry says with a nod towards the sign that points out the benefits of a membership.

"Hmm, good idea Harry." Sirius says with a nod towards his godson. He then pauses and grins, "I think I will get the twins one as well, but don't tell Molly."

The laughter from Charlie, who had moved next to Harry was noticeable. So was, "I didn't hear anything!"

Which gets many grins from those standing nearby.

"But the wedding is already over, why do we need new clothes?" Ron asks with a bit of whine towards the adults around him.

"Reasons," is what Sirius says with a grin that clearly says he knows something he is not telling.

Harry grins and then nods at that before saying, "For the record Ron, I second Sirius' reason."
Eyes widen at that as the other adults' nodded in agreement. Remus then says, with a point to the shop nearby, "Which is why I brought us here."

Ron sighs at that then grins and gestures for them to head inside, since he knows this is not a fight he would win. Of course, though he doesn't say this to anyone, he doesn't really think he wants to win. He knows his friends and family and if they think it's important for him to be outfitted in some new clothes then he is going to want to have new clothes.

As the group walks into the store they find themselves in a room that is a far cry from what they had experienced at Madam Malkin's. Instead of a small comfortable waiting room the chamber they were in had hundreds of display stands, each with a different style of clothing. What made it all the more interesting was that the styles shifted a bit in gender and size depending on the look of the person standing in front of them.

To the group's growing awe, the styles present ran the gamut from menial workers clothing and all the way up to the finest noble dress robe. Between the two extremes there were styles similar to what muggles wear as well as commoner clothing that looked like noble wear and noble clothing which looked like commoner clothing.

Harry let out a small giggle as he stood in front of the manikin which held a 'series' of clothing that would not have looked out of place on a male muggle stripper.

As Sirius gives an amused chuckle at that Remus raises his eyebrow and then eyes Sirius with an intrigued look.

"If you were planning on buying that for him," Harry says simply, "please wait till I go back to Hogwarts for him to strut about wearing it." A pause and with some amusement in his voice he adds, "I don’t think I ready to see that yet." This is followed by some laughter.

"Will do cub, will do," Remus says with a wide grin. One that clearly shows he is not as innocent as he often makes it appear he is.

Then, suddenly, they hear, "Remus? Remus is that you?"

The group turn around at the new voice that appeared out of a door leading to a back room. Remus' eyes widen slightly at that before a great big smile comes on his face, "Javier! Hey, wow, its good to see you. How are you doing?"

"Great Remus, simply great. Since we last saw each other, I used the money we got to open my dream store."

Remus grins at that before adding, "And has it been as great as it looks like it is?"

"Better." He says with a wide smile. "In fact, I just won the first-place award on French clothing stores."

"Wicked." Remus says he then turns towards the others and says, "Javier here was someone I met during my tour of Europe in the aftermath of graduation." He then chuckles. "We got along quite well which led me to helping him and Adrian in a design competition." A pause, "Speaking of Adrian, how is he?"

"Great, in fact we have been married for ten years now." A pause, "He is not here right now, or I would call him out to greet you all." Javier says with a smile as he gazes at them all.

Remus, catching onto the unspoken question, says, "Sorry for not making introductions." Which he
does, starting with the Neville, Luna, and Hermione, before mentioning the Weasleys. He then ends with Sirius and Harry, since he knew they would lead to questions.

"Merlin, are you really?" Javier says after shaking hands with the two later men. "It's nice to finally meet you. Remus hear talked so much about you both the last time I saw him."

Though Sirius nods at that Harry grins widely before saying, "Wait Javier. Are you the 'Javi' he talks about." A pause, "The one who magically stole the clothing off the backs of some nasty muggle tourists?"

Wide grins and a nod. "Yes, that is me." The grin grows even larger, "So you do know of me." He then laughs before saying, "So welcome to my shop, and how may I help you?"

Remus smiles, "Well, as I heard many good things about this shop, I thought we could look into purchasing some fancy-dress clothing."

A nod, "How many events are we thinking of?"

"Well at least two dances, though there is a potential for a third event." Remus says.

As Javier is humming in thought on that Harry speaks up, "Additionally I would be interested in getting further updates on some of the styles I see here." A pause, "Which are brilliant by the way, so no wonder you are an award-winning clothing designer."

"Flattery will get you everything, Mr. Potter." Javier says with a smile and wave of his hand. Which is followed by a laugh from Remus, amused chuckles from some of the others, and a launch into a very busy hour as they go about choosing robes and working out fittings.

8888

"Wow," Arthur says a bit shocked as they walked out of the clothing store. "That was a bit more than I expected."

Charlie chuckles at that, "I honestly can't say the same. Especially considering who we are with."

Percy leans forward and says, "Considering the tournament that will be going on, us having some new robes is not going to be a bad thing."

Bill nods, "I agree." He then grins, "Though I have to say I am amused at some of Harry's choices."

A pause, "not because they are bad but because how stylish they will make him look."

Which gets chuckles from everyone.

8888

After walking into a game and puzzle store Harry says, "Oh wow, I didn't realize there were so many gaming options."

"Thank you, sir," says a shopkeeper who came close to him. "We pride ourselves on having one of, if not the, largest collection of games for sale." A pause, "If you are interested in learning about them I can describe the most popular to you?"

Harry grins at that, "Actually, yes, that would be brilliant. Thank you." A pause, "Since there are so many let us focus on games that are fun for people of many ages and are playable by groups."

Nod. Nod. "Will do sir." Which leads him to showing Harry, and those of their group who stand by
him, many of those games which meet his requirements.

8888

"Pardon me for asking Harry, but did you really need to buy over a hundred games?" Asks Molly curiously as they walk out of the store. "Also why multiple copies?"

Harry simply nods at that. "I really did yes. See the first set is for Potter Manor, the second set is for Gryffindor, and the third is for when my year hangs out in our communal chamber."

Ron grins at his mother before saying, "We were starting to run out of games so this is kind of brilliant mum."

Hermione then adds, "Don't worry Mrs. Weasley, I made sure some of them are educational."

Percy gives Hermione a wide smile on that before adding, "I found those games particularly interesting myself."

Nodding at everyone Harry says, "See, useful. Also fun and relaxing, which is immensely important as we get older."

This gets some amused smiles as conversation continues on.

8888

"I think it's time we stop and got some food," Ron says with a smile and gesture towards the section of streets nearby with all the food establishments.

"Why do you always think about food," Percy says in a tone that makes it hard to know whether he is joking or not. Then he breaks it by smiling, "I do have to actually agree with you at this time."

"We could eat," Fred says as George nods at that.

"Great," Sirius says with a smile, "so off to the eateries we go!"

Which is of course what they do, visiting the street with lots of food stalls and shops so varied that everyone gets exactly what they want to enjoy.

8888

"Oh, its my turn to gush," says Hermione as they pass a bookstore. "I want, no need, to stop in this shop."

"Is this the one you mentioned having read about?" Percy asks Hermione as they gaze at the large windows showcasing the many books the shop holds.

A smile and a nod, "I did yes." She then turns to the others and says, in a lecture tone, "In the time of the Monarch this shop was in Camelot but was moved here so that it could be visited."

"Wait, really?" Neville asks somewhat shocked. A shake of the head, "I wonder why I never learned about that?"

"Its only really mentioned in certain specialized magazines." Percy says in his logical tone of voice.

"Wicked." Harry says in response. "Which means it will have a lot of interesting, useful, rare, exotic books." A pause, "I'm game. Lets head inside."
"Why don't you just head to the front desk," Charlie says before Harry can move.

Harry raises his eyebrow in question at that though it is Remus who answers before Charlie can speak again. "That way you can just say you want a copy of everything."

Laughter follows that comment, since they all, even Harry, know its not that far from the truth.

In the end, Harry doesn't buy one of everything. He does however buy twenty books while also signing up for the membership card program. This, in tandem with owl order, will mean Harry is able to add hundreds of rare books to his library in time.

8888

Upon walking out of the restaurant, they just had dinner at. Charlie moves up to Harry and says, "This was a brilliant day and I am glad I was invited to come along."

Harry grins at him and says, "It really has been awesome." A pause, "and I am glad you came along as well. I don't think it would have been as fun if you hadn't."

"Okay break it up you two," Ginny says with a smirk as she comes by. "The others are about to come out!"

As the two laugh, Charlie reaches forward and grabs his sister, hugging her and messing up her hair for her comment.

The humor doesn't end, even when the others appear, and the group begins making their way back. First to the Potter's Wheel before heading back to Potter Manor.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
Chapter Notes
See the end of the chapter for notes

New Yet Same

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Date: Fourth Year, Early September

"Lord Potter, if I may have a moment of your time?" Says a voice moments before Harry was about to head out onto the train.

Blinking Harry turns slightly towards the person who spoke, a person who he immediately recognized. "That is not a problem Lord Shafiq, though we only have a few minutes as I do not want to miss the train."

A pleasant smile and a nod, "Of course, Lord Potter. It was just that I was curious on the nature of your conversations."

A nod comes at that, then Harry tilts his head in thought. "I met an Amal and an Aisha today, aren't they your grand children."

A nod, "You have a good memory Lord Potter. For indeed, they are my grand children, on my daughter's side."

A smile after that, "They seem nice." A pause, "But to answer you actual question, I do the greeting so that those of Hogwarts know me as Harry rather than by my various titles."

A moment of silence as Lord Shafiq takes the concept in. He then nods before smiling widely. "That actually makes quite a bit of sense Lord Potter." A tilt of his head, "Though meeting everyone can't be an easy task."

Harry chuckles. "It's not, at least no longer. When I started there was around fifty new students. But now that number has grown into the middle hundred mark." Then they hear the whistle from the train indicating five more minutes until departure. Gesturing towards the train, "That is why I am cutting it pretty tightly this year."

"Then I won't delay you any further, Lord Potter." A wide smile. "Though I will say thank you for the information and I wish you luck on the meet and greet." A pause, "Especially in you finding a way to make it easier to meet everyone."

Harry chuckles then gives a nod towards his fellow lord. "Thank you, and I appreciate it." He then reaches out to shake hands, before he gives a final nod, some final platitudes, and then heads up onto the train.

8888

"Cutting it close, Mr. Potter," says Ms. Lynn, the candy lady with a smile on her face.

Harry chuckles but smiles, "Yeah, the large number of new students, and their families, I had to greet delayed me."

"I saw, Mr. Potter," she says with a smile. She then tilts her head in thought, "As a thought, if you
come early enough, you might be able to set yourself up in the little courtyard leading to the train." She grins, "That way all new arrivals have to pass by you before getting on the Express."

A wide grin, "Oh really, brilliant. Thank you Ms. Lynn, that is actually a really splendid idea." He then gives her a secretive smile before adding, "If I speak to Sirius, maybe I can even get some magic to help with the meetings."

She chuckles at that before gesturing for him to move on, which he does, with a whistle.

"You know you don't need to buy your friends love," Blaise says with a laugh as he walks into the cafe car of the Express. This was said after he saw Harry holding a box containing a large amount of food.

Harry chuckles at that, "Funny." A grin, "Though in truth, I lost the bet and so was tasked with the food acquisition."

That just gets a grin and even more laughter as Blaise just gestures for Harry to go on.

As Harry shakes his head he does just that.

"Okay, so I get why the ICW was upset when they heard that Tony Stevens utilized a self-created ritual to visit the moon." Ron says at one point during the train ride to Hogwarts. "But what I don't understand is why he even wanted to visit the moon."

"He is muggleborn, Ron." Hermione's answer in a matter of fact tone.

Neville who speaks up next, not Ron. "Why would that even matter?"

Harry chuckles and puts down his paper. "Because many muggles, and therefore muggleborns, have a fascination with space. Being able to actually use magic to walk upon another world's surface, it sounds marvelous." There is a bit of awe in his voice as he says that.

Numerous looks of surprise, as well as a few tilt of heads come as a result of his comment. Not even a moment later Luna asks, "So what have you done about it?"

Harry grins, the grin that causes the others to sit up and take notice. "Well," Harry says smoothly, "I guess I can say that my people have messaged him and are currently trying to sponsor a more in depth mission into space."

The grins and shakes of the head say more than words ever would.

"Just so you know, Cedric plans on running tomorrow." Terrence says as he walks past Harry as they make their way to the carriages.

"Oh, really," Harry says with a smile, "thank you for that."

"Not a problem." Terrance says simply before giving a nod and walking away.
"Oh Luna," Harry says to his friend as they sit amongst the others in the carriage, "any interesting finds this summer?" A pause, "I meant to ask earlier but we got distracted." A laugh.

She grins, "Actually yes!" A pause as she reaches into her pack to take out a collection of papers. "In our travels to South America, we discovered a mammoth reptilian centaur-like creature. While they don't have a name yet. What makes them so interesting is that they start as tiny slug-like things which shift in form as they age."

Harry blinks at that, surprised, "Oh wow, Nifty." He then tilts his head in thought. "Are they sentient, ah, think like us?"

Nod. Nod. "Yep. They also have a soul. A human soul, which is one of their more intriguing aspects."

"Wow Luna." Hermione says a moment later. "That's amazing."

"I agree." Neville says from where he is sitting next to Luna.

Seconds later Harry added, "Its also brilliant on how you are the ones to find them."

"Thank you all," Luna says with both a smile and a slight blush.

The moment is ruined when Ron accidentally burps, much to everyone's amusement.

8888

"So what do you know about the new Professor?" Dean asks as dinner begins after the sorting ends.

"Well Professor Moody is a long time Auror and friend of the Headmaster." Harry says without issue. "Brought out of retirement by Dumbledore to be our new Defense Professor."

"Should we be concerned that he has some dark secret?" asked Ginny from a few seats down.

As those around laugh Harry chuckles, "Well every Defense professor we have had, has had a secret, so why would he be different?"

"Professor Lupin didn't," comments Colin a moment later.

At the same time that Harry snorts at that Neville opens his mouth and says, "Of course, he did Colin, remember the revelation of him being a shifter."

"Even more," Lavender says with a small grin, "was us learning of his status as the High Seneschal for Harry here."

"Oh," Colin says with a nod, "right."

Which gets some laughter as the group goes on.

8888

"I hope you get a good night sleep, Mr. Potter. For I do believe the lessons, I have planned for tomorrow are going to be a good one." says Professor Babbling upon seeing him in the hallway.

Harry grins at that, "Hello Professor and yes, that is definitely my plan." He pauses to tilt his head, "So, how was your summer?"
A grin, "Brilliant Mr. Potter, brilliant. The work we did was some of the best that I have ever worked with. Honestly, I can't wait for next summer so I can go back."

"Wicked, Professor, wicked. I'm quite happy to hear that."

She clears her throat and then says, "Would you like a personal report on the work done, Lord Potter."

Harry gives her a grin, "While I wouldn't demand or order it. There is no way I would reject such an offer."

Which gets a chuckle and a nod. She then tips her head once before adding, "Not a problem. Well I must be off, have a good night Mr. Potter."

Harry nods at her, wishes her a good night, before heading back to the dorm.

8888

"Surprise!" Harry says upon coming up to Cedric the next morning as the other lad is making the turn towards the great hall.

A blink, "Harry?" A pause, "I didn't think you were going to run today."

Harry chuckles, "Which is why it was a surprise." A pause for another grin. He then shrugs, "Honestly, I kind of wanted the return of normality that is us running."

"Wicked!" Cedric says with a great big smile. This is followed up by him gesturing to the big doors and the run that both are looking forward to having.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
"So what is this year's greater project going to be." Draco asks his gathered year mates within the first week of the school.

As everyone looks around some eyes turn to Harry to see what he might say. He shakes his head at that and shrugs, "No idea guys, sorry."

Silence.

Then with a bit of laughter. Justin says, "Darn, I was hoping you had some sort idea cause I'm all out." A pause. "Does anyone else have any ideas?"

Shakes of the head and voiced negatives were pretty much the result.

"Well I think this make sense," Neville comments when nobody says anything. "especially with how busy the summer has been. In combination, with the whole tournament event that’s going to happen."

The six leaders of the group all look to each other in quiet conversation. "Okay, then." Harry eventually says when he gets a nod from them all. "We will put the year project on hold for now. We ask that you all think on things and when you come up with a good idea, please feel free to mention it to the council."

"So with that issue put aside for now. Let's us go over the standard opening meeting issues." says Ernie to his gathered year mates.

8888

"It's frustrating." Hermione says one day as she slams down her book onto the table while sitting in the covenant lounge.

Those around her blink at that, its not everyday that she yells out an issue she is having.

"What's wrong, Granger?" Draco asks a bit confused, he doesn't think he has ever seen her do that.

"That the education standards of Albion have gone down hill since the last Monarch died." She angrily frustrated answered.

"What?" Draco says nearby in a somewhat shocked tone. Out of all the things he had expected, that was not going to be it.

"Yes. When Albion had a crowned king. Hogwarts, all schools of magic actually, taught all twenty-five OWL slash NEWT subjects plus various minor subjects. But the thing is I can't even blame any one group as it being their fault. As it was the uncoordinated work of many movements, that chipped away at the classes till we reached our present state - only twelve subjects taught."
A pause to take a breath. "But that is not even it. No, what is worse is that the requirements for the subjects that remain have gone down. A lot. Its frustrating, its annoying, its not right, and I want to scream when I discovered it."

A slight cough clear from Blaise, "What brought this on."

Hermione turns to him and says, "It was something Harry said at one point over the summer. I began researching it then but only got access to better books when the year started."

"And then had a near nervous breakdown when you discovered the results," Daphne shakes her head, "and its only been a few weeks."

"Not a nervous breakdown, I am just concerned on the lessoning of my educational standards." Hermione says while choosing to ignore the "if you say so" from somewhere.

"OUR education is topnotch Granger," Draco says trying to get her attention. "In fact, we are probably the most educated out of all the students that have come through Hogwarts in the last decade."

Hermione opens up her mouth to argue, then closes it with a snap. She then gets a thoughtful look on her face, which leads the others around him to groan. They know that look, and it means more work for them all.

8888

"So Granger what is on your mind, I can see you all but vibrating over there with intent" Draco says as soon as formalities were done with in the meeting.

It was a sign of how far they had come. That Hermione took it in the humorous way he meant it, rather than as an insult.

"Ha-ha, Malfoy," Hermione responded, "you are quite hilarious." A pause. "Oh wait, no you are not."

She waits out the laughter of the group to that before continuing to speak. "So I know many of us have been going over ideas on what to work on as a year project. I think I might have it." She says in a single breath. When she does pause it is to say, "The thing is that it won't really benefit us personally. It's more of a let's care about the future project."

"Which is not a bad thing for us to consider." Harry says calmly, "Since one day we will graduate and have to live in the world." A pause. "So what is the idea."

"Those that were here a few days ago for my complaint -," Hermione stops.

As Draco interrupts by saying, "You mean freak out."

"Thanks, Draco." she says sarcastically before continuing, "Anyway, as I was saying, a few days I was complaining about education. But the thing is within this room are a number of last names capable of bringing about change given time. So I thought, let's research the schooling of the past, why things changed, how things changed, what needs to change, and what we need to make sure that we young magicals get the best education possible." A pause to breath. "But not just here at Hogwarts but all of the 21 magical schools in Albion."

"How much detail did you think we would collect?" Justin Finch-Fletchley asks into the silence.
"I don't know, but I think us gathering enough data to answer any question put to us would probably work well." Hermione answers.

"That makes sense as we would have to explain our findings and find a way to make it palatable to the Ministries and the groups that run the schools." Ernie says in agreement.

A nod from Harry then, "So does anyone else have any potential ideas for year projects."

Multiple negative shakes of the head.

"Right then. So the first step will be a group wide vote on whether you find this to be an appropriate topic. If you don't we can always find something else of course, so no worries on that. If it is approved, we can then discuss on how we want to set up the initial project outline." A pause. "Okay then, if nobody has anything to add. Lets vote."

It was quickly approved and the group got down to figuring out the very basic principles of what they were going to do.

8888

"So a reoccurring fact that has kept on coming up is that before the death of the Last Monarch. The classes available at all of the greater schools of magic were the same." Terry Boot was saying to his gathered year mates.

His researcher partner Isobel MacDougal continued with, "The nature of this meant that no matter what school you attended, you were given a similar level of education. The quality of the teachers somewhat varied and so did the clubs. But what one learned in the actual classes were roughly similar."

"While interesting information," Daphne said when Isobel had finished speaking, "may I ask how this applies to what we are doing."

A nod from Terry who answers with a, "The reason it matters is that this year we find ourselves with access to the students of two other Albion schools. What I propose is that we actually seek some of them out."

Isobel nods and explains, "In the aftermath of the once unity, the various schools went their separate path. Durmstrung kept the Dark Arts but not general Defense while Beauxbatons kept Politics and Law. They also turned some of the other subjects into clubs."

Justin raises his wand and with a sheepish smile says, "I know that this is slightly off topic, but I was wondering why the contest is based on these two particular schools."

A few nods and comments of "good question" are said in the aftermath of Justin's question.

Hermione raised her wand, "I wondered that myself so I looked it up and the answer is that it was once a lot vaster in scope - it included all the schools of Albion, plus those from Scandia and the Nippon. It was a series of competitions between only three wizards per contest but actually had hundreds of participants over its duration. It also took place during the summer months so that it didn't effect anyone's schooling."

Harry sneered at that, "So basically they took the name but changed everything about it." A shake of the head then, "That's just so disappointing." A pause, "Okay, with that being said, let us go back on topic. Which is asking those from the other schools to provide input."
Blaise raises his wand and then comments, "If we are to extend it to those two, then we might want to consider messaging those from the other schools. At least those from there that we might know." A pause. "I know a person in the Italian and Greek schools, for example."

Some nods come from that as Harry says, "Okay then. This sounds like a vote suggestion." which gets some laughs. "So two votes I would say, the first is for us to ask some of the students from the two visiting schools. If that passes, we can then vote on writing to those we know from schools throughout Albion."

There was some debate and discussions but in the end the votes were near unanimous. In approval, on extending the project slightly to include the students from other schools.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
New Arrivals

Date: Fourth Year, Late September

"So Moody walked into class just as Cecil was saying that he felt it would be more useful to learn the deeper points of theory, rather than simply see some wand waving." Cedric says as they turn the corner on their run.

"How very, Snape!" Harry says with a laugh.

With a grin on his face, "I know." Cedric says. "We all stared at him." A shake of the head. "But that's not it." A pause, "So Moody then gives a grin, takes out his wand, and begins rapid fire casting of various high level Defense spells." Another shake of the head. "Once he was finished with the display, he began lecturing us on the theory behind them."

A wide grin followed by a chuckle is Harry's response. He then shakes his head and says, "So let me guess his display made the later theory much easier to understand?"

"Yep, you know it." Cedric gives a grin.

"Well," Harry says, "I look forward to seeing what random teaching methods he shows to us."

"He hasn't done anything like that?"

"No, not yet." Harry says as they make another turn and continue the run.

8888

"Um, so Harry, can I ask you something?" Asks Colin during breakfast. Upon receiving an eye raise he nods before saying. "Right, stupid question." A pause, "Well it seems that many of the students coming are nobles." At a nod he goes on. "So I was wondering if there is anything I should know, or do, when they arrive."

A negative shake of the head. "No, but good question Colin." Harry tilts his head in thought. "I would say be polite, but in the same way you are to the other students here at Hogwarts."

Colin grins at that, "Okay good to hear." A pause, "So can I take their pictures!"

"Colin!" Harry says with a laugh, which soon leads to breakfast continuing.

8888

"What was that letter you received by owl this morning?" Minerva asks of Albus a little later as the group of house heads sit in his office.

With a twinkle in his eye he explains, "it was Sirius, it seems that the Ministry Board overseeing the Tournament will be here for the arrival."

"Is he bringing the other mutt?" Is the snarky comment given by the Potions professor.
"Severus!" Minerva says with shock in her voice followed by a slight frown that indicated her non- 
amusement.

Her look and gesture of disapproval was why the others stopped and stared as Filius chuckled. With 
a grin on his face he then says, "Nice one Severus. Minerva, he is being sarcastic, he no longer has 
issue with Remus."

"That is true." A pause, "Though why must you ruin my fun." Severus says with a raised eyebrow. 
The others stop suddenly as the Headmaster laughs brightly with a full twinkle in his eye.

8888

Leaning back in her chair within the covenant section Hermione asks, "So Colin's question at 
breakfast made me wonder. If there is anything you need to do?"

At the curious looks on the other's faces Neville comments, "Colin asked if he had to give the new 
arrivals any special treatment."

Nods at that. Blaise then says, "I assume you replied no due to the fact that as this is our school. We 
are the ones who gives the polite greetings."

Harry chuckles at that. "I said he didn't, though I didn't go into detail." A shake of the head. "I am 
pretty sure he doesn't yet care about the nuances of noble status."

Smiles and grins are the result of Harry's comment.

After nodding at Harry, Draco then says, "To answer your question Hermione, yes, of course." He 
then gives his own grin. "Its nothing official," a pause, "more a meet and greet."

Ernie then adds, "Its mostly due to respect and tradition."

"Let's not be cagey, it's also because Harry here represents an Utmost Ancient House." Is stated by 
Anthony a moment later.

"Unfortunately." Harry says in a deadpan voice to the amusement of the others.

"Yes, Hermione?" Daphne comments curiously.

Which leads to a slight blush at being called out. Not that it stops her from asking, "Didn't you all 
already meet them?" A pause, "At the wedding?"

"Though yes, we did," Lavender says, "it doesn't count."

"Because that was not at Hogwarts," Ron adds as soon as its clear she is not going to explain further.

Hermione then opens her mouth but closes it as Seamus walks into the room saying, "I’m finishing 
with the casting room, if anyone else wants to use it!" Which works to distract everyone from what 
they are saying.

8888

"Eyes to the skies," says the Headmaster not long after the school gathered outside on the hill by the 
lake.

"What?" Asks Ron curiously as he turns to look towards the distant horizon.
"The Beauxbaton students are flying here," Harry says simply while pointing in the direction that they will have to come by.

Which is exactly what happened five minutes later. At first, there was a dot in the sky, one which got larger and brighter as it got closer to Hogwarts.

As soon as the objects got close enough that they could be seen for what they were. Dean breathes out, "Wow! Look at that."

'That' being a set of carriages being drawn through the sky by four winged horses. It was quite a majestic and magical site, one that the students of Hogwarts would talk about for a long time.

"Hey," Justin says shocked, "did they fly all the way here?"

This gets a bit of a chuckle from those gathered around, which was all those of their year. Since they were more than class mates, they were friends.

Draco spoke, in the posh tone of voice of his that gets the others shaking their head and grinning. "Of course, they did Justin. As it was only two hours away."

Blaise snorts at that then adds, "Though really they did it because they had such a scenic view."

"Woah, cool," Dean's respond, which is followed by laughter.

As soon as the boats from Durmstrang popped out of the lake and docked. A number of students turned towards Harry in curious wonder.

Chuckling slightly. Harry says, "The Headmaster gave them a vehicle oriented portkey that brought the boats to Hogwarts."

"He also modified the wards for the second to allow them entrance," Professor Vector says off the cuff as she walks past the students. "Those of you in my class please expect this to be talked about during our next class period."

"Thank you Professor," Hermione comments, "I look forward to that."

"Not a problem, Ms. Granger." is her parting comment.

Harry, chuckling slightly says, "Honestly, knowing how such things are done does nothing to, well, reduce the magic of them for me. In fact, it just makes it all the more brilliant."

As the others nod in almost full agreement, they begin talking about other topics.

"Knock, knock." They heard at the door of the classroom that has been taken over by the nobles to meet and greet. As soon as the majority turn to look at the door Sirius says, "Pardon me, Harry, if I could borrow you for a moment?"

A nod, "Of course, Sirius." He then turns to the others, "Pardon me, I need to take this, I will be back as soon as I can." So said he walks to door and follows Sirius a bit down the hallway. Once alone he tilts his head, "What's up?"

"I was about to head out and wanted to say goodbye."
Harry grins at him before extending his arms for a hug. After a minute of it Harry cocks his head to the side and says, "Was that it?"

A shake, "Nah." A smile. "I also wanted to update you on the Michaelson Report. It seems that House Rodor and House Mithian are not entirely accepting of what House Lac and House Thomas are doing. Unfortunately, both House Priest and House Sage are being impacted by the situation."

Eyes widen. "I see." A shake of the head. "Wow, this is going to cause us problems. Especially due to my relationship with scions of both Thomas and Priest." A pause as he thinks over things. "Right. Gather the document for it, add it to our meeting schedules." A second pause. "I will talk to Dean, see if his family has informed him about it."

A firm nod from Sirius is the response given to that.

Harry then glances back at the room and sighs, "Right, so I guess I have to go back to the meeting. When you pulled me out, some of the nobles were debating the proper way to 'deal with lessers.'" A shake of the head. "Needless to say, I am glad I was able to walk away."

Sirius chuckles at that, reaches out for a hug (happily given) before saying, "Well then, I will leave you back to that fun. See you soon, and Remus says hello, not that you didn't talk to him yesterday."

So said the two part, with Harry heading back into the room and Sirius to make his way back to Potter Manor.

8888

"So how was your day, Harry?" Charlie says later that night as the two are talking by mirror.

"Fun and exhausting," was Harry's immediate answer.

A tilt of the head in question, followed by a moment's pause, followed by widening of the eyes. "Oh, right. You had a noble meet and greet."

"Yep, hence the exhausting. But it was also pretty fun as well." A shrug, "Honestly, the fact that I met them before made the event a bit easier than it might have been." Harry then grins widely.

"Oh, do tell?"

"Well, Fleur Delacour is here as well." The grin gets even wider. "You might remember her more as the girl that Bill is sweet on."

A similar grin comes on Charlie's face, a grin that only a brother could have. "Right, Fleur. How interesting."

"I know right," Harry says with a smile.

The two share an amused smile before Charlie shakes his head. "I will have to think more about that." A pause, "So how was Krum?"

"Pleasant, to some of my year's surprise." A small smile. "It seems that behind his snooty demeanor, he is pretty much a regular guy." A pause, then shrug. "At least he was to me and the other nobles."

"Not really surprised by that to be honest," is Charlie's response with a nod. He then grins and makes a slight gesture that basically indicates topic change. "Oh, before we end this call, I wanted to share with you some the details that my spell crafters had developed. It's hilarious!"
Which is what they do for the next twenty minutes before the call ends.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
Class Participation

Chapter Notes

Surprise! Four sections today rather than two. Why, no reason other than I felt like giving it to you.

Well, there is a partial reason, I wrote up to early January for Year Six, which means late June to early January are done for that book. just six months remaining to get covered. hehe

Anyway enjoy! :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Class Participation
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Date: Fourth Year, Early October

"So what do you think of the students from the other schools?" Harry asks Cedric as they are running that morning.

"Those from Durmstrang are dreary and those from Beauxbatons are flashy, but I like them." He then laughs before adding, "I actually know one of them, a sixth year like me, by the name of Pietro. Being able to give him a tour of Hogwarts was actually really nice."

"Oh that's cool." Harry says with a smile. "How is he finding Hogwarts?"

"Brilliant." Cedric says with a smile. "He told me this place feels magical in a different way then his school."

Harry nods at that before saying, "right. Isn't Beauxbatons in an old palace of some sort?"

"Yep," is Cedric's response. "Hence the different feel," he replies with a laugh. He then tilts his head as they turn a corner. "Oh, I meant to ask, who was that Beauxbatons lad you were talking to?"

Harry chuckles at that. "Oh that's Jordan Ignore."

"Wait, I know that name, didn’t you say you first contacted him after he sent you five letters through the ‘let’s thank Harry Potter’ program."

"Yep, that’s him. Well after that whole incident, we kept in touch as I found the whole thing amusing." A pause as a smile comes onto his face, "We have been sending back letters once a month or two since then."

A nod, grin, then a confused look. "How did he end up going to Beauxbatons?"

An amused laugh, "Oh pure luck, basically. His parents had happened to be assigned a work project in the French Ministry when he turned eleven, which meant he was in the Beauxbatons magical region when it came time for school. Now he could have changed it if he wanted to, a child of an ICW official does have the right to choose, but since he had heard good things about it he decided to
stay there.”

A nod follows that. Followed by the two talking about their friendships with Pietro and Jordan, which continues for the rest of the run.

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"Um, Harry, I was wondering something?" Lorene, a third year Gryffindor asks. After Harry gives her a smile and a gesture to go on, she does so. "I'm taking Runic Studies and, well, I don't understand why we can visit places of natural runes." A pause, "I mean wouldn't the sheer magic flowing through the pattern hurt us?"

Harry tilts his head in thought, and a bit of confusion, before he widens his eye at the realization behind the question. He then grins and says, "I see why you are thinking that, but no, not as a general thing. See, the amount of magic is the same whether its a rune the size of a coin or one the size of a city."

"Oh, okay. Thank you." A pause as Lorene thinks about things. "But then what about Spring Field, I know it has such a powerful aura that it has many mysteries."

Harry nods at that once before taking a bite of his food. He then says, "Your not wrong on the point of there being exceptions. The magic of such places are as high as they are for many reasons, more than I can explain here." Another pause, "I will say that sometimes such natural places have multiple connected runes." Harry then smiles before saying, "I'm going to say we will talk about it later, for right now I want to finish breakfast."

At the same time as Harry is getting nods Neville chuckles before saying, "Oh that, it reminds me in a completely unrelated way about something. That happened when I visited the greenhouses." Which leads to a bit of a story as the breakfast period continues.

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"So it was dinner and I was talking to Sirius and Remus when out of nowhere. The back door opened and suddenly there were three giggling, naked, house elves running through the dining hall." Harry was saying to his fellows during lunch that day.

"Wait, what?" Neville says shocked, right at the same time Ron spews some of the drink he started to drink due to laughing so hard.

As Hermione is quickly yelling at Ron, Harry grins before saying. "Yeah, a bunch of baby house elves decided to run through the dining room while playing."

"What did you do?" Asked by Davin Green, a seventh year sitting nearby.

A chuckle, "We just stared at them. Especially when a few of them came up to us, hugging our legs before running off." An amused shake of the head then, "We just said good luck to the house elf that ran into the room trying to find the babies." A pause, then in a deadpan voice Harry says, "Mostly because it was my permission that gave them the free magics to procreate."

There are many widened eyes at that, some full of shock but most full of humor. Harry himself simply grins as he continues eating.

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Not long after the class got situated Professor Vector walked into the room, followed by a
Durmstrang student. "Hello all, this is Alexei Vasily and he will be joining our class this year." She lets the polite welcomes flow through the room before continuing. "With that out of the way, let us begin discussing the topic for today's lecture - the arithmantic patterns lying within the Grecian Methodologies."

The class continues mostly as normal till midway when Vasily speaks up. "With all due respect, wouldn't it be better if one adds the Turing Equations to the formula you are talking about?"

There was silence at the question, just long enough for Vasily to get worried. But then Hermione laughs loudly and goes, "Ha-ha, I was right, suck it!"

The last line of the outburst goes the rest of the class to laugh loudly. Even Professor Vector gets a smile on her face, though one she tries to hide as soon as anyone turns in her direction.

At Vasily's confused look Harry leans towards him and says, "Don't mind her. Last week, she and Blaise had an almost hour long discussion on the potential of that equation. She thought it was useful, him not so much." A shrug then follows, "You agreeing with her sort of proves her point." There is then a pause as Harry reaches out his hand, "Welcome to the madhouse of our class."

Vasily grins, realizing he is going to like this, reaches out to shake Harry's hand and says, "Thank you, this is going to be fun!"

Needless to say the rest of the class was fun, educational, and informative - and Professor Vector could have not been any more proud.

As the group was heading out of the class it is Hermione who asks, "Pardon me for asking, but I was wondering why you are in our class. Aren't you in sixth year?"

Vasily nods at that before saying, "It's true. There was some issues in my classes and so I began to take Arithmancy a bit later than normal." He then shrugs, "In the end, it means I graduate with an OWL in the subject rather than a NEWT. Which is fine as my parents are already lining up tutors so that when I graduate I can learn enough to take the NEWT for the subject the year later."

Many nods appear at that not really surprising bit of news. After all even here at Hogwarts, such changes are not entirely uncommon. Which is why after the nods, the group simply change the topic and begin asking him what he has already covered. Since there is no way they aren't going to make use of his different point of view.

8888

"Sorry to interrupt your non-business day Harry," Remus says moments after the mirror call is accepted near the end of the evening.

"It's okay Remus, I know you wouldn't have done it if it wasn't important." A pause, "So what happened?"

"Well remember, how a few weeks ago there was a report of the death of Adam Engel, an official in the Orhollow Hundred."

A nod, "Yes, wasn't his death under suspicious circumstances?"

Another nod, "Exactly. Well the team examining his personal effects just provided me with their official report." A pause, "There are a number of discoveries that point out to secrets, some of which are grave."
"Right." Harry says with a nod as he thinks deeper on the matter. "Obviously send me the complete report, I want to read it for myself." A pause, "And also coordinate with Sirius because if this becomes as big as your tone of voice indicates you think it will. I want our Ministry operations already planned out."

"Will do, on both parts." Remus then gives a grin before saying, "So, since we are talking, how are things?"

Which receives a smile, followed by an answer which leads to pleasant conversation on both of their parts.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
Date: Fourth Year, Mid October

Everyone waits in the silence as the Goblet begins glowing before spitting out a fourth name. Then, as was expected by some, a particular name is called out - "Harry Potter."

He sighs as the magic of the many thousand year old artifact rushes over him. It didn't matter that he hadn't put his name in, or even ordered someone to do it, the oaths had already settled.

Gazing at the Goblet of Fire, Harry couldn't help but send out a blast of aura magic towards it. It didn't do anything that was easy to tell but it did make him feel better as he thought about it all.

Mentally shrugging, Harry then stood up, as a hush flows over the hall. Taking out his wand he calmly says, "I swear upon my magic that I neither personally put my name into the Goblet of Fire nor did I have anyone else do it at my request, either overt or covert. So mote it be."

The magic of his oath settled in and on and around him in a cascading aura of light.

"Lumos." is Harry's next statement and his magic lights up the wand, which means his spellcasting abilities remained intact.

"Let it be known although, I am forced to compete, I do not do this willingly. For that reason, I will turn the resources of the House of Potter against the person, and any master they may have, who put my name into the Goblet."

So said he turns and walks towards into the back room where the other participants were waiting.

"What is this?" Fleur Delacour says, "How is there a fourth contestant in a tri-wizard tournament."

"Did you hear my oath?" Harry says simply.

"Yes," Victor Krum says, "but I don't understand why someone would do that."

"I do," Cedric says with a friendly smile towards Harry, "he attracts hostile attention."

Nodding at that, since its true, Harry then explains, "I'm not sure on the details but after the Dark Mark was seen at the World Cup. I assume its a minion of the Dark Lord who wants me for something."

"Do you have to participate, Harry," Cedric asks worriedly, "can't you back out."

"Unfortunately yes, I do, and no I can't. The moment my name came out and was read, it activated a magical contract. I felt the magic go over me, its unbreakable even for someone with my power."

Harry answers with a steady tone in his voice.

"Well I don't blame you, and I am not upset with you," Cedric says.

"Neither am I," comes from Viktor, "for I know what its like to be focused on in ways that are not
Fleur shrugs in a manner that still showcases her nobility, "I heard your oath and know you still have magic. So I can't blame you even as I am upset that you are involved."

Nodding at that, "You can't be more upset than I am. I was hoping to personally sit this one out. While sitting in the back clapping in glee as Cedric trounced you all," his smile took the bite from the statement, if Krum's grin was to go by.

Whatever else could be said was pushed away as the heads of the three schools, representatives from the Ministry, and Sirius.

Seeing the look on Sirius face Harry nods, "No luck in breaking it am I right."

"You don't seem that upset about that, Mr. Potter," says Headmaster Igor Karkaroff.

"You seem to be reading my tone wrong, Mr. Karkaroff," Harry's politely respond. "I felt the oath settle over me and I am pretty sure a three thousand year old ancient magical artifact created by multiple willing sacrifices is not something that is going to be easy to break."

"You felt it Potter?" Professor Moody asks.

A nod, "Yes, I felt it, professor, my Ring give me a connection to magic." A shake of the head. "But because the Goblet of Fire is not hostile, it wasn't able to protect me."

"Do you insist that its a plot against you," says Crouch.

"Yes, Crouch. I do " Harry's less than polite comment to him.

"Be that as it may," says Madam Maxime of Beauxbatons, "that is not what we need to discuss right now." She pauses then gives Harry a small nod, "Not that it is not something we do need to talk about."

Harry nods at that while saying, "I understand. Unfortunately, the tri-wizard tournament is now a quad-wizard tournament." He then pauses as a thought crosses his mind.

Cedric looks at him for a moment. Before he gets an inkling of what Harry is thinking and thus says, "Did the Goblet go out yet?"

"No," Remus says from where he just walked in. "Which is as surprising as it is interesting."

Catching on somewhat Krum then says, "If the Goblet is still lit, then have it give two more names, one from each remaining school. That way its a Hex-Wizard Tournament, much more fun then."

The three school heads plus Crouch look at each other trying to find a reason to deny it. Sirius, seeing the contest going on, speaks up. "I approve and I say this as Lord Black, Wizenemgot member, and Hogwarts Board Governor."

Looking at the other wizard Dumbledore nods, "I agree that this should be done. It will also bring back the equality of the competition."

Maxime, "I support this move as well."

Karkaroff nods as well, "It will support a better competition."

Crouch tries to glare but eventually nods, "Dine, let's just do it. Two more people will be called forth
from the Goblet. Albus activated the magic as you are the school hosting it."

A simple nod and the three school heads head back out into the great hall. As soon as Headmaster Dumbledore walks out of the room. He raises his hand, and a hush comes upon the room. "Due to the unseemly nature of there being a fourth champion, we decided to expand it further. This is possible as the Goblet of Fire is still ignited." He then waves his wand and then the fire of the Goblet rises again in a great blast of fire and magic.

A second later a slip of paper jumps out of it, and floats towards Madam Maxime. She reads it, nods, and says, "The second contestant for Durmstrang is Vala Oolg, congratulations."

Everyone claps as Oolg stands up, a bit shocked, and then heads to stand next to Krum.

The fire activates again and another slip of paper comes out, this time floating towards Karkaroff. He grabs the paper, reads it, nods, and says, "The final contestant is Lucus Pieria of Beauxbatons. Please, congratulate him." Which the student body does willingly and happily.

At the exact moment, the sixth name came out the fire on the goblet grew larger, turned different colors, and then died. No other names would be given, which caused everyone to let out the breath they weren't aware they were holding.

Eyes twinkling, Headmaster Dumbledore gestures once again. "Teamwork between the two school champions will be a key feature here. Which means we will be grading on how they work together just as much as we will be judging their individual ability." A clap. "Now then, let us eat and then celebrate."

On their own unspoken initiative, the six participants all turn to each other and begin shaking hands. This initial sign of respect will carry through the whole tournament and bring a sense of nobility to it. That many of those in the past had otherwise lacked. It will also aid in the creation of connections and friendships that will last a lifetime. Not that any of that was known to them at this time, rather they were doing it all out of politeness. Once all the handshakes were done, the six participants headed back to their assigned tables so that the feast may begin.

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"Though, I am sorry that all the time you spent coming up with the three competitions was wasted," Sirius says as soon as the meeting fully begins, "I can't help but be glad at the same time." Looking at them, "This way we can come up with events that actually are befitting the nature of the tournament."

"As I said before I see no reason why we can't keep what we had before, just modify them a little for two people on a team." Crouch comments after Sirius finishes.

Karkaroff raises an eye at Crouch before saying, "You know why, as we also said, none of the competitions are designed for what we now need to do." He then turns towards Sirius and says, "Well you seem to have all sorts of ideas, please share them."

Sirius nods at that before saying, "First, let us increase the competition to four events. November, January, March, and May. Fire, air, water, and then earth. We can keep the final one, the second one can be used with some adjustments." A pause, "But the first has to go with extreme prejudice, even with the changes we already made its not worth our time or effort."

Maxime nods at that before saying, "I happened to agree on all that, so let us begin developing some better ideas." Which is exactly what they do.
"Are you okay, Harry?" is the first thing Charlie says when the former answered the mirror call.

Harry smiles, always happy to see the other wizard, before saying. "Yes, of course. I'm not entirely pleased that I got roped into participating. Yet, I also can't say I'm surprised." A pause then, "It's been less than a day, how did you already hear about it."

"News travels fast, especially with you being involved." Charlie says in answer to the question.

Harry laughs at that. "Right, the Potter luck. Honestly though it's not that bad," pause, "What I mean is it could be worse. I was able to manipulate things myself so instead of four participants it's now six, two from each school working as a team."

"That sounds a lot better than it was originally going to be. What did they say about the tasks?"

"That they need to rethink some of them due to the nature of having multiple participants per school. Which I'm glad at because from the rumors I heard, their initial ideas were stupid."

Charlie laughs at that. "Yes, I bet. In fact, I can now say that originally they had keepers from my Reserve coming to Hogwarts."

"What," Harry exclaims a bit shocked. Then he shakes his head, "no, why am I surprised. Of course, dragons would have crossed their minds. Idiots that they are."

"Yeah I agree, dragons are not something a sixteen or seventeen year old should fight. So that leads to some bad news, I'm no longer visiting due to work." A pause then a laugh, "Which was one canceled contract. I can say we were fine with to be honest." Then a shake of the head and a, "But the good news is I got tickets and leave to come and see all four tasks."

Harry grins widely at that, "Oh that's wicked. Really wicked. It will be nice to have you there cheering me on. I will have a seat saved for you in the box Sirius and Remus are at. Best seats in the stadium."

"Neat. Looking forward to it." A pause then, "Oh so who is the other champion. I missed that in my reaction to learning you were in it."

"Cedric Diggory, who is perfect as my co-player."

"Cedric, nice. Well at least it's someone you not just get along with but also coordinate well with."

"Yep, I'm quite pleased by him being part of it. He is a great guy and deserves the recognition, that the tournament will give him."

A smile at that and Charlie and Harry are off discussing a bunch of other random topics, for over thirty minutes.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
Dumbledore Plots or Not

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Dumbledore Plots or Not
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Date: Fourth Year, Mid October

As Harry was leaving the great hall, he was stopped by Professor McGonagall with, "If you please. can you head to the Headmaster's Office. He would like to speak with you."

"Sure," Harry said while nodding at the professor. The path to the office was quick and didn't even need a password for Harry to be admitted. Wondering what was going on had Harry surprised when he saw Sirius and Madam Bones present in addition to the Headmaster.

Before they could say anything Harry greets them all and then commented, "What is going on, it's too early in the year for me to have done anything that would get me into trouble."

Smiling at Harry in a way that would try and be comforting Sirius says, "Don't worry Harry, you're not in trouble. Madam Bones here just has a few questions."

"Sure. What would you like to know?"

"Mr. Potter, it has come to the attention of the Ministry that there were some irregularities in your home life and personal situation. We would just like some clarification." Was Madam Bones question.

Looking around still in confusion Harry nodded, "Sure Madam Bones, ask away."

"Well, I heard that you had both a block on your magic and a mail ward redirecting messages. We wanted to know who put them on you."

Looking around the room, he realized that none were looking at Dumbledore, who did not have his standard twinkle. Which led Harry to realizing they thought he had done it.

"Ah, I see, you wanted to know if I thought or knew it was the Headmaster's doing right." Seeing their guilty looks, Harry knew it out be true. "So what did he say?" Harry asked without answering the question.

"He denied it was him, on both parts." Was Sirius' answered as Madam Bones kept quiet.

A bit of a laugh from Harry. "Right, he is telling the truth." Seeing their looks Harry continues. "I can understand why you thought that, I thought it to, but it isn't his fault."

At this point Dumbledore speaks up, "Mr. Potter, what have I done that's so bad to you that you think I would harm you in such a way?"

Harry actually gives him a pleasant smile before saying. "I didn't know you. You were simply the man who put me with the Dursley's, and that wasn't a positive thing. To add to my issues, you didn't seek to provide me with any of the knowledge that a muggle raised wizard or witch would get. I had to muddle along all on my own."
"Mr. Potter," Madam Bones said in his quiet, "what was your life at the Dursley's like?"

"Abusive by mundane standards but similar to the way the dark families raise children under the magical standards, though without magic on their part. I solved certain issues I could have had by, well, ignoring the Dursley's and making use of the school programs. Things got better in the aftermath of my eighth year, and even better upon getting my Hogwarts letter." Was Harry's response.

"May I ask what said preparations were?" was Bones response.

"Sure, it was two things. The first is I bought a wizarding tent to provide me more living space without bothering them. The second was that I set up a contract with Gringotts that had them checking up on me, in fact I showed the Dursley's the contract." A shrug. "Things worked out."

"Did you tell any of your professors about the issues?"

"I asked Professor McGonagall if I could do something other than go back to the Dursley's. She said no, that Hogwarts was not equipped to house children over the summer. She was kind of course, but firm on the fact that no other option existed but to go to them." Here Harry paused. "I did learn a little later from the Headmaster that my mother's love and sacrifice created protections, and so it made me safer there than anywhere else. Especially, considering I knew Voldemort was alive."

"Harry, is that when you began your other plans?" Was questioned by Sirius.

"Yes. As I wasn't physically scared of the Dursley's, I didn't panic. I just planned around their idiocy."

"Mr. Potter," this was the Headmaster, "did any adults outside of Gringotts know of your concerns?"

Here Harry smiles widely, in a way that says a prank well done. This caused the adults to shift a bit worried, though of course Sirius knew all of this already.

"Yes. Remus. I had been in communication with him since Christmas of my first year." The grin goes even wider. "I bypassed my mail ward by writing to him first, so we began a correspondence. He told me he couldn't take me, and why, but he was firm in him caring for me. So in time, I came to trust him, it wasn't misplaced."

Sirius beams at Harry for that and says. "I don't think I need to say how much I am really glad you befriended him, and trusted him. You do your parents proud by ignoring his furry little problem and treating him with respect."

Nodding with happiness at that Harry waits for the next question, which comes from Madam Bones. "Well, okay then, the issue with the Dursley's seem finalized. Now, speaking of the mail ward you mentioned it's not the Headmaster's fault? Please explain."

Seeing Dumbledore both bothered by the fact people think he did such a bad thing, and interested in hearing the truth Harry doesn't delay. "It's a standard Potter family ward, activated upon my birth. I only get mail sent by blood family, those I know consciously, or those in response to something I sent. The only exception being letters from Hogwarts and the Ministry." A smile. "So amusingly, for example, even Albus Dumbledore acting as a person and not Headmaster wouldn't have been able to write me. That said, I should mentioned that Sirius would have been able to since being my Godfather makes him family."

"So where did the rest of the mail go?" Was Madam Bones next question.
"To a chamber in Gringotts, where it just sat waiting to be looked over. Interestingly enough, even their own letters went there, which is why I didn't originally get any bank statements."

"Would I be correct in stating," is said by Dumbledore, "that if a parent or guardian existed, all incoming mail would have then been redirected to said person."

"Yes, for the most part, though the guardian has to have actual authority recognized by Gringotts, which the Dursley's didn't. You did have some authority Headmaster, but what was funny is that it seems everyone including Gringotts forgot about the mail ward. After speaking to the goblins, I was able to have the mail ward modified slightly so that all incoming Potter mail is looked at by a team of Potter account goblins and bonded house elves before being passed on to me. This check is for spells, traps, and other nasties."

"Very smart, Mr. Potter." A pause by Madam Bones then, "So how did you learn about this?"

"I had Gringotts do a full physical, mental, spiritual, and magical analysis on me the summer before second year. They corrected the physical issues affecting me. While uncovering everything magical tied to my core. Which besides the mail ward included my family connections, including the bonds to all my holdings and house elves."

"Did it included any blocks found upon your person?" Again said by Madam Bones

"Yes, it did, and before you ask, this was also not the fault of the Headmaster. Cause trust me, if he had I would not be sitting here smiling at him, and Merlin knows I wouldn't even be at Hogwarts."

"While I appreciate your defense of me, may I ask who did put the block on you?" Said the Headmaster with worry and a bit of anger in his voice.

"I agree, and also wonder why you didn't tell me. Don't you trust me?" This was Sirius, who said with some sadness. Entirely faked of course, since he knew about the ward beforehand.

"Of course, I trust you Sirius. And I didn't tell you because its not presently important and so I didn't think of it anymore. Since Gringotts removed the block on the same day they scanned me, it was all part of the package I got from them." A breath to gather his thoughts. "As for who did it, simple, it was my parents."

"Wait, what?" Madam Bones exclaims quite shocked.

"Why would James and Lily do that to you." Dumbledore commented as he tried to think of possible reasons.

"They did it because they loved me. From looking through my parents journals, it seems even from a few months old, I was preforming magic. According to Remus, it wasn't accidental, he said he saw me summon my wolf and stag plushies from across the room a few times. They did it to protect my core, and it was a good thing too."

"What do you mean?" asked Madam Bones.

"It seems that night, you know the one I'm talking about, a major reason I survived was that the part of my magic bound was tapped into by my mum's sacrifice. In tandem, the two forces saved my life, giving me the title I annoyingly have. It continued to protect me till the ritual at Gringotts which gave me full access to the power. Now I'm protected in a different and better way."

Sitting back in thought, all three adults ponder the information they just learned.
After giving them a few moments Harry then speaks again. "Now I am angry with Albus Dumbledore for putting me with the Dursley's, I won't lie about that. Especially as I know, my parents will gave a list of about a dozen people who would take me in if something happened to them, and that it did not include the Dursley's at all. But that being said, the way the Dursley's treated me is not his fault but theirs. They are the ones who are horrible bigots."

Silence.

"So you don't want to press charges on them." Madam Bones asks.

"Of course not, even though I would win. The truth is there is no point considering that right now. I live at Potter Manor with Sirius and Remus and I do not in any way have to ever see them again. They can live there lives without any concern of mine."

"Okay, then. That seems to satisfy all the inquiries both I and my office had. Thank you Mr. Potter for your time, and wish you a good day."

"No problem Madam Bones, and in fact I appreciate you checking up on it. I was lucky and didn't have it as bad as it could have been, but that might not necessary have been true." A pause. "I also wish you a good day."

She then declares she will see herself out and leaves the office. Afterwards, there is a bunch of quiet, as the three remaining people just look at each other.

Eventually Harry speaks. "I think a part of why multiple people thought you were a major cause of the issues Headmaster is due to the fact you keep things close to your chest. Nobody else knows what's going on and so when something bizarre happens, you are blamed." A shrug. "I'm glad you didn't do it. Otherwise, it would have destroyed any potential relationship we might have had."

Dumbledore just nods a bit sadly. "I'm sorry for whatever part I played in your pain. I didn't mean for it to happen and truthfully, I thought you going there was the best option. I see I was wrong but even I can't change the past. All I can ask is that you work with me so I don't do it again."

Harry nods agreeably, it's nothing more than he had already promised himself that he was going to do. With that, the meeting ends and two of the three begin leaving the office.

Right before they get to the door Dumbledore says. "A quick question if you would. You mentioned that not even Gringotts letters directly went to you, that seems a bizarre restriction."

Harry smiles. "I agree. Which is why as soon as I gained the authority, I changed it. Now the Potter family mail wards automatically let the letters coming from Gringotts head to the person. Gringotts must always be allowed to message the Potters." So said, Harry leaves the office letting the Headmaster ponder everything he learned.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
**Chapter Notes**

For reasons of math I decided three sections today, that way the rest of the uploads for this book are all two sections. hehe

I would have uploaded it yesterday but the whole AO3 having issue kind of caused me problems on that.

As a random bit of writer news, so I was planning on pulling back from active writing for this story for a bit but after three days of not thinking about it my mind started thinking about it. So yeah, I'm still writing. lol

PS. Remember, still open to potential questions for the Q&A story.

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**Testing Choices**

_____________________

Date: Fourth Year, Late October

"Hey Cedric, how many OWLs did you take?" Harry asks as they are running.

"I took ten at Hogwarts and then another half a dozen last summer at the Ministry." Giving him a side eyed look, he then says, "Why?"

Instead of answering Harry then says, "Is that normal?"

"For purebloods yes, especially nobles. There are a number of subjects that Hogwarts doesn't teach that our parents want us to take." Another pause, "So, may I ask why?"

Harry finally chuckles before giving a nod. "I am thinking of taking all twenty-four OWLs."

A blink, a slight stumble, followed by a pause then a shake of the head. "Okay, can I say I am both surprised and not surprised." As Harry chuckles he goes on, "It is really a you thing."

"Yeah, it really is." A simple shake of the head.

Then Cedric says, after a pause to turn the corner, "So what really has you worried?"

"I'm thinking the rest of my year will also take all twenty-four OWLs."

A blink then a pause, with the pause lasting a bit longer than normal. "At Hogwarts?" Harry nods at that. "Well, isn't that interesting." Cedric then shrugs. "Honestly, Harry with your communal studies, I doubt there will be any issue with you all doing that."

Harry gives a nod at that before clearing his throat and commenting about something completely different. A point of conversation which takes over the run from them till the end.

8888
"So, Harry, is there any benefit to all the tutoring and studying you have been doing?" Justin asks during a hang out session in their covenant section.

Harry grins then says, "Do you count me taking all twenty-four OWLs as a benefit?"

Fred and George, sitting in the back sit up a bit at that before chanting, "Nope!"

Which results in the group laughing at the reaction.

When things calm down Blaise says, "Wow, really Harry." He then stops, "When are you planning on taking them?"

"If I can swing it, here, though I am not sure of the political dynamics of that yet." A pause, tilt of head, "Why?"

There is silence as Harry's year mates start meeting each other's eyes in silent communication. Born out of three plus years worth of knowing each other.

Harry lets it go on for a while before saying, "Is there something you guys want to say?" He then smiles.

Draco who then says, "Not at this time, but there is something we are going to need to discuss."

Hermione gasps as she looks at the time, "But not now, for if we don't head out now. We will be late for the dueling club."

Which spurs the others to move quite rapidly, for the last thing any of them want to do is miss the club.

8888

"So, I said to Third Minister Wagner, that House Black was not interested in selling off the Strickland District of Redbutler Hundred to the Ministry. No matter how many tax breaks he would give us." Sirius says later that day as he and Harry are discussing various business, political, and personal matters.

A shake of the head, "Did he really think that would work on you, or us?"

A grin, "Yep." With a slight pop to the 'P'. "From what I gathered, he is not usually the one to speak to the controller of high level House purse strings, so tax relief is normally useful." A shake of the head then. "He is not a bad guy, as shown in his willingness to support the offer to have certain grain fields enhanced using Ministry resources."

Harry's eyes widen at that, "Wait, really. Brilliant!" A smile, "I am really glad to hear that he was willing to support that."

"I know." A wide grin then, "Honestly, I must give him credit for he realized pretty quickly that they were Vidal Grains rather than the more nutritional ones." A pause, "Especially, when I threw in a slight bonus of his department getting first access to purchase them."

"At normal cost, right?"

Sirius chuckles, "of course, no discount given, he already knew that." He then leans back and stretches before moving to flip through his packet of notes. He then grins, "So that is it, that's the last of my updates." A pause, "How are things with you?"
"Well." Harry says simply, "I am thinking of taking all twenty-four OWLs here at Hogwarts."

There is a pause, which is followed by Sirius laughing deeply. He then slaps his knees before saying, "I won the imaginary bet I made with Remus."

A blink of confusion, "Wait, what bet?"

"On whether, you would take your OWLs during the school year or wait for the summer." A grin. "Remus thought the summer and I figured at school."

Shaking his head in amusement Harry simply chuckles at that. He then grins before saying, "I like the fact that where was the bet, not whether I was going to take them all."

"Oh no, never that, we both knew you were going to do them." A pause as he tilts his head, "Did you know that both Remus and I have all twenty-four OWLs, me because of my Heir status and Remus because he is an overachiever." He then grins, "Of course, taking them all at Hogwarts is very rare so you still win special points for doing that."

Harry laughs at that, cause really, how many 'special points does he need.' He then grins, "So how many special points would I win if I say my whole year might be thinking of taking all twenty-four OWLs."

Sirius doesn't answer, his mouth simply falls open, he gasps, and then falls out of the chair in shock. Much to Harry's amusement. When he picks himself up again, the two talks about something else for the last twenty minutes of the meeting.

8888

During the walk from their common room to dinner that night Hermione says. "Would you be willing to give us your study notes, so we could prepare for the OWLs as well."

Harry nods once before giving a grin, "Of course, Hermione. No problem at all."

A smile, "Do you think your tutors would be willing to help us establish a tutoring plan?"

Harry chuckles at that, "Maybe, though I can't fully say the answer to that till I speak to them." He then gestures to the area around them, a hallway full of people.

Which is why Ron then spoke-up. "So, does anyone know if the kitchens are going to make the chocolate pudding for desert. I'm quite hungry for that."

Which gets amused laughter and a clear change of subject as the group heads down to the great hall.

8888

Later that night, as he lays in bed, he takes out his mirror-linked message journal. He then writes:

Harold: Nicolas, Perenelle. It seems that my fellow year mates are going to take the same OWLs as I am next year. If you agree, I would like your assistance on coming up with a study guide for all of us.

Nicolas: With the work they are going to have to put into it, they will hate you by the time its done. Smiling at the quick response Harry then wrote out.

Harold: Well, they always talk about my work schedule. So, this will give them a hint of what I do as
a matter of norm.

Perenelle: Though amusing its getting late, have a good night Harry and we will talk to you verbally soon.

Harold: Good night!

Harry then smiles once before putting the journal away so that he can get some sleep.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
No Dull Moments
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Date: Fourth Year, Early November

"Loki, do you know where Isis is?" Harry asks as he is walking through Hogwarts.

"She is with the potions master." is Loki’s immediate response.

Harry blinks at that. "Wait really, but I saw her last night."

A wiggle of head followed by a slight lick of the arm he is on. "She knew you were going to be busy today, so she left after you fell asleep."

Before Harry can say anything, he hears,"Mr. Potter are you aware that Isis finds my room pleasant."

Harry grins at the Potions Professor. With a slight gesture indicating Loki he says, "I do now." A pause. "I hope she didn't bother you when she arrived at your quarters."

"Not at all. In fact, it was quite pleasant." The last part is said with Snape's own silky voice. "Though I admit to being surprised at her knowledge of my quarters." A slight tilt of his head shows to Harry there is a question involved.

Harry nods, "I am surprised by that as well. Though I believe she used her connection to me to connect with the school."

"Which revealed her my home, I see." A firm nod. "Should I expect you to appear as well?"

Harry grins. "Not unless the world is dying Professor, you have my word." A pause for the grin to fade. "Do you need me to come get her?"

"No." The response, though soft is firm and designed to be unquestioned. "In fact, feel free to consider my quarters a second bedroom for her, if you will."

"Understood, thank you Professor." Harry says honestly, he then gives a bow of respect towards the professor before he continues his journey.

A few minutes later, he raises his wrist up to his face and says softly, "Loki, I do believe that Professor Snape can speak to serpents."

The equivalent of a serpent grin, a lick to the hand, "I agree Friend, Harry." Which leads to Harry grinning himself.

8888

"Do we really need this meet and greet?" asks Vala Oolg to the other gathered contestants a little after lunch.

"I think it would be beneficial," Cedric says with a nod.
"As we will be around each other quite a bit," Fleur comments with a soft smile, "it would not be bad for us to get to know at least a little of who we each are."

"I agree."

Harry gives a smile then says, "So do I." A pause then, "Well hello all, I'm Harry Potter and I didn't really want to be here, but since I am. I'm going to make the best of it. I'm a fourth year Hogwarts Gryffindor, seeker on the house Quidditch team, taking Arithmancy, Runic Studies, and Care." A very tiny pause. "But because of my status as a Lord many times over, I'm being tutored in basically everything."

"How is your magic Potter?" Krum asks curiously.

"Developed," he says with a smirk.

Which leads to Cedric laughing. "Developed he says!" A shake of the head. "He learned the patronus charm when he was thirteen. His magic is more then capable of equaling us despite our age differences." He then pauses before continuing. "My name is Cedric Diggory, I'm a sixth year Hogwarts Hufflepuff, seeker on my house team, and I also have taken Arithmancy, Runic Studies, and Care. As the Heir of House Diggory, I am trained in more subjects than what Hogwarts teaches."

Giving a nod at that Fleur then says, "I am Fleur Delacour, seventh year Golden Oak Beauxbaton student. I played seeker for two years but gave it up when I turned towards academics. I have not only taken Arithmancy and Runic Studies but also a course in Warding."

As she says the last bit Harry can't help but think that it was that which started her and Bill's conversation. Of course, he then thought, it probably continued due to attractiveness.

None of this was said, which was why Krum then spoke up. "Well then, hello, I am Victor Krum, a seventh year Durmstrang Fire Drake. From second to fifth year, I was seeker on the Fire Drake Quidditch team before leaving it to play professionally. Which I have done for over a year now. My electives included Runic Studies and Care of Magical Creatures."

"We seem a well-educated group," says the other Beauxbaton student. He then grins, adding, "I am Lucus Pierea, a sixth year Silver Pine Beauxbaton student. I am Chaser on the Silver Pine Quidditch team, and a talented one too." A grin after that. "Well, I am taking Runic Studies and Healing and First Aid, which is the field I wish to go into when I graduate."

"Well I guess I am last," is said after nods go around as Lucus finishes speaking. "I am Vala Oolg, a seventh year Blue Drake tribe. I play Beater for my tribe's quidditch team, and while I am good I am nowhere near Krum. My courses include Arithmancy, Runic Studies, and Magical Craftsmanship." A grin, "it is on the later that I have hope to focus on when I graduate."

"So, with introductions out of the way," says Fleur, "what is it we should talk about."

Harry smiles at that, "Well, truthfully, I think we should simply talk." Which, upon Harry sitting back, is exactly what they do.

8888

As Harry was walking back to his dorm, he felt the mirror communicator in his pocket vibrate. Ducking into an unused classroom in a nearby corridor he took the mirror out, activating it. Soon enough the face of Remus could be seen coming from it.
"Hey Remus, what's up," Harry says as soon as the image stabilizes.

"Nothing bad," Remus says firmly, "but I received a request that needs your direct attention."

"Oh, really. Well go ahead, I'm in a classroom and have some time."

"Well it seems a citizen of one of your hundreds has declared his request to be tried by you, his lord."

Blinking at that, "Okay, I see. Well, now I can understand the point of that right, but our trials are
based on magic, so why would speaking to me change anything." A pause. "Also, what did he do to
be brought to trial."

"It wasn't a crime, its more property management rights and responsibility."

"Ah, okay. That makes a lot more sense, it's not a simple true false sort of statement. That we could
have solved with magic, as I know the Potters have no issues with truth serums and mind analysis
abilities."

Nodding. "Exactly. So, it's a bit more complicated than that and he would like you to look over it
and give a ruling."

"As is his right to ask and my right to give. Hmm." Harry says as the starts thinking about it. "Okay,
well I obviously can't do it during the school year, so he will have to wait till the summer. Please
have a team gather all appropriate information for me to read."

"Understood and will do," A pause. "I do know he put a note saying he doesn't want to make you
feel rushed and that as he knows you are school he doesn't want it immediately. That said he was
firm in his request that you look it over."

"I will honor that request, though I do want every effort to make sure the people know they should
be happy to go through my normal court system." Harry then pauses as he sees Remus make some
notes with a half smile. Then Harry says, "So, since we are talking, how are things with you."

Which was the direction the conversation went for the next ten minutes before both realized that they
had other obligations and ended the call.

8888

It was near dinner time and Harry is still in the meeting held to share certain details of the tournament
to those leading and participating. Getting a bit-tired Harry simply says, "So what are your plans to
make sure that everyone can see the events of the tournament?"

"That is private information, Mr. Potter," says Crouch with a scowl on his face.

"Why would that be true?" Harry says with a tightness in his voice indicating he is holding back his
less than polite comments. "Especially, since I am not asking about the events but rather behind the
scenes organization." He then turns in such a way that to the others his dismissal of the man is quite
clear. Once that is done. He says to the others, "If you are fast with the call, you could probably
catch the organizers of the World Cup before they depart and utilize the magical items they gathered
to project images of the event."

"If that was done Headmistress," says Fleur, "even those at Beauxbatons could get to watch us
perform."

"Plus, it increases the scope of people watching us, which could come in handy," says Krum with a
As the three Heads plus Sirius seem to be nodding in approval at the idea. Crouch throws his hands up in the air before storming out. As he does that Madam Maxime says, to Harry, "Pardon me, but may I ask what your problem with Mr. Crouch is."

Harry nods at that before saying. "His callous disregard of the law at the end of the last war led to numerous miscarriages of justice. Including the one which led to my godfather spending twelve years in Azkaban without even the appearance of a trial."

As eyes turn towards Sirius he gives a little wave and says, "That godfather by the way is me." He then shrugs. "I told Harry to let bygones be bygones, but he refuses." This is followed by a fierce grin. "And thus, the current feud between House Potter and House Crouch."

"I see," says Maxime, "so what does this mean for the tournament?"

As they are clearly looking toward him, Harry shrugs and says, "Nothing really except for scenes like this where I basically ignore him, and he tries to show his non-existent superiority over me." A pause. "From a judging and organization standpoint, Sirius is present as the representative of the Hogwarts School Board to make sure he doesn't try anything against me."

"Do you think he would?" This is asked by Cedric with surprise in his voice.

Another shrug from Harry, "Who knows but considering the fact he refuses to even acknowledge what he did to many people, I won't be taking any chances." A pause. "That said, and with all due respect, I didn't bring up the point I did to besmirch him. I really think it would be useful if we could expand on the numbers of people who were able to watch the tournament."

This gets numerous nods of agreement as the meeting continues for another ten minutes before ending so everyone can head to dinner.

8888

"Hey Sirius," Harry says as he walks his godfather to the apparition point. "have you noticed anything new with Professor Snape?"

A widening of the eyes is the immediate response before Sirius' features smooth over. "No, not at all, why you ask?"

Harry stops, and chuckles, before saying, "Really Sirius, are you seriously going to play the innocent game. What happened?"

"Nothing really, I swear." A pause as the two stared at each other, Sirius suddenly laughs. "Okay, okay, stop it, I see what you are doing with your eyes." He then shrugs. "It's not my secret to tell. So, all I will say is that he has asked to borrow a copy of a particular book that the Marauders wrote when we were at school."

Harry's eyes widen, "Really?" Sirius nods in response which leads to Harry smiling. "Brilliant! Good for him." A pause and tilt of the head. "Does he know about me?"

"No," firm, no question. "Though even if he did you can believe he would keep it secret." A pause, "What made you curious?"

"He is aware of Isis' moods in a way that only one who spoke to her could know."
"Oh wow, nifty." A pause. "Are you going to say anything?"

"No, at least not now. What nobody but him knows can't be used against him."

Sirius simply nods before moving to hug Harry right before using his portkey to head to Potter Manor.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
First Task - Fire Dueling

Chapter Notes

I hope you enjoy the first task of the tournament as I had a lot of fun writing it. :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

First Task - Fire Dueling

Date: Fourth Year, Mid November

As Harry stretches for their morning run he says with a chuckle, "I can't believe we are actually still going to run today."

Laughing as well. Cedric says, "Well it's not Sunday!" He then pauses as he grins. "Plus, you can't believe it. You were the one to decide we still needed to run."

"You can't prove that," Harry says in a posh tone while shaking his hand in dismissal.

As the two grinned in amusement at that they heard, "Do you mind us joining you both?"
Which sees both wizards turning slightly and seeing, to their shock, Viktor (who was the one to speak), Fleur, Vala, and Lucus all wearing jogging clothing.

As Harry shakes his head Cedric says, "No, not at all. So, you all run?"

"I do," says Viktor, "it aids me in quidditch."

"I do as well," comments Lucus, "as I find it extremely fun."

"It relaxes me," says Vala with a soft grin. "I run and the world fades away."

As the group looks toward Fleur she gives a soft shrug. "I do it when I must, but I don't play sports and so it's not fun for me." A pause. "But considering our dueling later. I think starting off today with a stretch and run is necessary."

Firm nods of agreement come from the rest.

"On that I agree," Harry says with a nod. "So, lets start so we can finish."

Which gets some laughter as the run continues.

8888

"Well look who it is, its Harry Potter!" Says Philip Cole upon stepping foot into the entry way of Hogwarts.

Upon hearing his name, Harry stops and turns, only to grin widely as he sees his old team mate from muggle school. Moving up to his fellow fourth year, he reaches over to shake his hand. "Hey man, hows it going?" He then gestures. "Welcome to Hogwarts!"
"It's going great Harry, and thanks, it's been pretty cool so far." Philip then stops and grins before gesturing to his adopted father, "Let me introduce you to my father, Sebastian Jones, Third Lord Minister of the ICW."

Reaching over to shake the man's hand, "Hello Lord Sebastian, it is nice to meet the man that Philip here talks so nicely about."

After letting go of Harry's hand Sebastian says, "It's nice to finally meet the wizard who my son talks quite a bit about." He then pauses, gives it a thought then says, "As well as the wizard who has already turned our world upside down even before he graduates Hogwarts."

Shocked and surprised, but also pleased, Harry grins at that. Though before he can say anything they hear a bark of laughter and turn to see Sirius and Remus coming by.

After giving Sirius and Remus a grin Harry turns back to Philip and Sebastian and say, "The two wizards coming our way are Sirius Black and Remus Lupin, my High Chancellor and High Seneschal respectively." A pause. "They are also the closest thing I have to a parental unit in the world." A slight grin.

As soon as all the standard greetings occurred. Sirius comments, "You know Harry you have some free time, what do you say we join you and give Philip and Sebastian for a tour of Hogwarts."

Seeing the excited look that comes on Philip's face Harry grins and nods, "Sure, come on, let’s do it."

Which is what they do, tour Hogwarts.

8888

"Surprise!" Charlie says upon coming up to where Harry is standing watching a huge crowd of people arrive at Hogwarts.

Blinking in response. Harry then grins widely, "Charlie, you made it. Wonderful!"

A chuckle as the two reaches over to each other for a hug.

After a moment Charlie pulls back slightly and says, "Of course, I made it. How could you think otherwise?" With his arms still wrapped around his friend and more he says, "So how do you feel?"

After giving a small smile Harry says, "I'm good." A pause and slight chuckle. "It's just good that I am comfortable in the public spotlight."

"Considering how long you have been playing sports, that makes a lot of sense." A pause, "Didn't you tell me about the ten thousand plus crowd football game you once played?"

A nod and then with some sarcasm he says, "Oh yeah, that was fun." Then a pause. "But yeah now, well, now its easy." A small clearing of his throat to change the topic. "So, are you in the private box Sirius was able to claim?"

"Of course." A grin. "As are my parents and the Tonks, and of course Remus, whose name is on the box."

A chuckle at the last part. "That's great, I'm glad they get such a good view of the game."

A nod then a grin, "Bill might be joining us as well, depending on the visibility given to him by his
assigned seat." A pause, "Which I meant to say, its really great that the students from all three schools get automatic seat assignments."

A wide grin. "I know. You have Sirius to thank for that." A pause, "Well Sirius and myself actually, for we both fought to make sure that the students got to enjoy it."

Before Charlie could say anything the voice of Ginny washed over them. "If you come with me, I can show you both the cafe street and the gift street. Which, despite the name, are in fact tents we set up this morning."

To the amazement of both, Harry and Charlie soon after Ginny came into view surrounded by almost twenty lanyard wearing guests coming to watch the tournament.

As she walks pass them she looks up to meet Harry's eyes in question, which is answered by a simple nod. "Well folks, let's stop here for a moment as I want to introduce you to two honored Lords of Albion. First is Lord Charlie Sidus, who is my brother so be nice," she then grins to their laughter. "But he has the honor of being a Dragon Keeper in Romania. The second, and yes, I see that some of you recognize him, is Lord Harry Potter. You know him as both the Boy Who Lived and one of the two Hogwarts Champions." A pause as the chatter starts coming over the group. With a slight raise of her hand Ginny says, "Now we may only occupy a few minutes of there time, so I am allowing one question each."

After being picked, a young man says, "Lord Sidus, what is it like being a Dragon Keeper?"

With a grin, and a slight elbow into Harry's side, Charlie says, "I'm more famous, they asked me first." The group chuckle in good amusement before he says, "Honestly amazing. Dragons are one of the oldest and most magical species we know and to work with them every day is a dream come true." A pause. "For the record if any of you are in Romania, or just want to take a small mini-vacation there, the Sanctuary offers small tour packages."

There are some murmurings at that before a young lady is picked and says, "Lord Potter, I heard rumors that you didn't even put your name into the running?"

A wide grin. "You know that is the first time someone actually asked me that, so I approve of you, Miss?"

"Rebecca, sir, Rebecca Grayson."

"Well, Miss Grayson that is quite true. The requirements of the tournament required the physical age of at least 16, of which I am not." A small hand raise as he knows what is going to be asked next. "But before you ask, no, I do not know who put my name in the running. That said, you can all believe that once I do find out who I will put all the resources of my Great Houses against said person." A small smile. "With Ginny's approval, I am going to let another question be asked, as I liked the first one so much."

A bit of laughter and then a young boy is chosen and asks, "Lord Potter, what do you think of the tournament?"

"It's going to be fun, for all that its also going to be dangerous. I am just glad that my partner for it is Cedric, as him and I have studied and practiced together for years now."

"Thank you, Harry," Ginny then says with a nod in his direction. She then smiles to the group she is escorting. "Okay folks, if you would continue following me we can continue our short tour."

After they head off, Harry and Charlie turn to each other and laugh.
"Well, that was fun," Charlie says in good humor.

"It was, wasn't it." Harry says good naturedly. He then gestures towards the school. "Oh, we should head inside as I know there are certain people who would be happy to see you again."

Which they do, and which sees Charlie meeting the Gryffindor quidditch team.

Walking into the tent set up as a meeting room. Harry feels the eyes of everyone on him. He chooses to ignore them as he sits down next to Cedric, who gives him a small sideways grin.

Clearing his throat Crouch Snr says in his most sarcastic tone, "Thank you for joining us Mr. Potter."

"That's Lord Potter to you Mr. Crouch," Harry says immediately. He then gives a slight bow to the three Headmasters, Sirius, and Ludo Bagman. "I would have come sooner but there was an important issue that I had to handle."

Having learned how busy Lord Potter was, Headmistress Maxime simply says, "Do not concern yourself unduly Lord Potter."

"Especially as it's been only five minutes since we all arrived." finishes Headmaster Karkaroff.

Harry gives both professors a small grateful smile, one which they nod in acceptance.

Headmaster Dumbledore, with a twinkle in his eye, "Well then since we all are here we can begin discussing the matter at hand."

After getting a small nod. Sirius says, "Which is on the matter of the Weighing of the Wands."

At this Harry speaks up, "Pardon me all, but I have an issue with this."

"Though we all know you do not wish to be here, please don't make the matter more difficult than it has to be," says Headmaster Karkaroff in response.

Giving the man an accepting nod. Harry says, "While I understand where you are coming from, the fact is I must object to one point." He then looks around the room. "Due to my status as a Lord and Head of House my wand operates as a House Artifact." Seeing both raised eyebrows in question and some dawning looks he chooses to explain. "Now I have no issue with Lord Ollivander weighing my wand. But what I do have issue with is him sharing said information with others."

"Lord Potter," says Maxime, "do you include us judges as part of the other?"

"For the most part no, though I do object to Lord Crouch's presence due to the official feud between my House and his."

Crouch glares at that, an act which everyone chooses to ignore, much to Harry's quiet amusement.

"Right then," Ludo Bagman then says, "the matter seems simple to me - we swear an oath of secrecy and ward the room against others."

"I support that measure," comments Karkaroff. "Especially since the last matter we need is to extend this issue any longer."

Headmaster Dumbledore nods at that before saying, "Well before that let us go over the protocols for the first task."
Which they do, all eighty-three of them. What makes this meeting even worse was that none of the rules were new, all of them were the same standards that all had learned during their dueling club activities.

Once the reading of the rules was finished, Crouch walks out and Ollivander walks in. As he did so he says, "So you are the one causes all sorts of changes in the weighing of the wands."

Giving Ollivander a look of amusement. Harry says, "Oh don't act surprised, you knew I was going to do this. I am a sitting Lord and Head after all."

A wide grin and laugh, "Too true, too true." A pause as he takes out his wand. "Right, is everyone here accepted by you." At Harry's nod, he then says, "So let us not delay, let us make the oaths."

Which they do.

This includes the five other champions, which Harry was talked into allowing to stay by Sirius Black. Which, as a note, was to their great amusement. It also included the six judges, with Percy taking the place of Crouch, who as Harry had said was not allowed in. But it did not include either Harry or Sirius - as it was the former's secret to tell and the later was already bound to secrecy via his position as High Chancellor.

When the magic of the oaths faded Ollivander spoke up again, "Please declare your Wands Lord Potter."

"Of course," Harry says as he reaches into his wand holster and takes out his holly wand and place sit on the table. As the others look on in confusion on why all the fuss. Harry gives them a grin before reaching into his cloak and takes out a second wand, which he puts on the table. Then, as the others look on in shock, he removes an armband which to the other's eyes grows till it becomes a mighty staff. He then lifts his sleeves to reveal the small decorative serpent wrapped around it who hisses softly before crawling from his arm and onto the table.

After a moment of pause Harry clears his throat and says, "I so swear that these are all of my currently bonded foci."

"Your serpent is a focus, Lord Potter?" Karkaroff says confused.

A nod. "Yes, though one most accidental, which both Professor Flitwick and Professor Snape can attest." He then looks at the others and adds, "My possession of said foci are all permitted by the most ancient laws of Albion."

Headmistress Maxime then says, "A statement that none of us are questioning Lord Potter." She then turns towards the wand maker. "If you would please weigh the foci Lord Ollivander."

"Of course." he says before stepping forward towards the table. Giving Harry a look of interest, he says, "These are not mine."

"No, they are your son's Harmitage."

"I see, his is always an expert craft." He then reaches forward and grips the holly wand bound by phoenix feather, says his esoteric knowledge and nods.

Once that is done he picks up the second wand and says, "hmm, English Oak and dragon heartstring, what an interesting combination Lord Potter." Giving it a wave, he nods, "Balanced and contained,
well done."

Ollivander puts the wand down on the table and reaches for the staff. "What a splendid staff you have here. Its mixed wood construction allows for the mana stone on the top to be perfectly aligned towards pure magic."

The staff goes down and he holds out his hand for the serpent, and with a gesture to come close Loki slithers onto Ollivander's hand. "Hmm, though you are right to consider him a focus as far as the rules are concerned. I do not see him aiding you in the tasks."

"That is something I agree with Lord Ollivander." Is Harry's response.

After handing Loki directly to Harry, who puts him around his arm, Ollivander takes out his own wand and swishes it about. This leads to the formation of two parchments which Ollivander grabs. The first he hands to Harry and says, "This is all the information I collected secured for your eyes only." He then hands the other sheet to Dumbledore and says, "This is the official set for the tournament, you may release it to the public."

After both take the scrolls he claps his hand, gives a firm nod and says, "Right then, let in the reporters we have five other wands to weigh."

Which is what they do.

8888

The stadium of the Hexwizard Tournament was an oval shaped magical construction designed as a series of overlapping wizard spaces. The nature of this meant that whether it was a hundred people or a million (not that anyone expected that many, but still) the stadium always looked near capacity. In the center of the stadium, there was a smaller oval platform with crystal clear ribs along its side giving off intense magical energy, for those sensitive to such things. To one side there, lay a triangular protrusion which contained rows of seating in addition to the boxes of both the judges and champions.

On the day of the first task, there was nearly half a million people sitting about talking and chatting and getting ready for a fun day. Then a hush began to flow over the stadium as the seventy-piece orchestra began to play the official song of Albion, one created by High King Bruta many thousands of years before.

When they finished with that they began playing the official song of Durmstrang. Then Beauxbatons. Then finally Hogwarts.

Quiet then descended before the orchestra began playing the official theme song of the now Hexwizard Tournament. A song whose origins had more to do with the Magical Olympics then what the Triwizard Tournament had become over the last few centuries.

While the theme song was playing, the six judges and their seconds made their way out of the back tent and down the field towards the judge's box.

As soon as they got a third way down the field three groups of students bearing flags came from the back. Among the Hogwarts students were individuals from all seven years and all four houses, including many of those in both Harry's and Cedric's year groups. They were twirling flags and waving hands as they walked. Once they got to the end, they went through another series of doors, and then found their seats.

Then the six champions came out, linked arm to arm as a show of camaraderie and fellowship. As
soon as they got halfway through the field, the groups separated and began waving towards the crowd. At the end of the field, they stopped walking before taking seats in a booth near the judge’s station.

Once everyone was situated, the six judges stand up and walk to a small podium. It is Ludo Bagman, the Head of the Department of Magical Games and Sports, who speaks first. "Ladies and gentlemen of Albion, it is with great pleasure that I declare the return of the Hexwizard Tournament."

A vast amount of applause erupts at that declaration.

When matters calm down he continues, "As you know it was no easy task bringing the tournament back, which is why we decided to alter the form slightly. The first change is that there will be two champions from each school and that they will be working together. The second change is that there are going to be four tasks, that's right FOUR!"

A great rush of applause comes out of that statement.

Once again, he waits before saying, "To explain the tasks themselves is Lord Sirius Black."

Applause and comments break out as Ludo steps back and Sirius moves forward.

Holding out his arms for calm Sirius grins at the crowd for a moment. "Well hello, their folks. So, I am stepping out here to quickly explain what the four tasks are going to be. Now you all know the first one, elementally aligned to fire, and based on the arts of the duel. The second task is in January, is of the air element, and is what we are calling archery golf." A small grin at that, though he does not explain further. "Then the water task will be in March, what we are calling the flooded dungeon." A pause, "and finally in May there is the earth task, what we are calling the Forbidden Maze! Very spooky, I know." He lets the wave of laughter flow over the crowd before saying, "as the events come closer more information will be given out. First, to those competing so they can prepare and then to everyone else."

With that he steps back to take his spot next to the other judges.

At this point Barty Crouch comes forward and says, with a wide flourish, "Let the games begin!"

Music plays as the crowd goes wild at the announcement.

8888

"Well it looks like its time to start," Cedric says with a nod towards the announcer who is declaring the first duel.

Hogwarts versus Durmstrang.

"Good luck." Fleur says with a soft smile towards the four participating. They all respond with small smiles and nods of their own. That's all they get to do before the attendant at the door of their box gestures for the four champions to head out for the walk to the ring.

Once they are gone, the same attendant says, "Ms. Delacour, Mr. Pierea you are both welcome to head towards your seats in order to watch the duel."

The two simply nod at that before getting up and making there way to their illusion into invisibility seats.

8888
While the four duelists are making their way to the platform Harry says, "As this is the first competition let us make it a memorable one."

"It's a competition." Vala says.

"Harry isn't saying for any of us to blow it, but rather we should make it theatrical."

"I'm for that." Viktor states. "Us making it entertaining won't harm anyone."

Harry nods then says, "Let's make a gentle agreement, none will try a finishing move till at least ten minutes."

"I say fifteen." Vala interjects.

Seeing nods Harry smiles, "fifteen it is then." A pause, "Well good luck and as we are putting on a performance, break a leg."

Which gets some amused grins. Which fade as their names are announced and they head onto the platform - a platform which is designed to look like a rocky platform in a burning lava filled volcanic crater.

It was awe-inspiring and a little bit daunting - a feeling that the others all shared if the side looks meant what Harry though they did.

Then it occurs, it begins. The referees declared the start of the duel.

All four magicals give each other a nod and a slight bow before jumping away to get out of dodge.

With not a moment to lose for the spells begin firing out of the four wands.

Beams of blue, red, orange, and white representing spells to transfigure, freeze, burn, and move.

Without much speaking the champions coordinate with their partners. A spell is cast, deflected by the other, striking a target.

Move forward, cast, dodge, move back, scamper around a corner.

At one-point, Harry jumps from the main platform and onto a small one floating above the 'lava' of the platform.

As that occurred Krum used a small hover charm to jump from beam to beam in order to get the high ground.

With the distraction given Cedric waves his wand about in a complicated pattern causing an illusion of a dragon to appear.

Which Harry follows up with a blast of fireball, which is intercepted at the last moment by a shield produced by Vala.

Cedric uses the need to concentrate to strike Vala with a movement hex which has the effect of sending her flying from the platform and into the lava.

Viktor then jumps from his high ground and casts a spell of fire against Cedric, who while able to deflect it is just too slow to stop it from targeting the volcano behind him - causing it to erupt and sending him high into the air.
Giving a mighty roar, Harry then jumps out of the cliff he is hiding in and casts a mighty spell of shadow.

Grinning Viktor flies from his own and blasts out a beam of pure white light.

The darkness hits the light and both wizards go flying backward.

The match is called.

All four magicals appear in a blast of magic on the stage. They bow to each other then shake each other's hands. They then turn to do the same to the audience who stands up and gives a mighty roar of yells and claps.

The four all head out of the stage to get cleaned up and get some water. Five minutes to the next duel.

8888

The Durmstrang and Beauxbatons duel is already a bit of the way in when Harry walks into their hidden seating area. Plopping down next to Cedric he says, "So how is it so far?"

"Interesting," is Cedric's amused answer. He then turns to give Harry a slight smile before saying. "So, Viktor seems to know more spells then Fleur, but she is more precise in her casting. Lucus though has a lot of spells while Vala is focused when she casts."

"Hmm. So, they are balanced, how interesting." A pause then. "Ooh, now that's interesting."

Which was said in reference to the fake out that Lucus just pulled on Viktor.

"Also, a bit unexpected, I didn't think that Lucus had that in him."

The two grinned at each other before turning back towards the duel.

8888

As Harry and Cedric are walking towards the platform the later leans towards Harry and says, "We should go the flashy and intimidating route."

A nod and grin, "Sounds great. Let's do this!"

Which is the last words the two shares before heading out onto the platform.

A platform which shifted and changed moments later till it took the appearance of a bunch of islands floating in an eternal sea of clouds.

Chuckling slightly at the scene before his eyes Harry then gave a nod and a bow to both Fleur and Lucus. Then after a quick glance at Cedric, and the blast of starting sound, Harry cast a spell mimicking a tornado.

Which gave Cedric enough time to jump to a higher island while Harry moved to a lower one.

A spell, a dodge, a blast, a move, a strike, a spell, an illusion, an attack, something to defense - thus is the method of the battle.

As they fought all four magicals choose mostly spells with maximum display to them, even if it required a bit of a spell boost.
Then the moment came. Cedric sent out a massive spell at the island that Fleur was on, tearing it asunder and launching her out of the field.

The nature of the spell Cedric used also had the side effect of disrupting his own island, which caused him to fall into the void. But, as he fell, he saw where Lucus was and used his last moments in the duel to notify Harry of it.

Which is how Harry finds Lucus and uses a fire spell to blast him dead, at least that is what would have happened if it wasn't a ritualized duel.

Using a bit of spell, Harry makes his way to where Lucus had 'fallen', making it to him right after the dual was called and helping him up.

The two then head to the center of the now flat platform and a waiting Cedric and Fleur. All four bows to each other, shake hands, then turn and bow at the crowd. With that done they make there way out of the platform and into the back sections of the stadium.

8888

"Lord Potter, Lord Diggory, are you open to an interview," is what the two wizards hear upon leaving the duel platform and heading into 'reporter territory.'

With a gesture towards Harry, Cedric says, "I am if he is."

Giving Cedric a nod Harry then says, "Mr. Owens hello, and of course I have time for you." A pause. "Is Ms. Carpenter here as well?"

"Of course, though she is currently interviewing those from Beauxbatons." Sebastian Owens says with a grin on his face as the three head into the small interview room and take a seat.

"Oh, well pardon me for that." Harry says with a grin.

Upon seeing the grin on Cedric's face, the two turns towards him and give a curious look. He shrugs and says, "Pardon me, I just didn't realize you two knew each other that well." A pause. "I mean I knew you knew each other, I just didn't realize how much you did."

Harry gives Cedric a grin, "You do realize I would never have accepted an interview last year if it wasn't with someone I had at least a passing connection with." He then gestures towards Owens, "So we have a few minutes before the show starts, so ask your questions?"

A grin. "First question, to both of you, what are your thoughts on the tournament so far?"

Cedric answers first. "I found the dueling fun, a great way to put into practice all that I had learned in the dueling club."

"I found competing against those taught dueling styles far different from those I have faced was quite fun."

"What do you think about the changes to the tournament?"

"Oh, I love them, I really do." Harry says with emotion, which will be noted in the interview.

Cedric nods at that before adding, "Making it two champions per school has made it more fun then distressing. Which I approve." A pause. "It's the same with adding a forth task and reworking the others."
Giving Owens a grin that promises a scoop of a lifetime. Harry says, "Especially considering that the original first task was going to involve us facing dragons. Dragons!"

Which gets widened eyes. Owens then clears his throat before saying, "Off the record Harry, are you sure you want me to report that?"

"Of course. I didn't learn it as a champion but rather as a Head of a Great House."

"Right." A massive grin. "Thanks for that, the boss is going to love it!"

A laugh, "I know." A tilt of the head, "So any more questions?"

"Ah, just some of the standard ones. But they can wait a bit." A pause, "Especially, as I know you need to be off."

"Thanks Owens, you're the best." Harry says before gesturing towards Cedric for them to head out. Which he does, though not without a laugh at how pushy Harry is - not that he minds, as he knows Harry is acting in a carefully preplanned manner.

8888

Upon stepping out of the champion box and into the secret passageways inside the stadium. Harry blinks upon seeing Sirius doing the same thing.

Sirius who speaks first, "Hey pup, you heading to the Potter Box?"

"You know it!" Harry says with a smile as he moves into step with his godfather. "Considering the intermission show, I figured it would be better to see it with loved ones then with my competition."

Nod. Nod. "Did you leave Cedric behind?"

"Nah, he is doing the same thing, heading to his family box."

A few tunnels later saw them opening the door and heading into the private box. "Hey cub," Remus says the moment those inside see the two. "Great job on the tasks so far!"

"Though Crouch is clearly playing favorites," Charlie says with a bit of anger in his voice.

Which gets a smooth laugh out of Harry. "Don't worry, he's meaningless to me."

Before anything else could be said some music begins playing to indicate that the intermission show is beginning. A show which involves 'Foundation and Chaos', a magical band famous Albion wide, playing several of their hit songs.

8888

"Of course, they choose a city design for our complete dual," Harry comments softly as the six gathers in a circle for the standard greetings.

"It's a perfect location for this." comments Lucus.

"I wonder if there are insides as well as the exteriors," Viktor says.

They are slowly bowing which gives Cedric enough time to say, "I hope so, it would be fun."

All six grins at each other, then comes the whistle of a start, and all six rapidly make there way from
the starting point and onto the surrounding towers of the city platform.

While jumping between balconies and casting spells at those from the other schools he encountered, Harry found himself amused. An emotion purely based on the thought of how this system is quite perfect for combat training.

His musings stopped the exact second his senses showed an incoming spell and he dodged out of its way. Without pause, he then sent out two of his own spells, one forward of the caster and one behind.

Hearing a grunt, Harry looks over and sees Vala fall, knocking her from the fight.

Murmuring "Sorry," Harry then climbs up to nearby ledge before jumping to another tower. All the way he is casting spells - highly visible and elementally aligned spells.

While running about dodging and casting spells, Harry found himself having fun, and so he chooses to let it go on for as long as it could. But eventually all things had to come to an end.

Though an end with a massive thunderous applause from the watching crowd.

8888

There is quiet as all six champions plot themselves down onto the seats of their box.

"Wow," Viktor says with his eyes closed, "that was the most fun and exhausting duel I have ever participated in."

There is a small chuckle from all around. Upon it fading away, Fleur says, "I don't think they thought it was going to take as long as it did."

"So, unofficially, I can't be the only person who choose not to take certain actions due to how much fun I was having."

"You are not alone" says Vala. She then grins, "Which was why I threw the color changing spell, it was strong enough to get points but soft enough to not stop the duel."

"Wicked," Cedric says with a laugh.

Though he opens his mouth to say something else he soon closes it as soft music starts to play, music that is indicating an intermission event.

Which saw the Seamonte Players performing over fifteen minutes a set of musical numbers from a muggle play about felines. It was such an odd choice for the tournament that the people in the audience couldn't help but find enjoyment in it, especially the one song about a magical cat.

8888

Upon walking into their area Sirius says, "Hey all, can I have your attention?" A pause as he waits for everyone to turn towards him. "Right, so the next set of duals are a bit different - you will each be facing a horde of 'minions' that you need to defeat. Because you are not facing each other all three duels are going to occur at the same time in separate platforms."

At this point Ludo comes in, claps his hands, and says, "Right then, please get ready champions as the duels will be starting momentarily."

Ludo then heads out, Sirius shrugs, and goes to follow. As he does so he pats Harry on the shoulder
and says, "I am totally not telling you to kick ass pup, as that would be wrong of me!" He then gives everyone a grin and walks out.

There is a moment of pause and then the others laugh at that.

As they begin heading out Viktor pats Harry's shoulders and says, "Your godfather, he is something."

A chuckle, "Yeah, he is something all right." Then a grin.

8888

As soon as they are on their assigned platform and ready to go Cedric says, "You know if these are 'minions' then we probably can talk as we fight."

Nod. Nod. Then, "They also aren't alive and so we can be as deadly as we want to be."

"Wicked." Is Cedric's immediate response.

It's at that point the judges activate the magic of the platform, which leads to Harry and Cedric appearing at the entrance of a cave complex.

With a laugh Harry says, "Oh, so they are going down the monster cave route. Nifty."

The two grinned at each other, wands come out, and they enter the cave. Only to be immediately set upon by some hybrid preying mantis slash arachnid looking creature.

Which spits acid.

And can cling to the roof of the cave.

Needless to say, the battles started almost immediately.

But, and this is the fun element to it, this is a duel and so the champions must keep to dueling rules, even as the monsters don't.

Now while some might have considered this to be annoying, the six champions thought otherwise - for them it was an intriguing way of going about the task.

It was 25 minutes later and the last of the minions were taken out by the two Hogwarts champions. Which led to the image of their platform shimmering as the illusion fell.

To their shock, but happiness, they learned they were the first to get through the duel. Which led them to bowing before heading to their private box to watch the other two duels going on.

8888

"Why aren't you watching the performance piece?" Luna says upon walking into the small cafeteria in the back halls of the stadium.

Giving his friend, who totally should not be back here, a big smile Harry says, "Well you know why."

"Why yes, you own the charity that the troupe is performing about." A pause then. "But I figured it would be perfect to start with that."
A chuckle, "Of course you did." He then gestures for Luna to come closer. "Come, eat, how are things?"

"Good. I'm staying around Neville and the covenant as there are too many people around effected by shadowy energies."

A nod, "Anything we should be concerned about?"

"Not really no, though Sirius does know about the few questionable people, and he told Madam Bones."

A wide grin. "Thanks."

Luna smiles at that before launching into a conversation about some of the mystical animals she is studying. Her storytelling works to both distract and relax him, which is exactly what he needed at this moment.

8888

As they stood ready in their platforms, the six champions couldn't help but think on how similar this duel is to the other special unit one.

But then the judges activated the illusions and Harry and Cedric found themselves in a forest. They then had but a second to take in the environment before they heard a mighty roar - one reminiscent of a dragon.

"Of course, they still found a way to bring dragons into the fight." Harry says a bit amused at the sound.

Thankfully, Harry knew, that unlike their original plan this dragon was a magical combat illusion rather than an actual dragon.

Giving Cedric a grin Harry then says, "Wicked, I always wanted to fight a fake dragon!"

"Of course, you did," Cedric comments right as the two need to dodge some incoming fire.

"Well then, let's do this!" Harry says with a grin.

What the two hadn't been thinking of is the fact that their comments are being broadcast to the watchers in the stands. Which means everyone saw Harry's enthusiasm and amusement and the fact that this wasn't scaring them.

Which the other two school contestants couldn't really say.

Well, that is not entirely true - for Krum also found the whole idea fun as well.

As a whole, Harry and Cedric's battle against the dragon was give and take, fight and retreat, dodge and attack. They moved about everywhere, the whole forest became their domain, even as the dragon mostly remained above it.

Harry and Cedric's duel took fifty minutes, five minutes more than Krum and Vala's forty-five-minute-long duel, and fifteen minutes less than Fleur and Lucus' hour and five-minute duel.

8888

"Hey Hermione," Harry says with a smile upon seeing his friend in line at one of the stadium cafes.
"Oh, hey Harry," is the immediate response, "how are things going?"

Giving a small wave to those gathered around, which thankfully was limited to only Hogwarts students he says, "Oh not bad. Tired a bit after the recent series of duels, but you know how that is." A wide grin. "So, anything interesting going on with you?"

"Oh plenty." Is what she says with a grin. She then stops to speak to the house elf behind the counter, who was more than happy to give her even more food then she asked for. After thanking said house elf she exits the line and begins heading towards the tables of their friends. Without pause Harry steps next to her which leads to her saying, "I have been talking to a number of those visiting from other schools and hundreds and have learned so much." She then grins. "In fact, I plan on presenting to the covenant a report of my findings."

A chuckle, "Oh really well that's nifty. So, anything you want to share beforehand?"

"Not really, at least not till I write up my notes." A pause, then a grin. "Well okay I can say this; the other schools have systems in place for better support staff. Which is something we might need with the ever-increasing number of students."

"Wicked," Harry says with a nod. "Well I look forward to reading the report." As he says this they get to the table occupied by some of his friends which leads to some light bantering, at least until Harry must head back to the champion's box.

8888

Whomever thought that having them duel another school and minions in a tundra environment needed to be shot is the thought going through Harry's head as he dodged the spell while feeling the cold snow move over him.

Upon getting near to Cedric, Harry questions, "How are your warming spells?"

"Good, do you need me to cast it on you?"

"Yeah, as my version is a bit too vast for our needs right now."

"You should work on that!" Cedric says in amusement as he casts the spell.

There bit of banter fades as they get set upon by six white furred minotaur looking illusion creatures attempting to stop them.

A few dodges, and many spells later, the two gave each other a grin at the downed minions before they made there way to a different section of the platform.

The duel continued. With them running, hiding, jumping out, casting spells and using magic against both minion and champion.

While looking for Lucus after taking out Fleur, Harry comments softly to Cedric, "I'm so glad that it wasn't Durmstrang, for snow is there home."

Cedric smiles at that, which is when a bunch of minions came out of the ground at the same time as Lucus did.

Which led to an interesting three-way fight as Harry and Cedric began fighting both Lucus and minions, while said minions fought both and so did Lucus.
The ending of the fight came quite fast, Harry had just been hit by an enough of a blow to be
knocked down at the same time as Cedric cast a fire spell which led to a vast burn zone - one that
took out most minions knocked Lucus down.

"You know Harry after watching how Viktor and Vala duel; I think I have an interesting idea."
Cedric says as they watch the Beauxbatons slash Durmstrang slash horde of minions’ fight.

"Hmm, yeah, I have an idea as well. But you first, what are your thoughts."

"Well if we use the Redsea Protocol in combination with the Captain Twist I think we can distract
them a bit."

A wide grin, "Oh, that's good, very good, what a brilliant tactical design." He then grins, "You
studied Durmstrang while I was looking at Beauxbatons." A pause. "I think us using the Ring
Pattern at the same time as the Shock and Fear tactic and the Volume Ward."

Nod, nod, followed by a great big smile. "Those are great strategic modes for us. They won't know
what hit them."

The two then grin at each other before turning back towards the window to fully focus on the duel
occurring on the dueling platform.

Then came the final fight of the first task, a fight located in a tall grass covered plains. Which is
interesting for it not being an environment that either Hogwarts or Durmstrang focus their dueling in.

Which is exactly why the judges choose this particular site.

Though both teams fought with the same focus as they did on the other, they did so with a push to
ending it as quick as possible.

Which didn't really surprise anyone in the audience, for tiredness even set in upon them.

Which is why both sides began taking a bit foolhardier actions, ones which they would never have
done in an earlier duel.

Which does really unbalance either team since both are doing it.

Move forward. Stick head up and look. Fire spells at any enemies found. Duck down and move to a
different location, repeat.

To counterbalance the repetition, all champions choose to use the most flamboyant spells they could
think of - which led to cheering and applause among the crowd.

But then the end came, with Harry making a small mistake and Vala taking advantage of it. Though
not before Cedric managed to hit both her and Viktor with a spell taking both out.

Of course, in a bit of fun unlock, a minion had struck and hit Cedric as well which meant all four
champions were down out.

Which thus the duels of the first task ended.
Before reaching halfway towards the private box of the champions, Harry felt arms wrap around him. He would have tensed up if it wasn't for how he could immediately sense that it was Charlie.

"You did great Harry, simply great! It was so spectacular to watch"

A wide grin into the neck as he says, "Thanks Charlie, I'm happy to hear that."

A small clearing of a throat led to the two backing away, slowly and without worry on what others would say. As soon as they stepped away from each other Remus moved forward and took Harry in his own grip. "Oh Merlin, Harry, that was amazing to watch, though you scared me a few times cub."

Remus had only moved back a bit before they heard the sound of scampering feet and Ron's voice going, "OH MERLIN HARRY THAT WAS SO VERY AWESOME!!!"

Chuckling slightly at his friend Harry reached out and grabbed him in a full arm lock. "So, you liked it Ron?"

"Totally. It was wickedly sweet." Ron says. He then pauses before saying, "Oh, I was told by Percy to come fetch you, they are about to start announcing the final votes and want all the champions gathered around."

"Well great." He then smiles at Ron in thanks before gesturing towards those gathered around. "Well, let's all head there, as I'm pretty sure family and close friends of the other five champions are also gathered about."

Which to no one's surprise is the truth.

By the time that Harry made it to the platform and moved next to Cedric the judges began announcing the Hogwarts scores.

Ludo Bagman is first, "10"

"Really, even though our actions in the one duel wasn't the best?"

"I know and agree, it's intriguing."

Then Maxime, "9".

Which Dumbledore follows, "9."

"7," says Karkaroff in a way that clearly show his support of his own school.

Then Crouch, "6"

Which gets a bunch of side eyed looks at his low score, especially from Sirius who says, "9."

"Wow guys," Charlie says from next to Harry, "that means you two tied with Durmstrang."

"Which is fitting I think," Cedric says with a soft smile, "they did show themselves as being quite capable."

"I agree," Harry says with a nod, "there is no doubt that they have some skills."

"While it's great and all don't focus on being the good guys and focus on HOW AMAZING YOU TWO WERE!" Ron says with fierce determination, much to the amusement of everyone present.
This leads to Cedric and Harry turning to each other, smiling, taking each other in a hug, before slapping each other on the backs in congratulations on a job well done.

8888

"So, this is the covenant section you talk so much about," Charlie says upon being shown the area as soon as Harry was able to get away from everyone.

"Yep, so what do you think?"

"Its nicer in person that's for sure." Charlie says with a chuckle as they continue to walk about the rooms. As soon as they get into Harry's private office and they sit down he says, "So are Sirius and Remus joining us?"

A nod, "Yep, in a bit. Once Sirius finishes his official tasks."

A tilt of the head. "Is this what you want?"

Nod, nod. "Oh yes very much so, especially with how busy and overwhelming this day has been."

Charlie smiles at that before starting a completely random conversation on a completely adhoc subject. He figures he has some time to kill till Sirius and Remus arrive and they play some board games.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
Regular Days, Mindful Days

Date: Fourth Year, Late November

"So, during the weekly data update I got there was a report about the discovery of a long-lost tower in the Rose Tornado Hundred." Cedric said during the middle portion of their run.

Giving a slight grin at the randomness Harry says, "oh, really, was this a good find?"

"Yeah mostly," is Cedric's response. "It seems the site was lost two centuries ago in an earthquake."

"So, what brought it back to the surface?"

An outright laugh follows the question. "Now this is amusing - it seems the neighbors were casting a spell to dig a basement. Their spell reacted with the magic of the tower and brought it back to the surface."

Harry grins at that. "Wait, really, nifty. So, did the report indicate what was inside?"

Nod. Nod. "Its a treasure trove for the site was once home to the arch master Loren Sheridan." A pause. "Which was why the report being only preliminary."

"I can believe that." Harry then chuckles. "The Rosewood Tree Hundred in House Sage contains a tower of his as well."

A nod. "A lot of Houses have places of his."

"Which makes the fact that we only gained access to them after he disappeared in a rift quite interesting I have to say." Harry saying as the two turn a corner and begin slowing down for the last lap of the run.

8888

"So, Fred, George how did the marketing of items go for you during the first task?" Harry says as he comes up behind the twins as they head to lunch.

The twins both grin in response as Fred says, "Brilliant actually."

"Quite wicked in fact."

"We sold so many items."

"That our stock sold out."

"Didn’t you have almost a thousand items?" Harry asks curiously, a bit shocked.

The two nodded at that before Fred adds, "We didn't expect it."

"Not at all."
Harry simply looks at the two before grinning, "Wow, simply wow." A pause. "So, are you going to add more goods?"

Grins and nods. "Of course."

"We already recruited a few helpers to increase production."

Harry gives each a broad grin before saying in a softer voice, "if you need resources brought in without undue attention, don't hesitate to ask."

They simply nod at that, which was a perfect response for at that moment they headed into the great hall.

8888

"So, Sheriff Wolfe of Green Pearl Hundred just reported the details of a series of thefts going on in her hundred." Remus says as the start of this portion of the update.

"I see, so how long has the thefts been going on." A pause. "oh, and what has been stolen?"

"For the last few months, from her report it started after the Grand Circuit." A pause then Remus grins before saying, "As for the item, well, animals."

"What!" A shake of the head. "What do you mean animals have been stolen?"

"Exactly what I said," Remus says with a slight laugh. "Cows, pigs, chickens, horses, and both dogs and cats." A stop. "They have gone missing."

A blink, "right." Harry says in a tone that extends how long it takes for him to say the word. "Why didn't she report it earlier? And what does our High Constable think about it?"

Remus frowns at that. "Her reason is in the report, but I must admit to not believing it." A pause. "As for the investigation well, it only started a few days ago after I heard about it."

"Right." A pause as Harry thinks it over. "Well, I do consider this important so make sure our investigation is independent of any local issues."

"Understood." Remus says with a nod as he reaches down to write in his pad. He then looks up, "I will forward all that we currently know to you as well as update you as soon as I can."

Harry chuckles at that but makes a gesture for Remus to go on. Which is exactly what they did, for another hour.

8888

Leaning back into his seat during a lull in conversation Flitwick asks, "So how goes your mind palace and occlumency training?"

Harry grins. "It's going great actually. My current manifestation is a continent sized landscape sitting in an infinite sea. Those not accepted appear on a raft in said ocean." A fierce grin. "An ocean full of storms and lighting and overrun by monsters both real and imaginative."

The grin that comes on Flitwick's face would be quite at home on a goblin of Gringotts. "Perfect. Those not welcome in your mind and soul's scape should never find success."
Harry nods at that and then says, since he knows Flitwick is curious but probably won't ask, "That said, the continent itself is a much more civilized land, a place home to psyche forms of both humans and animals."

A blink at that, then slowly, "So wait, you made a world in your mind?"

Harry laughs, "I made a mimic of one yeah." He shrugs. "I didn't like how barren and lifeless the place looked with nature and towers but no people analogs."

"How developed are they?"

A shake of the head, "Don't worry Professor. I didn’t manifest sparks or spirits."

A tilt of the head. "But did you grant them access to your soul?"

"No, not yet." Harry says firmly without issue. "But I did think about it and I am looking into it."

A nod at that, "I'm quite glad you haven’t attempted it yet." Flitwick says firmly. "With all due respect, you are too young yet, physically that is. Your body and mind and soul are still growing, still expanding. If you did this now, it might boost you up in the short term but harm you in the future."

A nod. "I figured that actually." Harry then chuckles. "When I first read about the possibility, I was all 'ooh, this is great' but as I delved deeper." A shake of the head. "Well, let me just say nope on that for now."

Flitwick laughs as well, both amused but also thankful that Harry has such a good head on his shoulder. "Though the act of creating a world within sounds like a dream come true, the nature of it is not as simple as it first seems."

"I noticed." Harry says with a nod. He then pauses, "Though I will admit to you that there is every chance that in time I will in fact enact said rituals."

"I am not surprised by that." Flitwick says with a gentle smile. "Wizards of your caliber almost always see the potential in such magics." A slight pause. "In fact, I do believe there are a number of people who you know who have begun walking the path."

Harry's eyes widen at that, "Oh, really. Who?"

A wide grin, "Well the Headmaster is one," an extended pause, "and the Flamel’s are two."

Eyes widen and a big grin form. "Oh, wow, wicked." A big chuckle and a shake of the head. "Honestly, that makes a lot of sense." At Flitwick's curious look, he explains. "It’s no wonder about the Flamel’s as they do not mind not traveling the wider world when they have their own internal world to visit." Another chuckle. "Well, I will have to speak to them about it, especially before I even attempt the preliminary rituals."

A nod. "Definitely, you should definitely do that." A pause as Flitwick thinks on a slightly different but related topic. "So, I did mean to ask, have you run into any troubles that you wanted to talk about?"

Harry nods, "Yeah, a few though right now my main issue is changing where my House and Ring protections hook into my magic."

"Oh, what do you mean?"
"So, I began learning occlumency and the mind realm arts before I gained my Head Ring. Due to this reason, my protections wrap around my core rather than the Ring. But since gaining the Rings, there magics have sent out tendrils into my core."

"Isn't that good?"

"Yes, mostly." Harry says with a nod. "My only worry is that Ring protections can be lost and if they are then my defenses will be stripped."

"Which you wouldn't want." Flitwick says with a nod of agreement. "Hmm," he then says, "while I don't have an answer. I know someone who might." A pause. "Would you allow me to ask Professor Snape about it."

"Sure." Harry says with a nod, he does trust the Professor after all. A slight pause followed by, "But yeah, that is my main issue. I mean I do have some other questions but nothing as difficult."

Flitwick grins. "Well, since we are here and talking about it. Ask away." Which is exactly what Harry does, and what they talk about for the next half hour before they change the topic back to Charms.

8888

"So, I was sitting on the couch when Theo, Wayne, Oliver, and Seamus entered, moved to the display in the back, picked up the animal statue and left the room." Hermione was saying in the covenant section.

Harry, having walked into the room at the start of her sentence, stops and laughs. As soon as the group turn towards him he gives a sheepish smile before saying, "Sorry. It's just I had honestly wondered who had done the deed."

Which gets wide laughter and a nod from Hermione who, with a smile, adds, "Even more was the fact that they were being quite loud as they were doing the deed."

Even more laughter occurs, only ending when Theodore - who had just walked into the room - says, "That's because we weren't trying to hide anything from the rest of you."

Grins from all around as Ron says, "Oh, then I guess you won't mind telling us what you were doing."

"Of course not." Wayne says coming up next to Theodore. So, said he gives Theodore a small gesture which has him, both of them really, moving from where they are blocking the door.

Just in time too for in came Oliver and Seamus holding the animal statue between them. Without saying anything they brought said statue - which was a platform on which a lion, snake, badger, and raven were hanging about - back into the room and placed it on its dais.

With a big grin Seamus turned around and gestures widely, "Tah da!"

"Tah da, what?" Asks Draco curiously.

Wayne answers as he points to the pad now attached to the display. "This is a menu pad and it is directly linked to the Hogwarts kitchen."

"We asked the House Elves if they would be willing to link this display in the same way the tables in the great hall are linked to the kitchens." Oliver adds.
"After a bit of barter of course." Theodore begins saying then pausing before adding, "Oh Harry, you will want to talk to them. We used your name."

"Thanks, Theo." Harry says ironically but amusingly. So that, he thinks, was what the touch of House Elf magic meant. They were asking his acceptance on the deal the group gave them.

"No problem!" Theodore says in a dead pan voice, which is broken up by the glint of amusement in his eye. "We figured you wouldn't mind."

Seamus then speaks up, "Ah, yeah." A pause. "So anyway, they accepted and now we have unlimited access to food and drink while here in our covenant section."

A few moments later, as individual chatter and conversation broke out among the room Hermione asks. "Do you mind Theo using your name?"

Harry shakes his head, "Nah, not in this case." Giving her a smile, he adds, "The House Elves knew better to assume and so magically asked me about it."

"Did that mean you knew what they were doing?" Asks Draco who had moved closer.

"No. They didn't give me the who or the why, they just asked if I accepted the deal. Then they told me the deal."

"So, what was the deal?" Ron asks curiously.

"I used my authority as Head of three of the four Founder Houses to extend the size of their private space. Its much greater now." A pause before he says. "Though the details are confidential for their protection."

Neville, who was sitting nearby, snorts at that. As the others turn to him. He says, "What, I find it amusing that Theo used a so-called underhanded deal to make the lives of the House Elves better."

Grins come to their faces as they turn towards the display where Theo was explaining to others about how the menu pad works.

Harry just nods. "Says much about him, doesn't it?" With that he gets up in order to see the nature of the gift they were given.

8888

"So Filius spoke to me about a concern you are having. Please explain it in your own words." Snape says to Harry moments after the later sat down in front of the former's desk.

Giving a small smile Harry says, "I do not want my defenses to be based on foreign magics." A pause. "With the foreign being anything not based on the magic of my soul. So, I include both my House and Ring magics."

"Is that so." Snape drawls. "Why?"

"Foreign magic can be taken away, even that of House and Ring. My intrinsic soul-based magic cannot, not unless one simply destroys my very soul."

"I see." A pause. "Wouldn't this be paranoia?"

"Only for someone who was not me. I am very powerful Professor, which some might consider as a threat. So, if they could remove the protection that my foreign magic could provide me then they
would try."

"I see." Snape says again. There is a considerable pause as he looks at Harry. Then, as if he is deciding, he lifts up the end of his sleeves, revealing the faded but still noticeable dark mark. "Due to the taint of this foreign magic, I have worked hard to find a way to keep it from my defenses, at least as far as I can." Another pause. "So yes, I can teach you ways to separate any magic not of your soul."

"But still making use of it?"

"Of course. One must never ignore the benefits that a form of magic might give you, even if the source is from something you hate."

A nod, Harry understanding exactly what the Professor means. "Thank you, Professor Snape." His own pause. "So how did you want to do this?"

A nod of acceptance "As a first step, I will provide you with the journals I have written on the topic. I require secrecy from you - only Filius, your tutors, and the mutt and wolf are exempt from this secrecy, but no others."

"Of course, Professor, and I appreciate your exceptions." A smile then. "I also thank you for the opportunity to undertake this study."

A nod. "You are an exceptional person Mr. Potter and in that you have, and will make, many enemies over your life. If there are actions, I may take that might aid you in insuring your life is long, then I will do it." He then gives his patented glare before adding. "Now, enough with the heart to heart, before I hand you the journals there are some questions I want answered."

Harry nods at that, which is all the permission Snape needs to begin asking questions. Though some of them are invasive, all of them relate to the topic at hand and so Harry has no issue with them.

8888

"Call Charlie Weasley," Harry says one night near bedtime.


"Hey Harry, what's up?" Charlie says with a wide smile as soon as his illusion manifests.

"I know we just saw each other at the tournament but I received reports today that the local muggle wars have been coming close to your borders and I wanted to see how things are going."

Charlie nods in understanding. He then sighs sadly, "Well on the muggle side things are getting really dangerous. To the point that the local Albion Ministries are beginning to discuss what they need to do." A pause for the moment but then he says, "but honestly I'm safe, the dragons are safe, and the magical world is safe."

Harry nods at that. "While I am really glad to hear that, I am wondering if there is anything we can do."

"Not sure but I could use some of my contacts to see on how the discussions are going." A pause. "Do you have hundreds in this area?"

A nod, "Yes, five in the greater region. "Eastcrest Hundred, Hollowfield Hundred, Wayshore Hundred, and Old Landcliff Hundred."
Eyes widen at that, not so much in shock but in contemplation. Charlie then nods a few times before saying, "Right, then there is definitely actions you can undertake." At Harry's confused look he continues. "You wouldn't have been given information on these actions as they aren't really the standard things a hundred government would do."

"Gotcha. That makes a lot of sense actually." A pause. "Well I'm glad that it's not effecting you." A pause. "I mean it's sad that the muggles are having to deal with it."

As Harry seems to ramble, which is somewhat unlike him, Charlie grins softly before interrupting gently. "It's okay Harry, I get what you mean. It's okay if you put caring about my safety above others, in fact thank you." He then pauses before giving a cough and saying, "Oh, so you need to hear what one of the dragons did." Which leads the two into an hour-long conversation, one that only ends when Charlie needs to head to bed as he has an early day tomorrow.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
Yule Ball Dates

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Yule Ball Dates
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Date: Fourth Year, Early December

"Have you thought of what girl you're going to ask to the Yule Ball?" Hermione asks Harry as they sit in the Gryffindor common room.

"I don't really feel like asking a girl." Harry's respond.

She doesn't even blink as she then says, "So have you thought of what boy you want to ask." Then she laughs at the surprised look on Harry's face.

"Kind of, not sure thought. It might be too political."

Neville ago was sitting near says, "Please tell me it's not Draco. He has a big head already. He doesn't need be 'going to the Yule Ball with Harry Potter' on top of it."

Harry laughs at that while shaking his head no. "Not him no. Though I admit he can be pretty cute when he pouts."

Ron groans at that. "Thanks Harry, that's not a mental image of him I need."

Which gets some laughter from everyone gathered around.

Luna then speaks, in that sing song quality of hers, "It's Blaise, isn't it? He's a good fit. He likes you, respects you, but knows it won't become more than a bit of fun and good times. It's all he wants right now anyway."

It should be noted that the fact that Luna - a Ravenclaw - is in the Gryffindor common room doesn't even get a notice. It's been that way since the tail end of her first year. She showed up, got inside, and made herself comfortable without anyone noticing. Now it's just one of those things that happen.

Nodding and smiling at her, Harry says. "Yep, him. I think it would be a good fit as well. Politically it makes a statement, socially we get along well, and physically he is quite hot."

"I look forward to watching you two on the dance floor, it's going to be so hot." Hermione adds to the blushing of some of the guys.

"Hermione," Ron whines, "you can't just say that." Which gets some laughs.

"Why not," she teases, "you all know their dances are going to look like sex, and since we won't get to see the sex they have after, we need to take what we can get."

Harry laughs. Amused though also a bit mortified. "Really Hermione."

She just gives him a deadpan look, as if to say, 'you're no better.' She then ruins it by laughing.

"Anyway," Ron says clearly and blatantly changing the subject, "who are the rest of you going with."
Neville speaks up, "Well if it's not obvious already, Luna and I are going together."

Dean nods at that and adds, "I asked Lisa Turpin."

Seamus, from where he is sitting nearby, says, "Justin and I are going to the ball."

Harry says, "well we know who I'm going to ask, so Ron, Hermione how about you."

Hermione doesn't look like she is going to say anything, so Ron says simply. "I asked Daphne Greengrass. I realized we have some similar interests after spending three hours talking to her after last week's study session."

The rest blink but then give him a great big smile. Harry says into the congrats, "That's awesome Ron. I'm glad you got over you're whole 'Slytherin is evil' idea."

The rest laugh, while Ron, hoping to divert attention says, "Come on Hermione we all told, now you have to." He then gives her a smile.

She laughs then nods and says, "Victor Krum asked me, I said yes."

Silence then a lot of "congrats," "that's awesome," and "good for you," come from those around her. It brings a smile to her face knowing her friends find it brillian.

As the compliments fade away. Luna says, "You need to ask him Harry."

Nodding at her he goes, "I know now that I have decided I will. Before dinner tonight, I will call him aside and ask."

"Good," is all she says then changes the subject to dragons. Which just so happens to feature the talk of Charley Weasley which causes Harry to frown at her, then shake his head, smile and then enter the conversation fully.

8888

Stopping to the side of the entrance to the great hall Harry waits for Blaise to arrive. He does so, as if summoned, not even a minute later.

"Hello Harry," is his response as he sees him, "are you waiting here for someone."

Giving him a smile Harry nods. "You actually. I was hoping to catch you right before you went into the great hall for dinner."

Looking surprised but pleased Blaise nods and then gestures to his friends to go in and that he will only be a moment.

"What can I do for you?" Blaise says turning to look at Harry fully.

Rubbing the back of his head a bit nervously, Harry than says "I was wondering if you would accompany me to the Yule Ball."

Blinking at that, a tiny bit shocked, but immensely pleased, Blaise nods. "Of course, it would be my honor to attend with you." He then pauses while still smiling. "We will talk about it later, I think we should head to dinner." He then stops. "I do thank you for asking me Harry." He then gives Harry a thousand-megawatt smile which promises all sorts of fun times ahead. He then heads into the great hall.
Harry, a bit dazed, stays there for a moment before heading inside. Smiling at his friends. He says, "He said yes, quite happily in fact." They nod and congratulate him.

At the Slytherin table, Blaise is being asked what Potter wanted. "Oh, not much," he says slowly, "Harry just asked me to go to the Yule Ball."

Silence. Then the mutterings all begin at what that means.

Draco, who besides Blaise hangs out with Harry the most out of Slytherin, nods at it all. "It makes sense on all fronts. Congrats Blaise, have lots of fun both at and after the party." He then gives Blaise a grin.

One Blaise returns. He knows he will have lots of fun, even as its only for the evening. He is not the permanent sort, at least not yet, and he knows Harry knows that. Still, he thinks, it's going to be fun.

Which is exactly what it was when the Yule Ball came around. Fun. No strings attached fun.

Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
Chapter Notes

So this update is not just a day early but it will contain four sections rather than two. Why, no reason, just because I guess. Well, in some ways its because I just spent a bit of time organizing the beta read notes given to me by jfranklin21 and so I am a bit in the mood to do stuff with this story.

So I hope you enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Timely Moments

Date: Fourth Year, Mid December

"What's going on?" Hermione asks curiously and softly as she sits down for breakfast in the great hall. As she does so she also watches seven students - from first to seventh year - moving in sync through the open space between the house tables.

"The Priest, Yates, and Collins siblings are performing their traditional religious rights," says Harry quietly to his friend. He smiles at her confused look and so adds, "I got here early enough and so have been watching it all."

"It's almost done, right?" Ron asks curiously, having gotten here with Hermione.

It is Neville who nods, "Yes, almost over. Just one more stanza of their prayer song." He then gestures for quiet as the group wraps up the prayer performance.

As it comes to an end, in a great hall mostly full of students waiting to eat, the seven participants bow towards student and staff. Then Alexander Priest, the fifth year who ran it, steps forward and says, "Thank you for letting us perform our rites. We appreciate your acceptance and understanding." One final bow and the group disbands, heading to their houses for breakfast.

Once commentary resumes as normal Dean asks, "So what did it mean?"

"They were honoring the festival of the Wanderers Path." Answers Neville without issue.

As eyes raise at that it is Ginny who answers. "It’s to celebrate the divine actions of a particular gathering of Divinities. To the sect they belong to said gathering provides for much of their family bounty." As the others look at her she just shrugs before turning to her food.

Which leads Dean to say, "I thought House Priest didn't focus on any one sect over any other?"

"They don't." Harry answers with a smile. "The believers were the Yates and Collins. All Alexander did was guide it as is the traditional responsibility for those of House Priest."

As nods of understanding are made at that the Gryffindor table turns towards their food. It being breakfast time.
As Harry is sitting on a bench in the covered and magically heated bridge he hears, "Hey pup!"

Blinking he looks up before grinning, "Sirius, hey, hows it is going?" A pause. "What brings you here?"

"Well mostly for a meeting about both the Tournament and the Yule Ball." He grins a moment before adding, "But I came to speak to you about a political update I wanted to inform you of."

"Oh, do tell, what happened?"

"Well a few things actually, all related. The Ironwood Hundred of London just elected Gayle Sanders as its Mayor. This is important because of the hundred's close knit geographic ties to Ministry operations."

"I see." Harry says and then after a pause adds, "While it's good to know you know I don't interfere in local elections."

"Yep, and rightly so. But the real reason I am directly mentioning it is that also elected was a new Undersecretary for Local Ministry Affairs. Said Undersecretary, one Wanda Edwards, has a public history of feuding with Sanders."

Harry opens his mouth to say something but then stops, tilts his head in thought. "Hmm, you know something most don't know."

Sirius grins, "of course. That something being that despite appearance both Sanders and Edwards don't hate each other, they in fact love each other. They just take different stances to make sure no matter what. They are in a place to gain power."

Chuckling at the information Harry says, "Oh, politics." A pause. "So how manipulative is the whole situation and is it something that will harm us."

"Well very manipulative but no, not harm us. In fact, if what I think is going on is actually going on this will help us with a number of your plots and plans."

A nod as Harry takes it all in. "Right, good to know." A pause. "Now while I don't interfere in public elections of local mayors. I do interfere in situations when my hundred controls might be threatened. So, I need you to speak to Sanders in order to make sure she knows that."

A firm nod. "Will do, was planning on it anyway, but its good to know you support that." A grin then comes to his face. "So, pup, honestly, how are things?"

Which leads to the two talking for the next hour, before they get pulled in opposite directions - Harry to class and Sirius to meetings.


"Answer it." Harry says a second later as he sits up from the chair in his office in the covenant section.

"Hello Harry," says Nicolas as soon as his visage appears. "How are things?"

"Good on my end," Harry says with a smile. After holding up an essay with an 'O+' on it.
"Especially, when my Potions essays are graded so."

A grin, "Well great, especially since with all your studying, you honestly deserved that grade."

Nod. Then with a grin he says, "Well despite his rough exterior, Professor Snape is a great teacher."

"He really does know his material. Including those subjects that he often does not tell anyone he knows."

Harry chuckles at that. "Quite. Including the magics that twist occlumency into a mindscape and the magics that let one manipulate foreign magic flows that interact with the soul."

"Yes, including most especially those two abilities." A pause then, with a curious tilt to his head. "So why did you ask him and not us?"

Harry chuckles, "Don't be jealous as there wasn't a reason. I was talking to Filius and it came up and he suggested Professor Snape." A pause then, with a tilt of his own head. "Soooo, you have empowered your mindscape with your soul?"

A grin and a nod, "Yep, we did." A pause. "Together actually."

Eyes widen. "Wait, are you saying that the soulscape of both yourself and Pernelle are one and the same. How?"

A smirk comes to Nicolas face but then he is batted away by another, whose form appears before Harry as she activates her own mirror.

"Don't be that way, not with Harry," Pernelle says with a smile. She then turns to him and says, "Hello Harry, I hope you are well." Then she pauses before saying, "The answer is we used the power of the Philosopher’s Stone to form a connection between our souls."

"Oh wow, brilliant." A pause as Harry laughs. "It also sounds simple when you say it that way."

The two laughs at that as Nicolas, coming fully back into frame, says, "I know right. We had individually made our own mindscape, empowered them with spirit but waited for the Stone to make them souls."

"Intriguing." Harry says with a smile. He then shakes his head, "While very interesting and useful to know, I will say to you both what I said to Filius and Snape. I have no plans on messing with my soul till I am magically mature. To do otherwise is to risk the very traits that Magic and the Divinities have given me."

"That is great to hear, Harry." says Nicolas.

"It also shows your maturity and understanding of the risks involved in such actions." Pernelle adds a moment later.

A nod then, "Which is why till then I just plan on deepening my occlumency and mastering my mindscape."

"On the later you, if you read about soulscape you can make safe changes that will allow for an easier acceptance of your soulscape when the time comes."

An intrigued look comes to Harry's face, "Hmm, really," at their nod he smiles, "Okay then, sounds good." A pause. "Well if you are interested in providing me material to read. I will definitely read it."
Chuckles from both followed by Nicolas saying, "Of course Harry, that is not a problem. We trust you to just read the material rather than just using the material."

After nodding at her husband Pernelle says, "Oh, while we are talking I wanted to update you on something." At Harry's curious looks she smiles and says, "It’s on the matter of Knights and your status as House Emrys."

Eyes widen, "Oh really, do tell, what did you find?"

At a gesture from his wife Nicolas speaks. "Well, we learned that while the rituals of Knighthood are outside of your current magical purview. You do have the authority to know the details about it."

A pause then a wide grin comes on Harry's face before he says, "Really, well that is wicked. Okay, so do tell."

"It’s a lot of material to explain so we put it into document form. But basically, the names, locations, purviews, and powers of all current Knights and their holdings are there."

"As are," Pernelle says a moment later, "the information on how to contact all Knights, even those who have hidden themselves."

"Wicked." Harry says with a smile before tilting his head in thought. "I assume that I can't command them?"

Negative shakes of the head as Nicolas says, "You can request, with said requests having some authority, but you can't directly order them yet. Not until you become the King of Albion."

Pernelle adds, "For the record, historically speaking Merlin was able to command the Knights not because he was Emrys but because he was the bonded spouse and consort of the Monarch and a very trusted individual."

Harry nods at that, "Well that makes sense." A slight pause then. "Though honestly, I would only make use of this ability in the face of a grave threat."

"Good to know Harry." says Nicolas in response.

After grinning, Pernelle then comments, "So with that out of the way, I do believe its time we discussed some of your work."

Harry nods, grins, reaches for a packet next to his desk and brings it forward. After opening it he says, "Great, let's begin."

Which gets laughter at the same time as the other take-out similar packets, as the tutoring review begins.

8888

After the third thunderous boom and lightning strike. Harry got out of bed, wrapped himself in a robe, and headed down to the common room.

"Hello all." Harry says with a smile upon seeing several younger students gathered about huddled together. "Can't sleep?"

It is first year Trevor Gibson who, with a shutter, shakes his head, "No, it’s a bit loud."

Smiling gently at his fellow Gryffindor, Harry moves to sit down near the center of the couch. "Well
then, I guess we might as well all huddle together till the storm fades.”

The students, almost a dozen total, look at each other in wonder for a moment before Krista, another first year, moves so that she can be close to Harry. Within minutes the whole group can be found huddled close together, relaxing as the storm rages outside.

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Chapter End Notes

I want to give a shout out to jfranklin21 for kindly beta reading this section. Thanks!
Yule Ball

Date: Fourth Year, Late December

"Are you ready Harry," Says Neville popping his head into the bathroom where he was getting ready.

"Yep, just needed to finish combing my hair," Harry says while doing just that, "and done." Giving his friend a smile he says, "hows everyone else?"

"Already done, you were the last." A pause, then grin, 'well at least among the guys, who know about the girls."

After a laugh, "yeah, obviously." He then heads out of the bathroom and into the room shared with his fellow years. After giving them a partial solute he says, "hey guys, so ready to head downstairs."

"Sure," says Seamus with a nod.

"How are we doing this again?" Questions Dean.

It is Ron who answers with a slight sigh, having to answer the same question numerous times already. "Well, as none of us asked someone in Gryffindor the plan is for us to make a circuit picking up our dates and those in our year as we go. First to Ravenclaw, so Neville can meet Luna and Dean, Lisa, then Hufflepuff for Seamus to pick up Justin, and then Slytherin to get Blaise for Harry and Daphne for myself." A pause to give them a grin, "while on the way Cedric will also join us since he is going with Terrance who is in Slytherin, obviously."

As the group grins at that Neville comments, "So what about the girls?"

"They are being met by their dates near the great hall." A pause, "well except for Hermione who is joining us on the walk since Vikor is with the Slytherins right now."

Dean then asks, "hey Ron, I thought Hermione was dating your brother Percy?"

A sly grin, "though unofficially yes the official answer is that they are not yet. But even if they were the bylaws of the Yule Ball require students to go with students."

"Then why did Vikor ask her?" Seamus asks curiously.

It is Harry who answers with a grin, "Vikor is actually in the same boat, as his significant others are not here and so he can't go with them."

"Them?" Neville says curiously, though not really shocked.

"Yep, them," Harry answers with a bit of a pop on the 'P'. "From what I know two people, one male, one female."

Ron, looking surprised that he did not know this asks, "how hasn't this gotten out, and how do you know?"

"First, very hard work on Vikor's parts to keep them out of a spotlight they didn’t want to be in, and
second, well, I'm Harry Potter."

First grins, then outright laughter, is the response to that little gem of news. As the laughter calms down they begin making their way out of their space and down to the common room.

8888

While walking down to Hufflepuff, Harry turns towards Seamus and says, "so I meant to ask, are you and Justin official?"

Seamus grins, "well, can I say both yes and no. I mean we officially go out a lot but neither of us are sure its going to be permanent." A pause, then in totally Seamus style, "though I admit to REALLY loving it when Justin goes down on me."

Just as Seamus is about to go into more detail Hermione slaps him on the arm and says, "seriously Seamus stop. No need for that sort of talk, at least not now."

"Yeah," says Lisa with a soft smirk, "save it for the covenant section."

Which gets some amused smile and a half hearted, "Lisa!" from a Hermione who is trying not to show her smile.

8888

Moving in step with Harry, like he was born to it, Cedric says, "its pretty cool how we are doing this."

Giving a sideways grin, "I know, it really is." A slight laugh, "imagine the faces in the hall when we all walk in all together."

"Its going to be epic," Cedric responds with.

Just as Ron adds, "its also going to make a political statement, one which no Pureblood Noble is going to miss."

"Oh what is that message?" Dean asks curious from where he is standing next to Neville.

Who happens to be the one to answer, "that our year is united, that we come as one."

Ron nods at that while adding, "some won't recognize exactly what that means, but all will know it means something."

"Our world doesn't know what hit them," says Hermione matter of factly.

Grins are the response, with an especially vivid one on Harry's face.

8888

Stopping in front of the entrance way to the Slytherin common room Harry gives a slight bow before saying, "we students of Hogwarts come to Slytherin in peace and invitation for our dates to the Yule Ball lie within."

Moving of what sounds like gears followed by a sibilant hissing sound and a voice saying in English, "Slytherin welcomes you students of Hogwarts in peace and acceptance. Your dates have been summoned and shall be out in moments."
"Thank you honored Slytherin, we shall wait in trust." Harry then gives a second slight bow before stepping back to where his friends are waiting.

"So was that really necessary?" Asks Dean curiously.

Harry grins at him, "of course for if one honors a snake then a friend one will have for life, but to disrespect them and an enemy one will make."

Sideways glances appear at that as the gathered students aren't sure whether he is joking or being serious. Then Hermione, seeing the slight upturn to Harry's mouth, gently slaps his elbow and says, "really Harry, you are going to pull that today."

A full grin, then some laughter, is Harry's response.

Just as a couple of the others opened there mouth to speak the doors to Slytherin open up in their somewhat regal fashion.

As Vikor makes a beeline for Hermione, Harry, Ron, and Cedric head for the exiting forms of their date.

Heading to Blaise without pause Harry smiles before handing him a small lapel, and getting one in return. The two then take each other's hands and kiss the fingers, in the time honored welcoming tradition.

Harry, with Blaise at his side, then makes his way through the gathered students in order to be up front. Quickly joined by both Cedric and Vikor, and their dates, the group then begin making their way to the great hall of Hogwarts.

As they are doing so Justin can be heard asking, "is all the pomp and circumstance really necessary?"

At which Draco answers, "when its us, yes." Which gets some grins while breaking the tension and leading to some small talk appearing among the group as they continue to walk.

8888

"Ready?" Is asked by Professor McGonagall when she sees the large group of students appear at the end of the hallway towards the great hall. Though her question seems general, the six players and their dates know she means them.

Which is why they nod at the same time as Harry grins and says, "of course. In fact this will be a Yule Ball that no one will forget!"

Looking over her students McGonagall gives a rare full smile, "I see, well I do hope you enjoy yourself."

She then gives them one final nod before turning to the other students. "All those not involved in the tournament would you please head inside the hall and make your way to the sides. Thank you." Once they start moving she says, "just five more minutes and you will enter."

8888

The music had started to play and thus silence descended on the hallway. Then entered the three School Heads, Sirius for the Board of Governors, and Percy for the Ministry. None had a date, for the ball was not about them, though that didn't mean their partners weren't present. Example, Harry could clearly see Remus in the corner with a wide grin on his face.
Then the six players entered into the room, with their dates in hand. The twelve made their way to the center dance floor and stopped as the music faded and the officials made a few speeches. To all present the speeches were dry and boring, more a formality then anything anyone wanted to say, so thankfully they were short.

Then the music started up again but this time in the format of a waltz. The six tournament players bowed towards their dates before standing up again to reach for them in the time honored fashion of pureblood society.

The group then danced to a pureblood wizarding song whose origins stretched all the way back to the days of Arthur and Merlin. It was an ornate and beautiful piece and left the audience gasping in awe.

Then the music switched slightly into a different style waltz. Immediately the six tournament players stopped, bowed to their dates, and then took a few steps to the side. Which put them in step with the date of one of the other players. Then the dance began again, as the song played the players moved between the dates so that by its near end each had danced with all of the other dates while ending back in front of their own date.

When the song ended quiet covered the hall as the twelve participants turned towards each other, bowed, then turned towards the watchers and bowed again.

Applause erupted throughout the great hall.

The Headmaster then stepped forward while saying, with a twinkle in his eye, "with the traditional opening dances finished the dance floor is now open to everyone."

As he backed up the tournament players and their dates began to leave the dance floor as others went onto it upon hearing the new type of music.

8888

An hour later Percy comes up to a tiredly sitting Harry saying, "so how many dances was that?"

"Lost count, but everyone irregardless of gender in my year at least once, many from the other years, and Blaise half of that number alone since one must always dance more with one's date than they dance with any other."

Percy gives a wry grin at that, "please don't tell me you are surprised?"

"Oh no, not at all. In fact the dancing with my year mates were all planned beforehand."

"Well that was quite smart," Percy says with a smile. "Though I can't say I'm surprised that you guys organized it so well."

A grin of his own, "well Merlin knows I needed to. There was no way I could have done that spontaneously." A slight pause then a sly grin, "speaking of spontaneous, nice on the dance with Hermione."

A blush, "I know it could have been seen as unseemly, me being a Ministry representative, but well she is so beautiful looking that I just needed to dance with her."

"Oh I understand, no worries, though do expect some good natured ribbing from your brothers."

An amused grin, "oh I expected it, always do when they are around." A slight pause then, "speaking
of a brother, there is a particular one who is waiting for you on the outside balcony."

Eyes widen, cheeks color slightly, as Harry can't help but grin, "wait really?"

"Oh yes, you should go now, for as I count you have twelve minutes before you are expected to
dance again with Blaise."

Harry nods at that before getting up and making his way to said balcony.

8888

"Hello, anyone out here," Harry says as soon as he got out on the balcony.

"Of course I'm here," says Charlie with a grin on his voice.

"Oh, it was you that Percy said was here, I thought it might be Bill?"

"Haha," he says with a wide grin, "your hilarious." He then pauses, "but don't let Fleur hear you say
that, she might get jealous and worried you are going to steal her man."

Harry just chuckles at that before moving closer to where Charlie is. Reaching for Charlie's hand he
says, "enough talk, I have only eleven minutes, so will you let me have this dance?"

"Of course. I would be honored to have a dance with you."

With moonlight poring in and quiet music playing in the background, the two have their first dance
together.

As the musing begins to slow down in ending the two men back up slightly from where they were in
each other’s arms. As they gaze into each other’s eyes Harry lifts up Charlie’s hands and kisses the
fingers, an action that is then repeated by Charlie onto Harry’s fingers. There is a steady silence
between them before Harry moves forward and kisses Charlie on the cheek. Which gets a grin from
Charlie in return as he moves to do the same towards Harry.

Which is all they are willing to give to each other at this moment, for reasons ethical, legal, and most
importantly magical. After all, as with most things magical, there is power in the wait.

8888

"Oh, by the way, you owe me Harry," Blaise says mid way in their next dance.

"Oh, what for?"

"I gave you a few extra minutes by having the last song chosen be longer."

Eyes widen before morphing into a grateful smile, "thanks Blaise, and yeah, I totally do owe you." A
pause as they dance around the floor. "So do you want something now or later?"

Blaise just leans forward and whispers something into Harry's ear, something which has him giving a
wide grin in return. "Oh naughty Blaise, very very naughty." A pause, "sounds fun, I'm game."

The two laugh softly as the music plays and the dance continues.

8888

"Are you okay with their plans for after the party?" Bill says upon coming up next to Charlie in the
corner of the room.

"Oh very much so." A pause, "in fact I told him directly to have fun tonight, and that Blaise should change his name to fun."

Staring at Charlie in shock for a moment Bill eventually laughs while shaking his head.

Giving his brother a grin he then says, "so what about you and Fleur?"

"That's for me to know and you to find out by you watching me leave with her."

Chuckling at that Charlie says a bit amused and a bit sad, but mostly amused, "I guess that's the advantage of falling for someone over seventeen."

In response Bill simply pats his brother on the shoulder in understanding while the two stand there watching the tournament players dancing with their dates.

8888

It was the next day and a cheery Harry walked down to breakfast saying, "good morning," to those he passed.

He even stopped by the Slytherin table and said the same thing, getting a happy response from Blaise and an angry tired snort comment from Draco.

"Bad night," Harry says softly, heavily amused.

"Oh go to hell Potter," is the response Draco gives, much to the amusement of those around at the clearly overtired Draco.

Laughing slightly Harry simply heads back to his table, a jaunty tune being whistled as he went, much to the amusement of most of the others present.

Up at the head table a grinning Sirius and Remus say softly, "he had a good night."

"With one of my Slytherins I do believe," Severus comments in a sarcastic tone so low that only Sirius and Remus are able to hear it.

As the two grin to each other Minerva turns and says, "what?"

"Oh nothing, just commenting on the weather." Sirius says in a very unbelievable tone.

Only to get a snort of laughter from Minerva in response.

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"Mr Potter if I may have a moment of your time," says McGonagall near the end of class.

"Of course," Harry says with a smile before turning to his friends, "hey guys go on, I will be right with you."

As soon as they leave the Professor says, "so I received the request for you to return home for the remaining portion of the holidays. Is this correct?"

A nod and a smile, "yes it most definitely is." At her intrigued look he goes on, "with all the additional people here due to the Hex-Wizard Tournament I haven't had as much peace as I normally do."

"So you want to get away for a little while," McGonagall says once he finishes speaking. "You request is understood and very much accepted Mr Potter. Simply speak to a head of house before you head out with Sirius or Remus and everything will be good to go."

"Thank you Professor. Both wizards are currently finishing up a project so its a coin toss on which gets here first." He then grins, "though either way its going to be within the next few hours, or tomorrow before breakfast tops."

Giving him a knowing smile she says, "well I can tell that you would have wanted to head out now if you could."

Harry grins at that, "you know it." He then heads out, after she gives him the gesture of dismissal.

8888

"Well look who it is, its Harry Potter, come to visit little old me!" Hagrid says upon opening the door to his cabin and seeing Harry behind it.

Chuckling slightly, "that would have worked if it had been more than a week since I came down here."

A grin is the response as he is ushered into the room. Once both are sitting down and the tea is on the stove and the cake is on the table Hagrid says, "I know, but I couldn't resist." The two laugh. Once they stop Hagrid says in his knowing way, "hows it been the last week?"

"Tiring, between the tournament and the Yule Ball and the many guests at Hogwarts its been tiring."

"Well I hear you are heading to Potter Manor bright early tomorrow, that should help."

A relieved grin, "yeah, yeah it will. Honestly I need it. The time alone, well mostly alone anyway, is going to let me come back next year refreshed and willing to tackle whatever happens."

"Good to hear Harry, good to hear." A pause long enough to declare a change of subject. "Oh so I got a story to tell you. It's right funny it is and I think you will enjoy it."
Which is exactly what they do for the next hour, tell stories, drink tea, eat cake, and relax.

It was a really good hour.

8888

"Oh its good to be home," Harry says as he plops into the chair in the lounge of Potter Manor.

Laughing as he joins him Remus says, "I'm glad you were able to get away." The two smile then, "so what are your plans?"

"Mostly to relax. Go to bed late, sleep late, relax, relax, relax." A pause, "for the record I am officially off duty unless the world is coming to an end."

"Duly noted," Remus says with a drawl, "I shall keep all away from you unless its something you need."

A nod then, "since you are so nice to me, I will give you a few hours on all the Wednesday's of this winter break."

"Nice, thanks for that," says Remus sarcastically.

"Oh what was that tone for?" Asks Sirius as he comes into the room, throwing his robe down on the nearby couch as he does so.

"Harry here graciously is allowing business and politics to be discussed on the Wednesdays of winter break."

A sideways grin, followed a nod, "wow, that is a nice gesture." A pause, "thank you Lord Potter for your gracious allowance of said meeting time."

In the most posh, noble voice he can muster, "your most welcome."

The three then laugh.

Once it calms down Sirius says, "so did you two eat?"

Harry shakes his head, "I didn't as I was too relieved to get away from Hogwarts for the break."

"Good, then get ready as I have reservations for four at a Spanish bistro in about an hour."

"Four?" Harry asks curiously.

"Well I can go back to Romania if you don't want me here," says the amused voice of Charlie.

As Harry gives a wave he also says, "did I say that, no I didn't, so don't speak crazy."

Instead of commenting Charlie simply follows Sirius' actions and moves to sit down next to Harry, just as he is sitting next to Remus.

It is Remus who asks, "so how did you get roped into coming here?"

A slight chuckle as his arms get wrapped around Harry, and vis versa, in a hug, "its actually a coincidence. I was at the Ministry dealing with House Sidus issues when Sirius taps me on the shoulder and asks me what my plans are. Since I was currently free I said so and so he invited me here."
"Thanks Sirius," Harry says simply, though with emotion.

"Not a problem pup, not a problem," is Sirius simple answer.

Remus then grins, "so if I am correct then we have thirty more minutes to sit here relaxing before we have to get up and ready for our ad hoc trip to Spain."

"Well that sounds good," Harry says in response.

The silence stretches for a bit then Sirius suddenly laughs, as the others look at him he grins and says, "oh that reminds me of a funny story that just came to my attention."

Thus the quiet relaxation turns into a fun story time driven relaxation, till they have to get up for the trip to Spain.

8888

"Dobby would like to know for how long the great master Harry is going to stay here?"

"Heading back the first Saturday of next year."

"But Dobby know Hogwarts doesn't start then?"

Harry gives a nod, "I know, but I need to get back a bit before school starts to get everything situated."

"Dobby understands though Dobby wishes you could stay here longer."

"That is a wish that I share, though you know it cannot be yet."

"Dobby knows," he says sadly. But then it fades as he grins, "but Dobby can make your time here as awesome amazing as possible." Nod. Nod. "Dobby will do this for his greatest master ever!"

He then pops away, much to Harry's amusement.

8888

After hearing an overview of the most recent situation from Remus, Harry simply shakes his head. "Look, while I get what Fredrich has been saying I also don't really think he needs the funding that he is requesting he get."

"I told him you would say that but he not only insisted that I tell you but he wanted me to show you this." With this being an amulet looking object covered in strange markings and made out of an inert magical material.

Taking the object Harry turns it in his hand a few times before saying, "okay, so I saw it, what did he say it would do?"

A slight shrug, "he said your particular Head Rings would know. I couldn't get any more out of him, besides his continued insistence."

Giving Remus a nod Harry says, "which you agreed because for the last hundred plus years he has been nothing but a hardworking member of the House establishment."

"Exactly," Remus says in simple agreement.
"Right, so let me see," Harry says with interest on what is going on. Taking a deep breath he accesses his House magic, which immediately pings him knowledge that the amulet is in fact not inert but potent. "Oh, it has meaning," Harry says after opening his eyes.

"Do you know what it does?"

"No not yet, though I can tell with the way my Rings are singing that its perfectly safe for a person like me." So said he manifests his Head Ring and activates his House magic followed by linking said magic to the amulet.

"What in Merlin's name," he breathes out in shock and awe. For in front of his mental sight he is suddenly flying around an ancient urban landscape full of massive towering edifices of stone and crystal. Though what he is seeing is quite a beautiful sight to behold he pulls back the moment he sees a door in a gate of a tower opening up. No way, he thinks, is he going inside something so unknown to him - and so he pulls his consciousness back.

Opening his eyes he blinks a few times at Remus and says, "fund him from my petty funds, I want to know exactly the meaning behind what he found."

"What did you see?"

Giving a shake of the head Harry says, "it would be easier to show you then to explain." So said Harry then reaches to his Potter Head Ring, selects the memory, copies it, and sends it to Remus' official Amulet of Office.

From Remus' perspective he hears Harry say that and then suddenly his bonds to House Potter activates, filling his head with the memory Harry sent him. "Oh Merlin," he breathes out, then opening his eyes he says, "what was that?"

"I don't entirely know, but I can tell you that its an image of someplace real, even if its not so much in our world."

"I see," Remus says a bit shocked. He then shakes his head, "what Houses connected with the amulet?"

"Potter, Black, Sage, Vidan, Emrys, and Levant - in that order for it predates the Empire of Albion."

A blink, "ah, I see." A tilt of the head as a thought comes to Remus. "Hmm, I wonder if the fortress found under Levant Manor is related to what you found."

"It probably is," Harry says with a nod. Then a shake of the, "well anyway, fund him, though I want the contract to have advanced level monitoring charms, I want us to know what he is doing even before he knows what he is doing."

"Understood, and will do." Remus says while making a note in his file.

When Remus finishes the writing Harry gives him a smile and says, "next?"

Which leads to the next matter of House politics.

8888

At one point in their chess game Charlie says, "you seem quite okay with the nature of Harry and I's relationship."
"Of course I am, for many reasons, including that I trust both you and Harry." A pause then Sirius says with some amusement, "though I could give you the traditional speech if it would make you feel better."

Charlie laughs, "nah, I'll pass, thanks."

After making his chess move Sirius looks at Charlie right in the eye and says, "you are really worried aren't you?"

"Yes, kind of." A pause, "well, not so much worried as intrigued on your full acceptance."

Sirius nods at that. "The truth is I'm glad he found you, that he has become close to you. But I am also glad that for the most part you don't reside in Britain."

"Considering our age difference," Charlie says matter of factly.

"Yeah that." A slight shrug, "now I'll admit that with everything Harry has to deal with he has grown more mature than his physical age would normally require. But still, biologically he is a child and you are not."

A nod, "honestly, you mention the distance, well I really think that is part of how we became so close. Because of the way we talked at first it was his maturity I noticed rather than his physical appearance." He then laughs before saying, "his mirror form is modulated so that it was roughly my size."

A bark of laughter is the response Sirius gives at that bit of news. Eventually this leads him to saying, "so, I did have a question, are you actually dating Harry?"

Which gets a quick shake of the head, "would you accept the answer of 'its complicated'."

"With Harry yeah, of course. But is it too complicated for you to explain?"

A pause, "not really." Another pause, "though we love each other the fact he is here and I am there, he is underage and I am not. These two facts both effect our relationship."

Nod. Nod. But then, "but its not the whole he is wanted by the Dark Lord thing, is it?"

"No, not really, though we will use that argument if we need to."

"I can understand that." A pause, "so I have one final question, but I am not sure on how to phrase it."

"I am aware that Harry has been having sex with his year mates, and it doesn't bother me. Though we don't really talk about it that much - mostly due to the current age situation - he knows that, well, I too am having sex with my fellow Dragon Keepers in Romania."

A wide grin, "awesome, good to know." A laugh which gets a curious look, "well its amusing as on this matter Harry is so much more me than he is James."

A questioning look, "you slept around, I thought you were with Remus?"

"I was, am, have been since third year actually. But the fact is that I have a sex drive much stronger than his, though we have our fun. But what makes it all the better is that he has long been quite open and happy to accept my acts of fun with others."

"But I refused to let him bottom or romance them, it was just sex," Remus says upon moving away
from the door he was leaning against. He soon continues, "in truth I enjoy knowing of his escapades, and got off on the fact that at the end of the day it was to me he came 'home' to."

He then notices that they are looking around him, and so he grins and says, "don't worry, Harry is not here, he is taking a shower after his dueling lessons." A pause, "so how did this topic come about?"

"It all started when Charlie asked why we weren't more bothered by his growing relationship with Harry," Sirius says matter of factly.

"I see." Remus then grins at Charlie before saying, "the truth is as a shifter I have long known the growing bonds between you. But even more you are good for him, and I think he is good for you, so a win win situation." Then comes a slight shrug, "as we went through basically what you are going through who am I to judge."

Charlie gives both men a happy, pleased, and grateful smile, before adding, "thanks guys, I appreciate that."

"Not a problem Charlie," Remus says with a smile.

As Sirius adds, "so I am right in saying that most people don't know of your special relationship with Harry?"

"Right, and we were planning on keeping it that way till he turns sixteen and either he graduates or Riddle dies."

"That makes a lot of sense," Remus says in a firm fully accepting tone of voice. He then glances at his watch, his eyes widen, and he says, "you best be finishing the game soon if you both want to get ready in time for the play tonight."

The two grin as their focuses turn fully onto the the chess board in front of them.

8888

"Hey Harry," Sirius says upon coming into the office where Harry and Remus were going over some business. Upon them turning to him he smiles and says, "I just got finished with a floo call to Arthur and Molly and so I know our Christmas Day plans."

Harry smiles at that, "oh, really, so what is it?"

"Well it seems that after speaking to the Headmaster they were able to get permission for their children to head home rather then stay at Hogwarts."

"Really, that's brilliant, good for them!"

"But it gets better," Sirius says with a wide smile. "So not only will Hermione, Neville, and Luna be joining them but we will as well."

Eyes widen as realization comes over him which leads to a laugh, "wait really, that's awesome."

"So is everyone heading back to Hogwarts that night?" Remus asks curiously.

A nod, "that is what Molly said that Albus requested, though Harry is of course coming back here."

"Sounds great, very great." Harry says with a smile. He then gestures for Sirius to join them before
saying at his look, "well since your hear, you might as well join us for this, its a good one." Which leads to the business meeting continuing.

8888

At one point during the Christmas Day celebration Harry found Molly standing in the dining room with a great smile on her face. After making a noise so she noticed his presence he says, "this has been a marvelous Christmas Ms Weasley, and though I know I said it before, thank you for inviting us."

"Not a problem, you are family after all," she says with a great big grin. She then chuckles, "I also have to thank you for offering the service of Potter house elves."

A small smile, "not a problem, it was the least I could do."

Tilting her head in thought she suddenly laughs, "was it your Christmas gift to them, making sure they could feed you on this holiday."

Harry chuckles but nods, "yeah, how did you know?"

"Well a Lady can't tell all her secrets," Molly says with a smile. She then pats Harry on the shoulder before saying, "but you did a good thing Harry, never doubt that." She then clears her throat and says, "now then, why are you here, you should be having fun with the others."

"Oh I am, in fact they sent me to get you to join us all in a family game."

Which gets a big grin on her face as she moves to join everyone else.

8888

"Mr Potter, welcome back," says Flitwick upon his return to Hogwarts, "did you have a nice winter break?"

"Oh yes, very much so." Harry says with a smile. "Most of it was spent relaxing and recharging, though unfortunately Wednesday's were still business days."

"You can never get away from such matters Mr Potter," Flitwick says with a smile.

Which gets an answering one, as well as a chuckle, "oh I know, do I know, but still it was nice to be able to relax around it."

A nod on that followed by, "well I am glad you were able to recharge for soon school starts again, and with that comes three more tournaments and all that such facts entail."

Giving his most respected professor a smile Harry simply says, "well it is what it is, as numerous people I trust have said to me."

Which gets a bit of laugh from both of them as they begin making there way to the great hall where the others have gathered.

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Bonding Moments

Date: Fourth Year, Early January

"Hello Harry," says Hagrid with a smile as he sees the lad walking across the green.

Stopping at the call he gives his own smile saying, "hey Hagrid, hows it going?"

A wide grin, "pretty good, pretty good. Its been an interesting experience meeting all the new people that's for sure."

A nod, "yeah it has that's for sure." A small smile, "though also a bit tiring."

An understanding nod. "Then its good that you have a place to rest that the masses cannot go."

"Yeah, definitely." A smile, "between that and my recent trip back to Potter Manor I'm good to go for another few months."

"Good to hear lad, good to hear."

A nod followed by a knowing grin, "so any new friendships?"

A slight blush and a rub to the back of the head, "well me and Olympe have been talking some, even though she is busy."

"Really, well that's great, good for you Hagrid." A pause before a thoughtful look comes to his face as he asks, "so what's it like with so many people coming onto your grounds?"

"Not fun, but the Headmaster hired some assistants to aid me in keeping up the grounds."

Wide grin, "oh really, nifty. Though I knew he had hired more staff I didn't realize you got some, but that's brilliant."

"Yea it is," Hagrid says before launching into a story related to amusing works done by some of his aids. It was almost two hours later that Harry managed to get away, and that was only due to heading to class.

8888

For the last hour Draco and Harry had been sitting in the later's private office within the covenant section. Though they had started talking about Potions in that time period it had constantly changed, and by the present it was almost a dozen topics away from education.

It was at this point that Draco laughs slightly before saying, "so Father was ranting to Mother on how impossibly stupid everyone must be."

An eye raise at the random point, "oh?"

A nod, "yeah." A pause, "well it seems that to the others your not really leading your Houses well."

A wide grin, "ah, its that." A small laugh, "so what does your Father think?"
"That they are crazy for listing your actions as accidental rather than as directed decisions."

"I see," a pause, "so what are they saying about how Sirius is managing things?"

"That he is messing around due to general mental wear and tear."

A shake of the head at that leading to, "so would I be accurate in saying that your parents do not agree with that popular wisdom."

A wide grin as Draco leans back in a stretch, "oh yeah, you are quite right in that."

Giving Draco a knowing smile Harry says, "I guess I shouldn't have been so forthright and capable in my conversations with them." A pause then a wry grin, "though the events of the world cup didn't help."

A laugh, "oh it didn't harm either considering they knew you were smart and in control even before then." Draco then gives a wide grin as he launches into a story about a similar incident in Lucius' past, when he was much younger and a newly risen Head.

8888

"But why is healing magic instant yet permanent while conjuration and creation magic is naturally prolonged yet needs the occasional infusion of magic to stay active." Harry asks of and states to Flitwick during one of their personalized tutoring sessions.

A nod, "that is not a bad question, for all that the answer is quite long and contains many philosophical points." A pause, then a slight grin. "Now the immediate answer is that healing magic makes use of the natural magic of magicals to supercharge the healing process. The caster's magic flows, the recipient's magic responds, the person heals, the caster's magic departs but the person is still healed. On other types of magical works the thing or event created doesn't have a magic of its own, and so when the caster's ever flowing magic departs it only has a bit before it runs out."

Eyes widen at that, "ooh, okay, that makes quite a lot of sense." A pause, "so then how does the more permanent instantaneous effects work?"

A wide grin, "well, the main difference is that the spell used creates a spark in the object, which artificially fuels the item or event's permanent existence."

Nod. Nod. "So that is why such magics are advanced, for all that they are not uncommon."

Pausing as Harry takes down the notes Flitwick nods imperiously, "exactly. Spark, Spirit, Soul. These are what is needed for the permanent self-sustaining use of magic." A pause, "the spark is the simplest and the most basic, and the only one Magicals can routinely create as a matter of our simple spellcasting."

"So is that why there is no difference in terminology between natural and artificial sparks?"

"Yes, mostly." At Harry's curious look Flitwick explains, "the other reason is that there is no difference between a natural or created Spark." A pause, "have you read about artificial spirits and souls yet?"

"Yes somewhat, though only at an academic level rather than practical." At Flitwick's curious look Harry smiles, "well it helped that a number of my hundreds and many of my estates have a Node spirit and that the Philosopher's Stone is a Nexus soul." The smile turns into a wide grin.
This leads to Flitwick laughing, "yeah, those two facts do help." A pause as he gets a bit serious, "so you can understand the difficulty of said creations."

A firm nod, "quite. Though I also have to say they intrigue me so much, especially the Nexus." A small shrug, "as you probably have been told."

A grin, "yeah Nicolas told me." A pause, "both that and the fact that you are studying its essential matrix."

"I'm playing it safe," Harry says with some laughter, "I have yet to manipulate, I'm only studying."

Closing his book Flitwick nods, "I know that. In fact you are being more careful then I expect most would be." A pause, "I don't mean 'at your age' rather I mean ever."

"Well I figure I have time, as my creation of artificial souls is a more long-term far future sort of project."

"Which is why I won't even bother asking the why of that." A pause, "so instead I'm going to say, any plans for the upcoming full moon?"

Harry chuckles at that blatant comment. With a grin he says, "you know it, I'm heading to Potter Manor for a run with Remus and Sirius."

"Well have fun with that, and thank you for telling me, I appreciate it Mr Potter."

"Harry, Professor, you have the full right to call me Harry, both in private and in public."

A wide grin, and an emotion that goes far deeper than physical comes to Flitwick. Who responds by simply saying, "Harry."

8888

"So I told Fred and George that unless they changed the substance covering us there was no way I was going to assist them in that prank," Harry says with much humor in his voice.

Chuckling Sirius goes, "so it wasn't that you would be covered in gunk that you objected to?"

"Of course not, sometimes pranking is a messy business." A wide grin. "No, it was completely what he wanted to cover us with."

"Did you give them any alternate suggestions?" Sirius asks.

But before Harry could speak they hear, "knock knock," and turn to look towards the office door, where a grinning Charlie and an amused Remus are standing.

"Charlie," Harry says in surprise and yet enjoyment, as he is always happy to see him. But then he tilts his head and asks curiously, "What brings you to Potter Manor tonight, of all nights?"

"Well that is a funny story," Charlie starts to say as he walks into the room and takes a seat on the same couch Harry is on. He pauses as Remus moves to join Sirius before adding, "so I was in the neighborhood, suddenly realized it was the Full Moon tonight, and decided, 'what the heck, let me go to Potter Manor'."

Three blinks at that, two for the shock and a third (Remus) in disbelief at how ridiculous said reason given was.
After looking at them for a moment he busts out laughing. He then says, "well truthfully, I'm here to join you three for your full moon run."

"What?" Comes from both Sirius and Harry at the same time.

"I knew," Remus says as they turn towards him, "since its with me that he has been coordinating this with."

As eyes turn towards Charlie he grins, "oh, didn't I tell you, I'm an animagus."

"No you didn't tell us," Harry says with anger in his voice. He then stops, tilts his head shocked at his act, shakes his head in a fake attempt at clearing his thoughts, and then clears his throat, all before repeating in a much softer tone, "I guess you forgot." He then grins.

Which saw an answering grin come to Charlie's face at that, a reminder of old conversations. His grin turns to a smirk, "so I began studying the magic around the same time you did, though I was trained by a few experts at the preserve." A pause, "not that I'm registered, a Lord and Head of House has to have some secrets." A wide.

"So what is your shape?"

A wide grin is the response. Charlie then gets up and uses his wand to move some of the future to the side in order to make a bit of cleared space.

He then transforms.

Which results in there being a Ram where there was once a human wizard.

Ram Charlie then moves over to where Harry is sitting and lowers his head in the universal sign of 'scratch me', which Harry does happily with a wide smile on his face.

After a minute of watching that Sirius clears his throat and says, "well then, it looks like Charlie will be joining us."

Which gets a wry look from Remus, an amused one from Harry, and a quite pleased grin from ram Charlie.

8888

It was twenty minutes before the moment of moon rise and the four wizards were sitting outside in comfortable chairs and sharing stories. At the moment it happened Remus stiffened up and gasped out, "its happening, transform."

Without speaking the three others nodded, stood up and transformed. By the time that Moony was up and looking around the area there was Goldwing, Padfoot, and Horntop - whose backstory the others did not know yet.

For the next few hours the four ran around the zones of Potter Manor enjoying the sites and playing games. Games such as chasing each other, hide and seek, animal hunting (which never involved actually killing animals) and even the occasional wrestling match.

Though the three had run many times before, and would for many years to come, the fact that Charlie joined them for it made it even more special and worth remembering.
As Filius was making his circuit around Hogwarts he stops upon seeing Severus standing in front of an open window with the full moon visible.

Before Filius spoke Severus says, "I figure he is out there."

After giving Severus a look of non-comprehension Filius says, "why would he be hanging out in the Forbidden Forest?"

Which gets a sharp snort and an eye rose, "not here, at his manor with the two dogs. Out singing in the moonlight."

"I don't know what you mean Severus," Filius says with some humor in his voice, "especially since its the middle of the school year."

"Of course." He says in his drawl. He then gestures with his wand, though with how minute and precise it was Filius only saw it due to how close he was. That, and his dueling skills. Once the secrecy spells were put up Severus continues speaking, "while I do not begrudge them secrets if my Slytherins thought I didn't know of their specialized training, they have another thing coming."

A wide grin followed by, "I don't think Harry ever thought you didn't know at least part of it."

"Good, for unlike Minerva I don't need to be blatantly obvious on such matters for need to report."
Though the words sound harsh both men know that Severus' feelings for her are anything but, his respect and admiration for her is well noted among the professors of Hogwarts.

"There is little I can say Severus, and you know that, but what I will say is that I trust those students."

"You know I am not saying otherwise," is Severus' immediate answer. "In fact I am quite intrigued in what they have built for themselves."

"Its quite a fascinating look to the future isn't it," Filius says before turning so his focus is on the glorious full moon on the outside.

8888

Blinking at the sight of Neville sitting there on a couch in the common room Harry moves over to him. "Hey Neville, couldn't sleep?"

Looking up from his book Neville smiles, "yep. Woke up and after a bit of water I came down here to rest my mind before heading back to sleep." A pause, "so how was it?"

A wide, carefree, happy grin comes to Harry's face as he moves over to sit by him. "Oh amazing," is his answer. "In fact Charlie joined us, which was a surprise but made the run all the more fun."

At Neville's intrigued and questioning look Harry smiled and launched into a story detailing the night. It was almost forty minutes later, and nearly morning, before the two headed up to bed. Both being grateful that it was now Sunday, and thus they could sleep in.

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Date: Fourth Year, Mid January

"So how long have you two been running?" Vala asks the morning of the second task as their small group goes running.

It's a repeat of the first task, an act that has become sort of a mini tradition.

"All our time at Hogwarts," Cedric answers, "and me a bit beforehand."

"Same with me," Harry says with a nod, "I think I was around nine when I started running." A pause then a tilt of his head as they run the corner, "how about you all?"

"I'm the same," Viktor states. "I have been running all my life."

"For the last four months," Vala says. She then gives them an amused smile, "It was required by school."

Lucus nods at that then says, "I have been running twice a week since entering Beauxbaton. Though I probably will stop when I graduate."

"This is my fourth time, I'm not really big on it." Fleur comments with a shrug. "Though I will say that it was quite helpful last time, which is why I am here now."

There are a couple of nods at that, but then silence for a moment as they turn around a corner and need to focus. Once they do Harry says, "Honestly, I do it more for the fun of it rather than for physical excersize." A wide grin, "Especially these last four years, hanging out with Cedric has given us time to talk before the day begins."

There is laughter at that, but also some thoughtful looks. Ones explained when Viktor opens his mouth and begins talking about some of the random thoughts he has had. When he finished Fleur then began speaking, which is followed by the others in a circle - to their great enjoyment.

8888

"Knock knock," says Charlie as he leans up against the open door to Harry's personal office in the covenant section.

A wide grin comes to Harry's face as he jumps up from his desk and moves over to Charlie, "Charlie, hey!"

The two then embrace, in a hug which lasts for a good couple of minutes.

It's a hug that only ends when, "Ooh can we join!", is said by the twins with some heavy suggestion in their voices.

As Harry and Charlie pull back they give each other a look which is also a bit of unspoken conversation which leads them to turn and grab both twins in a giant bear hug.

Which has all four laughing at the actions.
When the group calms down they move towards the nearby couch and sit down. With Harry in the middle, Charlie to one side, and Fred and George basically twisting so they both are partly on Harry's lap.

"While I know what you are hinting at, no, we are not going to be all making out." Charlie says immediately, though amusingly for his two decades of life have desensitized him to such prudish behavior.

"Aww, man, really?" Fred asks.

Then George adds, "But we can make it fun!"

With a laugh Harry moves forward and kisses both of the twins fully, with the skills he has garnered after almost two years of practice. Once he pulls back from both of them they sigh a bit before moving their hands up and down Harry's body, it's a rub and a caress.

As that is going on Charlie raises an eyebrow and says, "Really guys, you know I'm here right?"

Which gets two identical snickers and a grin from Harry, which is made all the wider when he says that each moved one of their hands in a caress of Charlie.

Who laughs. "Nice try guys, but while you may like having such fun I'm going to pass, at least for now."

Harry uses the moment of distraction to move his own hands, till he is rubbing the backs of the twins. With hands moving down and down till it is their butts that are being caressed. He then, in a smooth move that shows this wasn't the first time slips his hands down into their pants and onto their bare bottoms.

Which gets a giggle from Fred and George and a somewhat surprised look on Charlie's face. One that Harry wipes away a second later when he leans over and kisses him.

On the mouth.

But then Harry pulls back, removes his hands and fingers from within the twins, pushes them to the side, sits up, and says, "Well guys, do you want to play some games," a pause, "board games."

There are three wide grins and a chuckle from Harry as nods come leading to them doing exactly that.

8888

It was some time later, after two games had been finished and Fred and George had left the room to plan their own prank that Harry and Charlie could be found sitting on the couch talking softly.

Which is how Remus found them when he walks into the office after giving a slight knock announcing his presence. After greeting Charlie he sits down at a nearby table and says, "Pardon for the interruption but your input is required on something."

A chuckle, "Sure. So what happened?"

"Well two things. The first involves us discovering a massive vault in the Green Opal Hundred. As the locals have traditions about the vault protests have begun demanding we leave it alone."

This gets an intrigued look on Charlie's face and a smile in recognition of that fact from Harry, before
he says, "What does the local mayor and sheriff think on it?"

"Well the mayor is part of the camp that doesn't want us to touch it, though he blatently said he would follow your orders on the matter." A pause, "As for the sheriff he could care less about the traditions of the locals on the matter and is gathering resources to open it up."

"Right." A pause as Harry thinks on things.

Which gives Charlie the time to say, "So this is a delicate situation and if not handled with the right respect could lead to a major issue."

Harry nods at that, as does Remus in acceptance of what Charlie commented. "Hmm," Harry then says, "well here is the thing, is there any rush?"

"No, at least not in the sense of the vault failing or anything like that."

"Good, then we have time to give this its proper due." Nod nod. Then he looks Remus straight in the eye and says, "I am going to close the wards around the vault so only myself or those I given direct access to can get in."

"That is a good immediate first step, but then what?"

"I want a team set up to research the vault, what it means, who built it, and why was it built. Contact Gringotts to see if they know anything. Have both locals and not involved, but everyone needs to swear an oath of loyalty, I will not allow messing abouts."

"Will do. Should I also begin setting up a cursebreaking project on the vault?"

"Yes, begin, but don't send them to the site yet as without the proper research I do not want it touched." Harry says with a firm. He then takes a deep breath. "Right, let me secure the wards, which I am thankful I can do here."

He then grins at both wizards before closing his eyes to reach for the magic - first his, then the House, then the hundred, and then the district within said hundred that housed the vault. With a blast of magic, felt but not seen, he pinched the vault and its surroundings from normal entrance - outsiders can see it but they could no longer get into it.

With a twist of power he also manifested a sign upon the newly appeared sealed gate - 'Closed till further notice by the authority of Lord Harold James Potter.'

Nodding slightly Harry comes back to himself and grins at the two. "Well that was intriguing, I look forward to learning what is inside said vault." A pause, "So what is the second matter?"

Giving Harry a grin Remus then says, "Well the Ministry is having some issues with their plans to project the second through fourth tasks to the wider world."

"Oh, really, but the last task was projected fine?"

A nod, "It was yes, but since then some changes in Ministry and related House officials caused a blockage to appear."

"Right, well that is not going to be tolerated." A pause as Harry thinks on matters.

Charlie comments, "So easy would it be for Harry to brute force the orders?"

Giving Charlie a wide grin Remus says, "Magically easy but politically inconvenient for some." But
then he gives a firm nod. "But immediately doable with but a pulse of my Amulet of Office."

Giving Charlie a nod and Remus a grin Harry says, "thanks Charlie and Remus, do it." He then shrugs, "I am secure enough in my position that 'politically inconvenient' is not something I often find myself restricted by."

A grin, "Considering you participation in the tournament I think most people would expect it here Harry," Charlie comments.

"Too true, too true," Remus says with a chuckle. He then sits back, "Well that was it for me right now. So before I go and handle both issues, how are things going, " s pause, "for the both of you?"

Which gets some grins as conversation flows for a bit of time.

8888

With the little bit of free time they still had Harry and Charlie decided to walk about the small market set up in the shadow, and within the halls, of the stadium. The fact that they saw almost all of the famous businesses in Britain, France, and Germany had a presence here amused them to no end.

Which is what they are talking about when they walked into a particular hall and heard Ginny saying to an older gentleman, "Now sir I am going to have to insist that you make your way to your seats."

"But if I do that then I won't be able to buy the necklace that I know my wife would love."

Ginny carefully does not sigh, "I understand that sir but you sadly don't have the money to buy the item."

"But," the older man says sadly as he looks at the necklace.

Harry, after stepping slightly closer, makes a small gesture towards the shopkeeper and points towards the necklace, himself, and the man.

After staring at Harry for a second the shopsheeker then nods before walking into the back of the stall, much to Harry and Charlie's surprised look.

But then the shopkeeper returns to the front and clears his throat, "well sir, you are in luck. I just checked my back counter and you are actually my thousand customer." A wide grin as the older man looks wide eyed at the shop keeper. "This means you may purchase any item here at great discount."

The older man clears his throat, "I have thirty gold, is this enough with the discount?"

"Of course, in fact its only 25 gold with the discount."

The older man grins at that before handing over the coin and taking the necklace. "Oh my wife is going to love this so much, especially since we have been looking for something like it for decades now."

He then turns around and makes his way out of the small market, but not before stopping near Harry and bowing slightly, "Thank you sir for your kindness," and then walking away.

Charlie clears his throat slightly which has Harry blushing before he shakes his head and heads up to the front. "Thank you Mr Langhar for understanding my gestures."

"Not a problem Mr Potter, not a problem." The shopkeeper then stops, gives a grin and says, "That will be 210 gold Mr Potter as the necklace is quite expensive. It's all natural you see, made in the
sixth century within Camelot and contains its own magic."

With a grin, "Well look at that, I hope the man enjoys it." He then reaches into his personal bag and takes out a Gringotts check, as he wasn't going to hand over that much money in coinage.

As Harry is filling it out Philip Cole comes by saying with a smile, "Now I heard you were kind but I didn't realize how much till just now."

Though he gives him a grin it is Ginny that comments with a laugh, "He once bought enough radio units and receivers for the whole school, including its house elf members."

"What! The ones the school had were from the 70s, it was a travesty." He says upon finishing up the transaction. Which included him adding a bit more on the top, in thanks for the man understanding exactly what Harry was indicating. "So Ginny, how is the the work?"

She gives an amused grin at the question, "Honestly, not bad bordering on fun." She then turns towards Philip and says, "Out of all the community service work I volunteered for this has been the most intriguing."

"Oh really, so what else have you done?" Philip asks curiously as he and Ginny make their way out of the room.

Right before they fully depart, though not before both give Harry a small smile, they hear, "Well I assisted in the Brighten Beach Hundred fair and I have to tell you it was not fun!" She says this with a shake of the head.

Harry and Charlie simply stare at the sight before turning to look at each other in humor. "Do you think?"

"That your baby sister has set some eyes on Philip, yep!" Harry says with a chuckle and a pop to the 'P'. He then pats Charlie's shoulder, "But don't worry, Philip is a good person. He and I were in school for years and since Hogwarts have been pen pals since second year on."

Charlie then chuckles suddenly and at Harry's curious look he says, "Well her having a potential boyfriend in another school will make mum feel better about her actions."

Which gets a wide grin on Harry's face, one that says he knows something Charlie doesn't. Which at Charlie's look leads him to saying, "Though its not my secret to tell, I will just say that she is not some innocent flower."

Which gets a snort from Charlie and a shake of the head, "Right, I should have thought of that, she is a Weasley after all."

"Oh?"

A wide grin, "Yes." A pause, "Let me just say that Father wasn't mum's first, or fourth, but neither was mum Father's first, or sixth."

A wide grin followed by a large full on from the belly laughter is Harry's response to that particular revelation.

8888

"You know you don't have to come with me," Harry says to Charlie as they are walking towards the interview room within the stadium.
A nod, "Of course I know that, but I'm still coming along." Charlie says with a smile, and a soft hand on Harry's shoulder in fellowship.

It's at that point they arrive at the room for the interview which leads to Harry giving Charlie a wide smile before moving forward to greet the reporter. "Vivian why hello, so you got the short straw today did you."

A laugh, "Hello Harry, and you know it." A wide grin. She then turns towards Charlie and says, "Lord Weasley hello, welcome."

"Ms Carpenter, you are looking well today, I see the weather here is treating you nicely."

The two grin, which gets a surprised look on Harry's face as he says, "Wait, you two know each other?"

A nod, "Vivian and I were in the same year at Hogwarts, though she is Ravenclaw. Since then I have made use of her talents when I needed some reporter assistance."

Vivian nods at that while adding, "While I have made use of Charlie's knoweldge of magical creatures and his status as an active Head." A pause as she grins at both wizards, "So, what brings you here today Charlie?"

"Oh I'm not really here."

"Of course, of course, duly noted," she says with a wide knowing grin.

Looking between the two and their somewhat silent communication Harry chuckles and shakes his head, "So good friends I see." He then gets a bit serious, "Well anyway he is obviously not here as you know." A pause for her to nod then he says, "Right, so question time."

"Question time indeed Harry." She then clears her throat and sets up the auto-writing pen.

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Vivian CARPENTER: I am here today with Lord Harry Potter, one of the two Hogwarts champions. For the record as we are speaking one Cedric Diggory is also in interview. Now Lord Potter, since the last task do you have any new thoughts on the Tournament?

Harry POTTER: Well the last task was fun and I find myself looking forward to seeing what this one will bring.

Carpenter: Do you have any comments on the nature of the tasks themselves.

Potter: I like the way they became rather than what they were going to be. The new set of four are much more varied and, well, entertaining.

Carpenter: So you are glad they were changed?

Potter: Oh yes, very much so. In fact I found the origional trials as they were quite irresponsbile. For example a dragon is not a creature that anyone should face, let alone school students. The old second task would have had zero visibility for oothers to watch, which is not entertaining. In fact only the third and final task was something I thought was fitting.

Carpenter: Well then I am glad it was changed. So, what are you thinking about this upcoming task?

Potter: I'm looking forward to it. Magical golf archery is such a bizarre combination of concepts that I
think its going to be quite fun. *At this point Lord Potter speaks in a whisper.* I even heard that there is going to be moments when the crowd will be able to assist us.

Carpenter: I head something similar, though no need to whisper Lord Potter as this article is coming out after the task finishes.

Potter: Oh is it, nifty. *Lord Potter gives a wide grin at this.*

Carpenter: Well then, my final question is have you prepared yourself for the trial?

Potter: Both Cedric and I have practiced and studied quite a bit. We also have come up with various potential plans, based on what the judges have officially revealed to us. I think its going to be fun.

Carpenter: Well that is it for now. Thank you Lord Potter for agreeing to speak with me today. I would say good luck but as a reporter I need to stay unbiased.

Potter: *With a grin* Well then say Have Fun! But that said its been a pleasure speaking to you here today.

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"Well that is all for now, thank you Harry for agreeing to be interviewed by me," Vivian says with a flourish upon shutting off the quill.

"Honestly, like I said, I have no problem with you or your interviews. You at least keep them real." A pause, "So I meant to ask, why aren't you being a bit more pushy with them?"

A chuckle, "Honestly readers have no interest in non tournament related issues in this series, so we are keeping them on the point." A grin, "But expect us to go back to the rough questions once the tournament is over."

All three laugh at that before Harry stands up, "Well then I guess I have to head out, its time for us champions to gather for the start of the trial."

"Well Harry, have fun!" Vivian says as her way of having the final word as the two head out.

After a bit of steps down the hall they get to corridor with two paths. This leads to Charlie saying, "Well Harry this is where I leave you for now. Have fun and enjoy yourself, and good luck to both Cedric and yourself."

"Thanks Charlie, will do. I hope you enjoy it and say hello to Remus and your family up in the booth."

The two grin at each other before parting ways. For now anyway.

8888

As soon as the last of the champions, which happened to be Vala, had arrived Lugo Bagman began speaking. "Hello ladies and gents to the start of the second task. Now before we head to the platform and begin there are some matters we need to go over." He then pauses in order to make sure everyone is paying attention to him, which they are. "Right, so this task is going to be divided into eighteen holes broken down into six sets of three holes each. Some holes will be solo, some team, and some crowd - which is which will be made apparent at the holes themselves. On the solo ones final point score is a combination of both and averaged."
After raising his wand and getting called on Harry asks, "What magic are we allowed to do?"

It is Sirius who answers from where he is leaning against the wall. "Anything legal that doesn't cause damage and which stays in the stage of the hole." A pause, "The exception on the later being when its crowd, of course."

Nods are given at that which leads to Ludo clapping his hands together, "Splendid. Right then, so let us get ready and in ten minutes it all will start."

As Ludo heads out Sirius gives all a wide grin and a nod and then walks out himself.

"Oh look, it has a jungle theme," comments Cedric as soon as the vast illusion of the course manifests around them. "I like jungles."

This gets some amused chuckles as Fleur goes, "So how do we decide which pair goes first?"

"That would be through us," says the voice of Ludo from on high.

"Each pair please pick a color," Sirius adds.

"Gold," Harry says after a moment of discussion between himself and Cedric.

"Black," says Viktor with little input from Vala.

"Purple," adds Fleur after she talks it over with Lucus.

"Splendid," Ludo comments.

At this point the group can here a bit spellcasting casting which is followed by the manifestation of a spinning three sided die the size of a quaffle.

The die continued to spin for a bit before slowing down to reveal itself as all Black.

"Durmstrang will go first!" Sirius then states.

Then a two sided object appears before them and begins spinning. After a minute of the movement it begins to slow down, manifesting as Gold.

"And Hogwarts as second. So that its Durmstrang first, Hogwarts second, and Beauzbaton third." Ludo says to the roar of the fans rooting for their schools comes over the stadium. "Okay champions you may now begin."

"Right," says Viktor as the outside sounds fade away and the world narrows to simply the six of them and the environment of the task.

Which is a long narrow lane with the tee off point in the front, a bit of raises then lowers and then the target slot at the back. Though that is difficult enough as it is what makes it all the more challenges is near invisible magical flows that limit certain paths.

Without much delay Viktor and Vala move to the front, take hold of the other's hand, and looks over the field. With a slight gesture and a look they then close there eyes in concentration, before opening it to let out a blast of magic.

An elemental orb manifests and begins moving from them and towards the hole. It flows quite well
first before hitting a bit of turbulence and landing upon the ground, somewhat near to the target.

They look at each other and nod, a very respectable distance.

Harry and Cedric nod themselves before moving up in a physical repeat of the process. As they grab hands they move to link their magic, their auras, which is what allows them to manifest the elemental orb.

It also naturally slows time for them, as is standard for those who have worked together for years.

But even more it lets them talk, mentally, and without detection.

"There is an air flow to the side." Harry says.

"Yes I see, and a water bubble in the west, nearly invisible."

"If we hit the air to the side it will flow down the dip and loose momentum when it hits the water, letting us in."

"But the slight rise will block us."

"True, but not if we utilize the smooth fire near that point to gain momentum."

"Sounds perfect, if we time the magic right we might get a hole in one."

"Do we want to risk that?" Cedric wonders.

"Your right, that's too risky. Let us instead try to get it near that final flat part."

"I agree."

With full agreement both toggle their magic which leads into their shared aura and then through the orb. Which flies from its spot and through the stage in exactly the way they had planned before landing at the point they had figured it would.

With a nod of success for getting even closer to the target they step back and let Fleur and Lucus have their try.

Which leads to their orb slightly nudging the orb of Viktor and Vala, moving it to the side and thus both farther and closer at the same time.

"Sorry," Lucus says in amusement, since such things are in fact quite likely.

Shaking their heads Viktor and Vala make their way to their orb for their second attempt. Which leads them to getting it a bit closer but not actually in the hole.

After linking there auras again Cedric says, "Oh I know what to do. If we add a bit more air and fire to our aura we can lead it to hitting the side of the stage before hitting the hole."

"I agree," Harry simply says as he is in fact full agreement with what Cedric says.

There plan works well, leading the orb flying from where it had landed, hitting the side, moving to the other side, hitting there, and then flowing down towards the middle and into the hole.

"Score," Harry and Cedric say as the orb enters into the hole one lower than the goal.
The other champions nod at that as Fleur and Lucus come up for their second hit. Which has the unfortunate effect of flowing past the hole before settling near to it.

Both Durmstrang and Beauxbaton achieve success at getting their orbs in the hole at the third attempt. Which just so happened to be the goal, so both teams were quite happy.

The second hole turns out to be quite similar to the first, though it did include a bit of wasteland designed to catch the orb as it flew past. All three groups managed to get it on par, which led to grins among them.

The third hole in this set had a slightly different feature then the others - it contained two paths one could take and also had a trap that responded to the magic of those watching the match. Now this is a bit of tricky magic that puts out a vote to those watching and uses the consensus to shift how the magic of the trap works.

Due to the vagaries of this trap none of the groups wanted to make use of them, but that would be hard due to the design of the stage.

Which is exactly the point of it.

So the Durmstrang champions went first and managed to bypass the first set of traps, much to the applause of those supporting them.

Now when Harry and Cedric got up they decided a different route - to take the risk of the trap because a bit of timing could lead to a benefit even with the danger. Which led to their orb moving from the start down a ramp, through some air, and into the crowd trap.

The orb is subsequently held by the trap as the vote takes place magically. Once a decision is made the orb shifts and moves and launches itself from the trap and down the field, hitting a few dips and sands before resting in a corner.

Though Fleur and Lucus saw what Harry and Cedric did they didn't want to risk it, and so shifted their aura in a precise way to bypass it. They didn't get as close but they also didn't get harmed by it - so they considered it a success.

The second hit for Durmstrang hit a crowd trap and went widely off course, though not so far as to risk the hole for them.

The second hit for Hogwarts was carefully chosen to be a safe one, they didn't want to risk anything.

When Fleur and Lucus got up they decided to take a risk, one which paid off by just missing a crowd trap. To the enjoyment of most, even those not supporting their victory.

Seeing how things are going the third hit for Durmstrang is entirely safe.

The third hit for Hogwarts is a strategic one that gets them to close but not at the hole.

Luck ends for Beauzbaton at their third hole for here it hit a side wall and went right into a crowd trap.

This actually led to the crowd cheering for at this point all three schools had hit a crowd trap.

As a show of skill for all three schools the fourth strike for them all led to orbs going into the hole, to a vast cheer.
The first set then ended as the background faded.

"I have to tell you Draco," Harry says upon seeing his fellow year, "that was a bit more fun then I expected it would be."

With a nod, "I thought the same thing actually." Is Draco's immediate response. "Which is funny as I have seen and played both golf and archery and this is many times more fun."

"By the way," Blaise questions as he comes by, "Why are they calling it golf-archery, afterall its mostly golf."

A shrug is the response, "Not sure really. Though I think the archery elements come out more a bit later."

The small group stop as the return to seats sound over the magical loudspeaker.

Giving his friends a grin Harry says, "Well see you later as the small concert is about to start."

"Ooh right," Draco says, "isn't it Cassandra Prophecy, I really like her music."

Both Harry and Blaise nod at that before the former smiles once more and heads out of the room.

Upon making his way to the champions box he says, "Did I miss anything?"

"No, just the introductions, she is starting her song set now."

"Brillaint," Harry says as he sits back to listen to her songs which blend traditional with muggle with new style.

With a laugh Viktor says, "oh pirate them, we at Durmstrang love this theme."

Before any of the others could speak Ludo's voice comes over the announcement system. "So champions it has been decided to reroll the order that you will go in. That said the colors will remain the same, why change a good thing."

This leads to it going Beauxbaton, Durmstrang, then Hogwarts.

As they began all the champions take stop of how this particular set is designed. Which is in the form of a pirate ship whose main deck is the first hole, the inside deck the second, and the captain's quarters the third.

The first hole is the simplest, though it does have a wooden mast to cause some problems. It is here that the first hole in one occurs, done by Durmstrang much to there glee.

The second hole is designed to be long and twisty and contains numerous nooks and crannies. This led to a much longer attempt, with all three groups going over the goal by at least four.

The final hole was short but made use of crowd traps and hidden pitfalls to increase the difficulty. What made this amusing to those in the stands is how Hogwarts got a crowd trap once, Beauxbaton three times, but Durmstrang none.

Needless to say this set turned out to be easily placed as Durmstrang's finest.
"Ladies and gentleman let me introduce those of the Golden Sparrow Theater as they perform some scenes from their musical 'The Life of Cleon the Reformer'."

As the performers went on stage Cedric turns towards Harry and says, "Out of all the plays did they really have to show this one?"

A small chuckle, "I asked the same thing to Sirius. He told me that their agents gave Ludo a ten page letter on why they should be chosen."

"Did the letter also include some gold?" Asks Viktor curiously as he leans over.

A wide grin, "He didn't say but he did wink a bit at me as he commented on it."

Their chatter is then interrupted by Fleur who sushe them while saying she loved the music of the play and wanted to enjoy it. The rest of the champions settled back to watch, but not before grinning in amusement at each other.

"Oh, my turn, I love dinosaurs," Harry comments the moment the illusions manifest and they hear the roar of a distant dinosaur.

"I heard that some of the earliest dinosaurs became dragons when magic first appeared," comments Lucus with a wide grin. As the others look at him, and right before Ludo starts to speak, he shrugs and adds, "I like dinosaurs too!"

They then grin while listening to Ludo talk about the order - which after a magical dice roll leads to it going Hogwarts, Durmstrang, then Beauxbaton.

"Cool," Harry says as Cedric nods and the two head up to the front begin the set.

Before connecting their auras the two look around the stage in an attempt to get a clear picture of what they are facing.

"We have to be careful," Harry says once they enter into the shared aura space. "Because if we strike the orb wrong it will enter the mouth of the dinosaur."

"That might not be a bad idea actually," Cedric says in response. "Well maybe not in the mouth but if we hit it right we can get it on its nose, bounce it up onto its head, and then down its back."

"It could work yeah," Harry says in acceptance. A mental nod, "Mostly because the dinosaur is not really moving much."

"Yeah exactly," Cedric says in agreement.

With them deciding exactly what to do they move to put that into play. So a shift of their body and a change to the expression of the aura and the orb flies from its position and down the lane of the stage. It hits the nose of the dinosaur, who moves its head upward to shake the itch, leading the orb to move on its head, then down its back, and up its tail before falling right into the hole.

Which is a hole in one.

As the two wizards watch it they blink in shock at how lucky that hit was.
As they move back Viktor and Vala move forward, with Vala saying, "Nice one. Quite lucky."

After two hits each, which is under goal, the champions move on to the next hole of the set. A hole shaped like a 'U' with a number of traps inside the bend.

Despite the relative success that was the last hole this one, well, turns out to be a disaster for all three schools. All of them require many more hits above goal, with Durmstrang the least at three above and the other two both at four.

This leads to a much dejected and thus very focused group of champions walking to the third hole, which is 'L' shaped. Besides the crowd trap it also contains numerous elemental and physical blockers designed to make it all the more risky.

It is at the start of the third hit that Cedric says, after realizing something, "Trust me?", as they share auras.

"Of course, completely," is Harry's immediate response with no hesitation.

Which is why he did not have any issue with Cedric manipulating their shared magic without actually telling him what he is going to.

The trust pays off, not that Harry had any doubt, as the orb pushes through a crowd trap - with a roar of enjoyment - then through a fire, then air, then water, and finally an earth trap, followed by hitting a wall, which leads it to skip bouncing down a sand trap and into the hole.

The two grin at each other as the crowd goes wild at the display.

"Showoffs," says Lucus with a laugh as Viktor and Vala move up to take there own hits.

It is at the fourth hit that the others get their orb into the hole, a respectable number, and thus ends this set.

8888

"Well I'm going to stretch my legs a bit," says Vala with a nod towards the other champions.

As the others nod at that Harry smiles, "Good idea, I think I'm going to copy you."

Which leads to laughter as the small group disperses, with each heading to a classmate or family group.

Harry made his way to the section where his year mates are sitting, which is in a booth of there own. As he walked he couldn't help but chuckle at the thought that his year got their own section due to connection with him.

"Hey all," is what Harry says the moment he walks into said booth.

Which leads to a slight lull in local conversations as they greet him, with some actually congratulating him for work well done so far.

After smiling and shaking hands, and even accepting a few shoulder pats, he moves to where Hermione is in discussion with a number of others.

As soon as they see him Hermione turns and says, "I was just saying that I had been talking to an Abasi Asim who is visiting here from the Heka School of Magic. He was telling me that they spend a lot of time studying the ancient magics of Egypt - in fact over all seven years."
"While I find that interesting," Terry says, "I didn't think her conclusion was entirely the way we should go."

Looking at Hermione leads her to saying, "I suggested that maybe Hogwarts should make the study of such ancient magics mandatory from the start."

"Wouldn't that technically be the responsibility of the History of Magic course?" Harry says then chuckles, "Which yes, I know, is mostly about goblin wars right now."

The rest gathered around chuckle at that as Justin says, "Also the other classes cover it too." As they look at him he explains, "Well each year did spend a portion of time covering the ancient magic of that field."

"Oh right," Blaise says with a nod. "I particularly enjoyed the Potions of Rome we covered in January of Second Year."

"Actually speaking of that," comments Mandy, "isn't going over some of the more recent developments within Albion what the upcoming presentation is going to be about?"

As Harry nods at that Draco says, "I was actually wondering who pushed for the educational program?"

"The three Head Teachers actually, with Karkaroff being the one to push for it."

"Wait really?" Justin asks confused, especially considering everything he heard about the man.

A nod and grin, "I know right, that's is what I asked myself. But it seems that a number of recent developments are from people in his social circle and so he wanted to advertise them. Dumbledore pushed to get it to be all recent developments of certain standards."

"Well that's nice," says Daphne with a nod. As the others turn to her she adds, "I know of some of those recent developments and they help in a hundred and one fields."

"Is there a pamphlet on what topics will be covered?"

POP

"Dobby here was asked by great master Harry's godwolf to give these out to the Great Master's friends."

He then snaps his finger which causes a pamphlet, how convenient Harry thinks, to appear in everyone's hands.

Before Harry can thank Dobby there is a gasp and a questioning, "Dobby?" from Draco.

Dobby nods his floppy ears before saying, "Hello young master Draco, Dobby here is pleased to see you are doing well."

"But how are you with Harry, and why didn't I see you during the summer?"

"Dobby had his contract bought by the great Master Harry and has been serving him since then." There is a pause, and a slight tug of the ear, one of the few acts of self-harm that Harry had not been able to get Dobby to stop doing. "Dobby didn't show himself then as Dobby felt it too weird." A wide grin then appears, "Though that not all for Dobby also didn't show himself as he wasn't there a lot as Dobby was training with High Chamberlain Esher."
"Well that's great Dobby and its nice to see you again, I'm glad you are okay and clearly loving life."

Nod. Nod. Wide grin. "Dobby is, Dobby really is. The great and awesome and amazing Master Harry is awesome!" He then gives a bit of a bow before popping away.

"Right sorry all, he is a bit exitable."

Not only is there laughter at that but Draco nods fully in agreement. He then gives Harry a soft smile, one that says much even without words.

Though the laughter continues for a bit at the same time those around the room begin opening up their pamphlets to see what is going to be covered in the presentation.

"Ooh," Neville says with a smile, "they are going to cover Nicolai Delvale's recent Herbology development."

"I like how they will be covering the arithmantic developments of Lady Ilene Crane," Hermione says in joy.

With a chuckle Ron adds, "The new Quidditch spells of Mickie Trudeau is being presented as well, which is going to be fun."

"Eight presentations each roughly five minutes, not bad, not bad at all." Harry says with a nod as he reads over the description.

"And its starting now," comments Terry as he points towards the sight of the judges walking out to the platform to begin introductions. Which leads the others to find a seat and quiet down in interest as what is too be said.

8888

"I must say there illusionists did a splendid job on desiging the stages." Charlie says with a nod towards the island platform that the champions are playing in.

Remus nods in agreement, "You have Sirius to thank for that, he was able to find the budget space to hire the Moonlight Designers Guild."

"Having Harry as their patron couldn't have harmed that attempt," Molly says with a smile, to the shock of many of those around. "What, I'm a Prewett by birth and a Weasley by marriage, of course I know these things."

Some wide grins come at that though the talk stops for a moment as Harry and Cedric make a particular important strike which leads to their orb going into the second hole.

"It also doesn't harm matters that Harry has stopped watching his words when at the Burrow." Molly says with a smile. "Not that he needs to as everything he says at the Burrow stays at the Burrow, privacy and security is our guarantee."

"Truthfully Molly, I don't know if you know how much that means to him," Remus says softly with with strong conviction in his voice.

She just smiles and nods while turning back to the game.

8888

"Oh I love Jarvis and Delmar, their comedy routine is hilarious," comments Cedric about the comedy
"I don't think I have heard of them," Harry says with a shrug.

"Really, for even I have seen them before," adds Viktor from where he is sitting.

Fleur then says, "Same with me, in fact I have even seen two of their shows."

"Well then, if all of you like them I guess this is going to be great!" Harry adds with a small smile as the duo begin their routine. A routine which by the end has all of them, including Harry, laughing so much they are holding their sides.

8888

The fifth set of holes had a western theme to its design, that is of the American West. Though this raised some eyebrows at first it wasn't long before the fact that millions of Albion citizens lived in hundreds full of said design - and that fitting them into the tournament showed their full acceptance.

At least that is the political line, the truth is much less enlightened - Sirius Black liked how Remus looked in a cowboy outfit and so pushed for the theme to be part of the tournament.

This was not told to anyone - though Harry had sort of guessed it, not that it was that hard as he did run into the two of them dressed as such at one point. Of course Harry did share said reason with Cedric, mostly to see him blush, which is exactly what happened around the time the stage manifested and Harry wiggled his eyebrows suggestively.

The three holes of the set included a street, a bar, and a mine.

The street is large and straight but complicated through the use of statues to represent people, as well as a few displays. All three champions got this under goal, which is not something that surprised anyone.

The second hole, the bar, involved quite a bit of height changes, representing tables and chairs and even a bar. Through both a bit of luck and skill the Beauxbaton champions managed to get a hole in one, which led to multiple congrats for the achievement.

The final hole, looking like a mine, is loopy with a downward pitch, representing the mines going deep underground. While Fleur and Lucus used finnese and Viktor and Vala made a strategic strike, Harry and Cedric went all out on the power level.

This saw them making a wild shot, one which hit corners and jumped all over the place - it even flew out of the area before hitting a wall and bouncing back in. In fact all but the last hit, which is done gently, is done in said wild style.

8888

"Okay I am so glad the last set is done," says Harry as he plops down in the chair within the champion box.

"Seriously Harry," says Lucus, "what did the poor set of holes do to you?"

This gets a chuckle among the group.

Even Harry smiles as he says, "Honestly, I don't know, I just didn't feel like being slow and steady."

"Which I was fine with," Cedric says with his own chuckle, "as with it being different then our older
methods it was also fun."

"One more set to go and this task will be done," Fleur says with a nod and a soft smile. "Which I want to happen soon."

"As do I," says Viktor with a firm nod.

"Well we do have this intermission to watch first," says Lucus.

"Which is what exactly?"

"A circus show," Harry adds with a smile, "which honestly I am looking forward to as they are pretty fun."

Said circus act started not long afterward in fact, much to everyone's joy. It was a thirty minute act and it contained both ground and air acrobatics as well as song and dance routines and even a few animal acts - which are made all the better due to the animals being fully willing.

By the end of the show the champions exited their box and stood visible to the crowd of the stadium as they clapped loudly in enjoyment at what they just saw. This got a slight bow from the troupe performing as they saw the champions applaud them.

8888

Space. The final frontier.

And the last set of holes for the second task of the tournament.

As the location manifested around them the six champions were in awe at the environment they found themselves in. Looking about they got to see the layout of the set - the first hole is a ship's bridge, the second is standing on an asteroid, and the third is them within a dome on what looked like the planet Mars.

All in all very nifty and very fun looking.

Which led to the six champions taking their time and doing this set of holes right. They acted with patience and worked with organization the led them to being both strategic and tactical.

Which would prove itself when by the end all schools got at par for all three holes, even with at least two crowd traps being hit for each of them.

As as the bubble of space faded away the six champions saw themselves on the base platform in the center of the stadium. The crowd were on their feet clapping and yelling in enjoyment at the completion of the second task.

The judges came forward and began making their speeches and handing out points. Which led to the reveal that all three schools were basically equal to each other as all did quite well in the tournament today.

With a single final wave and a mighty bow the six champions walked out of the stadium, done for the day.

8888

It took Harry an hour to go from the stadium to the covenant section and then another half an hour from the hall of the section to his own office. Mostly because every time he took two steps forward
more people came by wanting to congratulate him and tell him how great he did.

Of course, Harry being Harry, there was no way he was going to be rude to those saying such nice things. So instead he controlled the conversation and continued moving forward, inch by inch till he could get away.

"Hey pup, you okay?" is said by Sirius upon seeing his godson walk into the office.

"He's probably tired," Remus says with a smile as he gestures towards the cup on the desk, "some hot chocolate for you cub."

Stepping forward and grabbing the cub he smiles and takes a long swig of it before sitting down in the chair next to Charlie.

Charlie simply says, "Take your time, relax, and enjoy your drink. Also there is more if you want."

"Hmm, thanks Charlie, your the best." Harry mumbles while leaning his head back against the table.

"Hey, it was Remus who got the tea!" Sirius says aghast.

Which leads to Harry opening his eyes and then all four laughing at the antics as they simply relax and enjoy each other's company.

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Magical Happenstance

Date: Fourth Year, Late January

"So Terry was telling me about the time when his muggle cousin got locked into a walk in closet but found it so enjoyable he refused to come out even when they unlocked the door." Is what Harry is talking about as him and Cedric ran their laps around the school.

But before Cedric could comment on the nature of the story Harry stopped as he felt his Head Ring heat up. Stopping himself, for there was little that Cedric knew would cause Harry to pause in his run he waited.

He didn't have to wait long for Harry had already activated his Ring and manifested the messenger.

"Sheriff Cummings, what do I owe this interruption to?"

"Pardon me my lord," the older sheriff of the Purple Reed Hundred says, "its just that there was an incident recently that I figured you would want to directly know."

A blink then a nod, "If you think I should know then I trust you when you say its important. So what happened?"

"It seems that a storm struck the light tower of the magical workshop of one artificer Maurice Burgess and impacted the nexus lines of the hundred."

"What is the devastation like?"

"Physically, a lot, but not so much in lives lost. Which we are thankful on."

"So what is the ongoing issue?"

"The aftershocks are worse then we expected. Our rescue workers and artificers are finding themselves becoming overwhelmed."

A nod. "Okay on the aid front I can have companies of Guards and aid workers there within the half hour." A pause, "but that doesn't solve the immediate issue of the magical backlash."

After a small clearing of his throat Cedric says, "hey Harry, pardon me, but does the hundred have a ritualized essence discharge site?"

At Harry's nod to him the sheriff tilts his head in thought, "my hundred doesn't but the nearby White Sands Hundred does. Why?"

"Well if you get a warding specialist to manipulate the magical tapestry you could have it absorb the excess energy and eject it into the ether."

A pause as the sheriff thinks, "that's not a bad idea sirs."

Harry stares at Cedric for a moment before smiling, and giving a nod. "Right. So this is what we are going to do. I'm going to send you the guards and relief workers, as well as artificers and ward masters. You will do what you need to do to create a stopgap measure while I work on gaining
access to the discharge sight." A pause then, "who owns that hundred?"

"House Malfoy sir," comes the immediate answer.

A slight frown followed by a nod, "of course they do." A shake of the head. "Right, so that's on me so don't worry about it. Focus on your hundred."

"Yes sir, will do." A pause then he tilts his head in Cedric's direction, "thank you as well Lord Diggory."

Cedric simply nods in acceptance as the message is ended.

Harry gives his friend a nod before quickly calling the First Captain of the Potter Guard, the Potter House Warder, and Superintendent Santiago Rivera, the head of the Potter relief organization. He also sends Remus an update message as well, though not a full on mirror call.

Once all orders are given Harry turns to Cedric and says, "well that's done, though sorry for the interrupt, but thanks for the help."

"Not a problem Harry, not a problem." A pause, "so what do you want to do?"

Looking at his watch he then says, "lets finish the run, we still have some time."

Which gets a grin as the two begin moving again for they have a run to finish.

8888

"Pardon me Mr Potter," says Professor Sinistra upon coming upon Harry gathering books off a shelf for a Potions project.

Directing a smile towards her he says, "yes professor?"

She then gestures towards one of the back study rooms which has Harry nodding and then heading there. Once they are in the room she says, "I do apologize for the interruption but I have heard some grave news that I wanted to share with you."

A blink in surprise at that, for most professors keep outside events, well, outside. Still, he knew, that if she felt it necessary to tell him right now then it was important. "Well then, what can I do for you, how can I help you?"

"Are you aware of the situation going on in the Emerald Claw prefecture?"

A nod, "I know that a magical incident has occurred in the Purple Reed Hundred."

"It seems Lord Potter that the issue has expanded, it also touches my parents home in the White Springs Hundred, which is a few hundreds away from Purple Reed."

"White Springs," Harry says in thought while feeling for his House magics, "isn't that a House Sage holding."

"Correct Lord Potter." Is her response, she then takes a deep breath before adding, "so in the aftermath of the magical incident White Springs got a bit of stormy weather but didn't think much of it. But I was just floo called by Father who wanted to tell me it just got worse."

"I see." Harry says with a sort of regal nod. "After my upcoming Defense class I will be meeting with Remus in order to go over the details of what is going on." A pause to smile at her, "but I thank
you for the heads up as it benefits me to know what is going on."

She gives him a nod at that before making her way out of the room, while Harry sits down in thought. This is, he thinks, the disadvantage of being at Hogwarts, for he is away from his direct access to the Potter Manor C&C center.

But then he shrugs for there is nothing to do about it, he is after all only fourteen and thus needs to be at Hogwarts.

8888

Upon walking into the covenant common hall Harry makes a beeline for where Neville and Hermione are sitting in a corner studying. "Hey guys," he says upon coming up to them, "I just wanted to say I'm going to be in my tent in a meeting."

Neville nods at that while Hermione asks, "did you want us to get you at a time?"

A grin, "well I guess maybe if I'm not out by dinner you can come find me."

Which gets some amused laughter as Harry nods and walks away.

After he does so Justin walks in saying, "oh did I just miss Harry?"

A nod from around the room as Neville says, "yeah you did."

"Oh darn, I wanted to ask him about a project we are working on." A pause, "is he going to be back anytime soon?"

"Not really no," Hermione then says, "as from what I gather he is going to be busy handling political matters."

"Oh, okay," Justin says with a nod, since he knows how busy Harry often is.

8888

The meeting had lasted by this point for over an hour. They talked about everything, from geography, to timeline, to environment, to what the people in and around the hundred did.

They even expanded the conversation to cover what was going on in the hundreds nearby. Which, when they really got down to it, could potentially be worse then what was going on in the Purple Reed Hundred itself.

Which leads to Harry saying with a firm nod, "so really Cedric's idea is the best we have."

With a nod, "it really is yes. Though there are some issues we will have to work out, especially if we want to be quick about the working."

"Which is where I come in," Sirius says upon walking into the office from the floo chamber. After a quick kiss to Remus and a hug with Harry he continues. "So I've been with a team all morning trying to figure out the administrative geography of the region. While the majority answer to you Harry, two are House Longbottom, and many are House Malfoy, including a couple which were once House Weasley but Malfoy has dominion of."

"Thanks for that Sirius, you really helped."

"No problem pup, glad to do what I can do." A pause, "I should add that I already spoke to Augusta
and she is fully in support with cooperation."

"So that leads Malfoy," Remus says with an ironic smile.

"Hmm, isn't that interesting." Harry says with a nod. A long pause as he thinks on things. He then says, "okay, so here are some of my thoughts. One I go through Sirius while two is I contact him myself."

"I think there is more benefit to you being the contact rather then me," Sirius says after a moment to think on the situation himself.

"I agree," Remus says softly, "though I kind of wish I didn't."

A wide grin followed by a node is Harry's response, followed by a shake of the head. "Admittedly, I agree as well."

"So I guess what we need to discuss is the talking points you will use when you speak to him."

Sirius comments.

"Sounds good," a pause, "okay then, lets begin." Harry then grins as they get back down to business.

8888

It was the end of Potions and Harry gestures towards his friends to head on out.

As soon as its just him and Professor, said professor says, "yes Mr Potter what may I do for you?"

"Honestly, something a bit complicated." At the man's raised eyebrow Harry goes on. "Has Professor Sinistra spoken to you about the issue in her parent's hundred?"

"Yes she has Mr Potter, I also know that besides your assortment of Houses there are a few hundreds in the area of both Longbottom and Malfoy."

A wide grin, "well then it makes this conversation a bit easier as I don't have to tell you the set up."

"You do not Mr Potter, though I still am unaware of what use I may be to you on this."

Harry pauses before saying, "well here is where the complication arises. I would like to have a meeting with Lord Malfoy and I would ask you to facilitate said meeting."

"Oh you do, do you?"

A firm nod at that, "while the initial contact is something I am more than prepared to do on my own, and in fact I have already penned the letter, it is the meeting that I seek to make easier."

"So you wish to bypass the Hogwarts protocols designed to protect students from being forced to handle political issues."

"Yes," Harry says simply.

"You know that if I accept your request I will be present for the whole meeting."

"Of course. In fact I would never have thought otherwise and consider your presence fully welcome."

"I see." Snape says in his drawl while not showing what he is thinking about it all. "When do you
wish for the meeting?"

"I plan on sending the message as soon as you accept the offer. On the meeting itself, well I am optimistic he will accept a quick meeting."

Snape simply stares at Harry before giving a firm nod, "I accept Mr Potter, please feel free to send the message and know that I shall be available for whenever you two decide on an evening."

"Thank you Professor, I appreciate it." Harry says before giving a regal nod of his own and heading out of the class.

8888

"Well, well well," Lucius says a little while later upon reading the message from Lord Potter.

"What does it say Husband," is Narcissa comment after Lucius finishes reading it.

"It seems Lord Potter wishes to have an in person meeting with me in order for us to solve the issue going on in the Emerald Claw prefecture."

"I see." A pause, "do we have assets there Husband?"

A nod, "yes, both directly as House Malfoy and also secondly through our regency of certain House Weasley holdings."

"Hmm," she says before commenting, "is he circumventing the Hogwarts protocols for such meetings."

"Yes," now Lucius gets an amused smile on his face, "by having Severus host our meeting."

"Quite intriguing Husband," Narcissa says with a wide grin. "So what are you planning on doing?"

"I will meet with him of course and while I will agree to assist him I plan on seeking some boons."

She nods at that before saying, "my only advice Husband is don't push it, don't back Lord Potter into a corner."

With as open a smile as he has ever give he says simply, "that is not my intention at all. In fact I see more benefit to us and our House by working with him."

"Good."

8888

Upon sitting down in Professor Snape's private lounge Harry says, "once again I appreciate this Professor."

Whatever Professor Snape was going to say was interrupted by the lighting of the fireplace and the magical woosh of a floo connection being made.

Then a voice manifests from it, "one Lord Lucius Malfoy of House Malfoy wishes to visit one Lord Severus Snape of House Prince, Potions Master of Hogwarts."

"I, Potions Master Lord Severus Snape of Hogwarts do accept the floo passage of one Lord Lucius Malfoy of House Malfoy into my office for a personal meeting."
Then an ornately dressed Lucius Malfoy steps through the fireplace and into the private office. Lucius then gives Severus a slight bow before shaking his hand. He then turns towards Harry and does the same, a bow and a handshake. Once the standard greetings are given Lucius and Harry move to sit in the chairs by the fireplace while Severus moves to sit behind his desk, close but not officially a part of the conversation.

"So with that out of the way how would you like to handle this meeting Lord Potter," Lucius says with little emotion in his voice.

"Formally informal," Harry says with a bit of a grin appearing before adding, "mutually respectful but to the point without needless flowery language."

"That I can do," Lucius says with a small smirk, "so lets begin with laying out the issues and what is needed to solve it."

Which they do, for almost half an hour.

Once that part is set up Harry says, "we seem to be in agreement in what needs to be done, now let us go over what we are willing to do and for what."

This Lucius gives a small smirk at before launching into what he wants and what he will do if he gets what he wants.

It doesn't take long for Severus to realize what Harry did - by letting Lucius speak first he was able to direct the flow of conversation. Now Severus knew that Lucius would realize this later on, but that was okay for it was the now that was great.

Severus is brought back to the present when he hears Harry say, "oh, you didn't mention seeking my support in your attempt to pass Reform Law 607 B." A pause, "for I will accept doing that, as long as you drop your second, sixth, and seventh requirements."

Which leads to another set of discussions as they work to iron out the exact nature of the deals presented. During the whole time Harry gives as good as he gets, not backing down but at the same time being gentle in his firmness.

In the end two hours passed before the two Lords had come to an official agreement, one which led to a pact backed by the power of their Head Rings. Then the two Lords stood up, bowed to each other, shook hands. With that settled Lucius did the same to Severus, while also giving him a knowing grin, before flooing away.

Once Lucius left Harry turned towards Professor Snape and says, "well that went well I think."

"Mr Potter that is an understatement," Severus states firmly.

"Oh, well that's good to hear. It was my first true one on one discussion with another Lord."

Severus nods at that before launching into a lecture that explains the finer points of what he had done. This lecture, very well received by Harry, only ended when they happened to look at the clock and notice that Harry had five minutes left before curfew.

"Good news," Harry says upon ducking into a side room and mirror calling Sirius and Remus.
"You made the deal?" Remus asks.

"Great job pup," Sirius says with a smile, "I knew you could do it."

A wide pleased grin is the response followed by, "well I admit it was fun." A pause, "though I am sorry to say that its going to make a bit more work for both of you."

An eye raise leading to Remus saying, "what did you promise cub?"

A grin, "internally not much Remus, your mostly going to be busy coordinating the various House agents in securing the situation."

"What about me pup?"

"Sorry Sirius," Harry says softly, "but there is going to be some Wizenemgot operations that you will have to participate it."

"Please tell me you didn't give Lucius the moon?" Sirius questions.

"I own the moon?" Harry says seriously.

Only to get two scoffs at that as well as a snort of laughter.

After grinning Harry says, "well I'll send you the files but I doubt you will be worried."

"Good to know Harry," Sirius says with a smile.

"Oh cub," Remus says with a soft smile, "all joking aside we trust and have faith in you and your ability to handle what is going on."

"Thanks guys." Harry says with a small but deep smile, "I appreciate that."

Some days later, while running, Harry says to Cedric, "so I meant to thank you for your input."

A small grin, "it was no problem Harry, I'm glad I could help." Cedric then tilts his head and asks, "what did you do?"

"Oh, what ever do you mean?"

"Don't play that Harry," Cedric says with amusement in his voice. "I can tell you did something."

"Well besides informing Amos that thanks to his son's actions numerous Great Houses and the people that live in their hundreds were helped, I did nothing."

Though they continued to run Cedric turned to stare at Harry. "Oh."

Which gets an amused snort out of Harry as they continue to run.

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It was mid afternoon and Harry was walking the freshly snowed grounds of Hogwarts. It wasn't a run, that was in the morning surrounded by weather wards, but rather a slow gentle walk about.

He stopped near the tree line when a pack of Threstals came up to him. Without even a sense of fear they begin butting up against him in an obviously unspoken plea to be petted. Which Harry was more than happy to do.

Which is how Hagrid found him some hour later. "They like ya Harry, they really do."

Harry grins up at his friend and teacher while continuing to pet the foal that is the target of his pettings. "Well its mutual. They are such beautiful creatures."

"Most beasts here are that," Hagrid says with a smile. He then gestures towards the Forbidden Forest and says, "did ya know that more beasties live here then in most other sites."

Harry shakes his head at that, mostly as his hands were occupied petting. "I didn't." A curious look then comes to his face, "how big is the Forbidden Forest anyway?"

"Hard to say, dozens of wizard spaces and thousands of acres per."

"Wait, really. I didn't realize it was that big," a pause, "how didn't I realize it was that big?"

Instead of answering the question Hagrid asks, "do you get updates on direct Hogwarts business?"

A negative shake of the head, "no, not yet. I leave most of that to Sirius and the Hogwarts Board, mostly as I can't hold the wards yet." A pause, "why?"

A small grin, "well if ya did you would see the reports of all the magical creatures that occupy the lands of the Forbidden Forest"

A wide grin, "you know Hagrid, you are becoming cheeky like Sirius, I'm not sure if that's a good thing."

A booming laugh, one which gets the Threstrals to give a snort of there own before backing away.

"That and all that tutoring I've had since your second year." A small smile followed by a shake of the head, "but anyway, due to all the wizard space folds this region is far larger than it seems to be."

This gets a snort out of Harry, followed by a shake of the head, and then a response after seeing Hagrid's curious look. "There is a mysterious magical area in the depths of the Forbidden Forest connected with House Potter."

"Oh yah, the Circle," Hagrid says with a smile, "been there once, made my hair stand on end, its that powerful."

A nod, "yeah it is," then a wide grin, "a mystery that we are slowly unraveling piece by piece and bit by bit."
"Good on ya Harry," Hagrid says and then gestures for him to come with him back to Hogwarts, which Harry more than willingly does. As they walk Hagrid comments, "you know if ya interested I could share my reports and files. Give you a bit of a leg up in knowing Hogwarts before you officially know Hogwarts."

Harry smiles at that, "oh that sounds perfect, thank you for that." Is what Harry says as they continue to walk about towards Hogwarts, all the while chatting softly.

8888

During a momentary lull in the covenant meeting Harry spoke up, "so hey, ah, I just wanted to say sorry."

"For what?" Asks Terry curiously.

"Probably for not assisting us in the year project," says Hannah in response.

The majority nod at that.

Blaise then says, "but you need to know we don't blame you. Between running your Houses, working on your studies, and dealing with the Tournament how could you possibly join us in researching Albion's education system."

Harry gives a small grin at that, "thanks for that."

Then Draco says, "but it doesn't mean you can't help us by getting access to certain Imperial tier levels."

A raised eyebrow at that, "what do you need?"

Multiple grins come upon the faces of those present as Ernie takes out a sheet of paper and Daphne begins reading out all the information they wanted access to.

Harry just laughs while making mental notes of who he will need to contact to get the files.

8888

"No, no, no. You can't just combine the Kevino arcano-matrix with the Crawford Protocols, the effect would cause an explosion," says the cursebreaker named Clay Hart to his fellows while making use of the library of Hogwarts.

"Not," Bill says with a bit of a smirk, "if you combine them with a Xilean Cadet Boolean as that would balance the ritual components and establish enough of a safety net that we can get inside."

"Yeah," says a Lucia Sanders, "though that assumes the foundation core recognizes the magic as friendly and deactivates the Chaos Binds."

Bill gives another grin at that while gesturing towards Harry, who just so happened to have walked in on the conversation. "See that is where the presence of our boss Lord Potter comes in handy, his magic will allow us to interface with the core ward of the site."

At another gesture from Bill, Harry sits down at the table the small group are making use of. After nodding in greeting at all the cursebreakers Harry says, "what intriguing conversation did I walk into?"

"A great one," says the Lucia Sanders, "for with it we might have the solution needed to get through
"Really, well isn't that interesting." A wide grin comes to Harry's face at that. "Especially considering the last report indicated only partial success on going through the barrier points."

Clay sighs on that, "oh Merlin that was annoying. Everything we tried failed, as if the system was adapting to our unweavings."

A tilt of Harry's head, "could the facility have a consciousness?"

"Hmm," Bill says with a look to his eye as he goes over the past information he gathered. "with its age of over six thousand years old that isn't entirely improbable."

At that Harry stands up, giving each of the cursebreakers a smile. "I have to head out as class starts soon but keep me informed of your plans for I will join you for the ritual work." So said he nods once more before heading out.

At the shocked looks on the faces of the other two Bill simply smiles, "yes, that is Harry!"

As the group walks through the Forbidden Forest on a Saturday morning Sirius comments, "the funny thing is that despite years of exploring the forest I didn't even know these paths existed."

"Most don't," is the comment that Filius makes with a nod. "Mostly because what we know as the Forbidden Forest are three different areas." He then gives the others gathered a look before saying, "which are?"

"Hogwarts," says Lucia with a smile.

A nod of agreement.

"Hogsmead," says Clay in a way that mimics what he was like years ago at school.

"There is also what is now the true Forbidden Forest, though its original name is long lost," Bill says to complete the trifecta of answers.

"I can attest to that," says Remus with a smirk, "as even after years of reading reports about this area no other name came up."

"Mostly," Harry says in such a way that all turn towards him, "because what is now the inner Forbidden Forest was actually a composite region made from scores and scores of other regions blended together."

"Now that's an interesting bit of news," says Filius with a nod towards Harry.

But whatever else he was going to say is interrupted as the group came upon a clearing in the middle of the woods. But what made it all the more special is that lying at its center is a standing stone circle, one quite similar to Stonehenge.

"So what's the plan?" Is asked by Sirius with a smile and nod towards the standing circle.

It is Bill that answers. "I start the ritual, Harry connects his magic to it, and then the rest of you join in." A pause as he puts his pack down, though he soon continues. "I then direct the magic to peel back the ward layers before setting it so we bypass illusions and protections."
"Then we enjoy a bite to eat!" Sirius says in an attempt to find humor in what is going to be a very dangerous ritual.

The grin on everyone's face proves that the humor worked.

8888

It is hours later and the team has finally pushed through the final layer of the protective ward matrix. By even halfway through the process the group realized that there is no illusions - the clearing and its standing stones are actually exactly what they look like. All the wards did is to mask the sheer power level of the site, which is even more potent than what is said to be in Camelot.

But what the group hadn't expected is for a single glowing point of magic in a nearby tree to appear. What made it all the more fascinating is that while the aura was Potter the site itself is far older, and far more mysterious.

As soon as Bill and the cursebreakers had scanned its interior and declared it safe the group headed inside. What they found is a complex of over a score of rooms of various sizes and purposes and home to the remnants of items and magics. They also discovered that for every item that is safe to touch two other items are warded by potent protection magic the likes Bill had only seen in the oldest of Egyptian pyramids.

After looking around for a moment Harry says in a firm tone, "Bill, shift control of your ward ritual to me." As soon as Bill does so, which isn't that difficult of a process due to Harry's authority of the contract, Harry speaks again. "This place is potent and ancient and will take months to investigate thoroughly. It is also full of material I do not want to fall into the hands of others. Which is why all your oaths of secrecy and security are now doubly enforced."

"Yes sir," is what both Lucia and Clay say.

While the other four say, "of course Harry."

"Thank you all." Harry then looks at his watch before adding in a pleased tone, "well we still have some time so let us continue to go through the items, scrolls, and tomes before heading back."

Which is exactly what happens.

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"Well isn't this interesting," Harry says while glancing through the morning papers. He then turns towards his friends who were reading some of the other papers he received while saying, "can I get back the papers your reading."

"Of course Harry," says Ron reading Magic Monthly, "its your subscription after all."

A grin is the response as Hermione, handing over Albion Times, asks "so what has caught your interest?"

"It seems that the demagogue Edmund Yamusa has taken the steps to turn his social club into a political union."

"Is that bad?" Dean asks curiously.

"Maybe, not sure, but its intriguing."

"Hmm," Hermione says while reading the article over Harry's shoulder.

Ginny then asks, "so where did he form the union?"

"Now that's interesting," Hermione says suddenly. As the others look at her she shrugs, "well it is."

Ron, who by this time had looked at the article himself grins at that, "oh, I see what you mean." A pause as the others give him a curious expression he continues, "right now all of his branch clubs exist in Ministry held territories."

A nod, "yes, him ignoring the territories of the Great Houses is very intriguing." Harry then takes out a wand and uses magic to copy the articles from all the papers related to his actions. As others look at him he shrugs, "this isn't an immediate crisis, more a lets look into it just in case it becomes worse."

Those around him nod at that for they all know how Harry doesn't just look at the now but also thinks about the future.

Up at the head table Severus commented with a gesture towards Gryffindors, "it seems that Mr Potter noticed something intriguing in the papers today."

"Hmm," is the response from Filius as he flips through his copies of newspapers. "Ah, here it is, Edmund Yamusa established his political party."

"That would interest him yes," Minerva says with a firm nod.

"The lad has a good head on his shoulder," Moody says in his gruff voice, "he practices CONSTANT VIGILANCE!"

Eye raises, shakes of the head, and looks of amusement are the result of Moody's comment.
Leaning back at his desk with various reports arrayed around him Harry says, "mirror, call Sirius."

"Contacting Sirius."

"Hey pup," the man says with a smile as his image appears standing in a hallway of Potter Manor. "What's up?"

"Hey Sirius," Harry says with a smile, "and not much, just wanted to talk."

Sirius lets out a loud barking laugh at that, "oh really, you just wanted to talk. So this had nothing to do with the articles about the new political faction being formed?"

A chuckle, "okay, you got me, I wanted to talk to you about it."

"That's what I figured pup." He then grins before adding, "which is why all your Praetors are currently sitting in conference room waiting for the meeting to begin."

Harry just stares at the image of Sirius, who grins back and gives a little wave as he walks into the conference room.

From Harry's perspective he sees Sirius move towards the table, taking a seat to one side of the center. Sirius then places the mirror in the middle and presses a button on its panel.

This causes the field to expand and before Harry's very eyes an illusionary image of the whole room, and all the agents, appear in the air in front of him.

After giving all the men and women nods of welcoming he says to Remus, who is sitting nearby, "so how long has this ability been present?"

"Just a few weeks now," is Remus' immediate response.

"We were saving it for a good time, and this just so happened to be that," Sirius comments.

A nod, "congratulate the artificers for their expansion on the spellcraft of the mirrors," Harry says with a nod. Then a pause, "right, so with everyone here let us discuss the Edmund Yamusa situation."

As the other Praetors nod at that Reid Petrie speaks up, "pardon me sir but do you really think he is a threat?"

Harry frowns in thought at that before saying, "honestly, not sure. But what I can say is that I feel that at some point he will be important."

"So you want us to monitor it now rather than later," says Marcy Ferrel, a Harbinger.

"Yes, exactly." Harry says with a firm nod.

"You know Harry," Sirius says a moment later, "this might be a perfect time for you, for all of us, to test the coordination of the agencies."

Irwin Grove Praetor of the Daybringers of Vidan says, "it is true that while we all work well on our own its been centuries since the agencies have partnered together." A pause then a grin, "this could be fun."

The others, even Reid of the Shadows of Black, nod at that, fully in agreement.
"Perfect then, so let us discuss how we want this done and when we want it." Harry says with a nod.

"With approval," says Drusilla Palma the High Praetor, "each Praetor should start by giving a description of what their agency will do."

Nodding in approval Harry then says, "which we can then modify to make it more communal. Good, I like that."

Which is exactly what they do for the next hour and a half. It is, needless to say, a very important meeting. Though one whose results won't be seen for years.

8888

Laying in his office with his eyes close Harry suddenly says, "sometimes its quite tiring."

"Oh, what happened?" Charlie says immediately upon hearing the comment.

"I spent hours today with my Praetors discussing certain actions with them." A pause, "which was mostly fine but then there was a moment when I listened to a few of them bantering back and forth and it hit me."

"What?"

"That I am fourteen and that the youngest in the meeting was forty while the oldest was almost two hundred, and yet I was in charge." A long sigh, "it really hit me then."

A nod full of understanding.

"Harry," Charlie says in a tone that has him opening his eyes, "if I was there right now I would hug you, but I'm not so I can't. But there is something I want you to do. I want you to find the twins or Blaise and let them be there for you."

"What?" Harry says.

"You shouldn't be alone for what you are feeling and no matter how I wish I could be the one physically comforting you, I cannot be. But you are not alone, which is why I want you to find them."

"But," Harry starts to say.

"No buts, Harry, go and find them." A pause, "we have been talking for thirty minutes now, talked two days ago, and will speak again either tomorrow or the next or the next. But that is not what you need." He then gives Harry a wide grin, one which reaches his eyes, even as its tinged with a bit of sadness. "I'm going to be ending the call in a moment so you can go. But I will also find out if you went to them."

Harry nods before saying softly, "Charlie."

As he trails off Charlie says, "I know, the same," he then gently ends the call.

Harry stares in silence for a moment before giving a firm nod and walking over to one of the other offices in the section.

As the door to the other office opens up he sees the twins there looking at him. Without them saying anything they get up from their chairs and head over to Harry.
With a pause only long enough to make sure this is what he wants they take him in their arms, kiss him soundly, and drag him to the bed they have in the nearby part.

They then have fun. Loud glorious fun. For so long and for so many times that they miss curfew by a few hours.

Not that they care, considering their knowledge of the castle and the use of Harry's invisibility cloak. Nor is their hidden walk back anywhere near a walk of shame.

As Harry laid in his actual bed that night he couldn’t help but think that Charlie had been right, companionship was exactly what he had needed.

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Unlocking Secrets

Unlocking Secrets
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Date: Fourth Year, Late February

At one point during their run Harry asks, "so how was your last Charms exam, I know you were worrying about it."

"It wasn't as bad as I thought it was." Cedric says with a smile. He then chuckles, "though I admit that studying with the Twins and Terrance did make it a bit easier."

A wide grin, "oh that's great. So do you know what you got?"

"Exceeds Expectations, which is far better than I was worried I was going to get."

"Really, that's brilliant. Good on you Cedric." Harry says with a big smile. "I knew you could do it!"
He then says, "despite you being ...," he then pretends to speak in Cedric's voice to say, "it's too hard, I can't do it, why do we have to know this." He then grins.

"Ha ha," Cedric says, "laugh it up Harry. I can't wait till you have an equivalent exam and I can mock you for your worry."

Giving his friend a grin Harry says simply, "well you don't have to wait long, next year is OWLs after all."

"Ooh, right, well I look forward to that." Cedric says as they continue the run.

8888
Tap. Tap. Tap.

Is what Harry is doing with a quill on his desk while that administrator Gregory Nunez goes on with his presentation. Once the man finishes with the report on resource surpluses in the the South American hundreds, Harry smiles. "Thank you Mr Nunez for the report."

A wide grin comes on Nunez face at that, "Not the most riveting topic to go over sir, I know, but well," he then shrugs.

Harry laughs in response, "Its important, you were going to say, its important."

"Well it is Harry," says Remus at that point, right before all three wizards break into grin. Which is followed by a bit of laughter.

When it dies down a bit Harry says a bit informally, "So Greg if there was one thing that you learned while researching this topic what would it be?"

A pause then, "Honestly sir, what intrigued me the most was the nature of the trade in the region."

"Oh," Harry says with a raised eyebrow, "do tell?"

Nod. Nod. "Albion geography is such that its hundreds tightly border those of the Aztecs, Maya, and Inca." A pause, "Though they also border each other." A shake of the head, "But that's not the point. The point is that so much tourism, trade, and commerce flow between the hundreds that they almost
HARRY GETS AN INTRIGUED LOOK ON HIS FACE AT THAT, "OH, REALLY, NOW THAT IS INTERESTING."

A BIG NOD AND SMILE, "YEAH, ITS FASCINATING. SEE UNLIKE THE MUNDANES THE BORDERS BETWEEN THE MAGICAL EMPIRES ARE, WELL, MAGICALLY SECURED. WHICH MEANS THAT ITS EASY FOR BOTH GOODS AND PEOPLE TO MOVE TO AND FRO." HE PAUSES THEN GRINS, "I HAVE HUNDREDS OF PAGES WORTH OF NOTES ON THE NATURE OF THE BORDER."

HARRY BLINKS AT THAT BEFORE MEETING REMUS' EYES FOR A BIT OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATIONS. ONCE HE SAW WHAT HE WAS LOOKING FOR HARRY SAYS, "SO GREG HOW FOCUSED ARE YOU ON YOUR RESOURCE WORK?"

AFTER LOOKING BETWEEN BOTH REMUS AND HARRY IN CONFUSION HE SAYS, "WELL SIR, ITS SIMPLY MY CURRENT PROJECT ASSIGNMENT. NEXT MONTH I THINK I AM GOING TO BE WORKING TO GATHER DATA ON THE INTERACTION BETWEEN YOUR FISHERIES AND FARM PLOTS."

HARRY THEN SAYS IN A TONE OF VOICE DEVOID OF EMOTION, "I AM VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO THAT REPORT." HE THEN GRINS, WHICH IS SHARED.

A MOMENT LATER HARRY SHAKES HIS HEAD BEFORE SAYING, "RIGHT, SO YOU ARE A CAPABLE ADMINISTRATOR AND RESEARCHER BUT WE SEEM TO BE HAVING YOU WORKING IN PROJECTS THAT YOU LACK AN INTEREST FOR. IS THIS CORRECT?"

THERE IS A PAUSE AS GREG CONTEMPLATES HOW TO ANSWER, BUT THEN HE REALIZES HARRY DOESN'T DO TRICK QUESTIONS. SO HE SAYS, "THOUGH THEY AREN'T SO BAD, AND PASS THE TIME, MY REAL PASSION IS IN MULTI-HUNDRED AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS."

"THAT IS GOOD TO KNOW," HARRY SAYS WITH A SMILE. HE THEN GIVES A FIRM NOD BEFORE ADDING, "ONCE WE FINISH HERE REMUS IS GOING TO GET YOU SITUATED IN THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE."

"WHAT?" GREG SAYS SHOCKED AT THE TURN OF EVENTS.

REMUS SLAPS HIS SHOULDER IN A SIGN OF FRIENDSHIP WHILE SAYING, "YOU WERE JUST POTTER'ED. ITS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ARE GIVEN THE JOB OF YOUR DREAMS IN SUCH A NATURAL WAY." HE GIVES A GRIN THEN SAYS, "BUT ANYWAY, WE DO REALLY NEED TO GET BACK TO THE REPORT, HARRY HAS CLASS SOON."

AS HARRY GIVES A NOD AT THAT GREG FLIPS THROUGH HIS REPORTS BEFORE CONTINUING FROM WHERE HE LEFT OFF.

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AS HE CLOSES THE TEXT BOOK HE SMILES AT NICOLAS BEFORE SAYING, "WELL THAT WAS INTENSE, THOUGH AT THE SAME TIME VERY INTERESTING."

A NOD, AND A SMILE, "THAT SUMS UP THE WARING MAGIC. THEY ARE INTENSE AND DIFFICULT BUT ARE USEFUL FOR A HUNDRED HUNDRED DIFFERENT PROJECTS." NICOLAS THEN LAUGHS, "I REMEMBER ONCE USING THE HYPATHIAN CODEX AND THE LOGARITHMIC EQUATIONS TO PUSH THROUGH WARDS THAT HAD BEEN MADE BY TEAMS OF WARERS CENTURIES AGO AND HAD RESISTED ALL PREVIOUS EFFORTS. IT WAS GLORIOUS."

HARRY GRINS AT THAT BEFORE LOOKING AT THE CLOCK, WHICH CAUSES HIS EYES TO WIDEN. HE THEN SAYS, "WHILE THAT SOUNDS GREAT, AND I REALLY WANT TO HEAR THE STORY, ITS GOING TO HAVE TO BE NEXT TIME."

WHICH LEADS TO HARRY SEEING NICOLAS LOOKING TO THE SIDE, HIS OWN EYES WIDENING AT THE TIME. "OH, YES, I SEE. WELL THEN HAVE A GOOD EVENING, I WILL TALK TO YOU LATER."

THERE IS A MOMENT AS THEY NOD AT EACH OTHER IN GOODBYES BEFORE THE MIRROR CALL IS ENDED.
At this point Harry leans back in his chair, closing his eye to process the meeting from a Mind Arts perspective.

He then suddenly opens them in shock as an idea comes to him. An idea which might lead to a breakthrough in a project he has been working on for years.

Grinning he gets out of his chair and with warding tome tucked under his arm he heads into the tent he set up in the corner of the room. Upon walking into his personal office he makes a beeline for the trunk he placed in the corner.

His mother's trunk.

Putting the tome on the nearby desk he flips to the pages describing the combo matrix that lets him combine the four techniques he recently learned together. Going between the sections he rapidly, but with focus, works out the necessary formula for what he wants to do.

Once he is done he says, "Dobby."

"What can Dobby do for the greatest master alive?"

"Hey Dobby," Harry says while passing him the sheet with the formula on it. "If Remus and Sirius are available could you bring this to them. I want them to double check it."

Nod. Nod. Dobby then looks around, sees the open chest, and gets a look of understanding. Which is why he then says, "Dobby will be quick as Dobby knows you need an answer soon."

A wide smile, "thanks Dobby, I appreciate it."

While Dobby is away Harry uses the time to go over the pages of the book in order to make sure he understands exactly what he will be doing. It is twenty minutes later before Dobby pops back into the room.

"Dobby found them together talking politics. After they look over it Dobby brought it back for his master wizard."

"Thanks Dobby," Harry says as he takes back the sheet, now with a second page of notes, advice, and a few corrections.

Dobby gives Harry a wide grin before popping away.

After taking a deep breath Harry takes out his wand, gathers his magic, and begins casting the combination rite. It took both control and power to manage the magic that flowed between him and the trunk but he maintained the rightful balance as the magic flew through the locks, opening them.

It was ten minutes later that Harry pulled back the magic and lowered his wand, finished for now.

As Harry looks towards he trunk he smiles in success, for it was now open to a level far beyond what he had managed to achieve up till now.

As the clock chimed the time, which was nearing curfew, Harry swore slightly before giving the trunk one more look before deciding that he would look through it this coming weekend.

Which he would learn was a good decision, for when he did begin going through it - an activity where he was joined by Remus and Sirius - over four hours would pass. He was glad that it was the
It was Monday afternoon, almost a week later and Harry knocked on the door to the teacher's room.

"Come in," McGonagall says a moment later.

As he opens the door he smiles towards the three professors present in it, Snape, McGonagall, and Flitwick. Giving them a grin he says, "well this is perfectly lucky as its the three of you I wished to speak to."

"Oh really Mr Potter," says McGonagall, "what may we do for you?"

"Well," Harry says as he works out the best way to say it. "So years ago I discovered that my mum had taken all of her and father's more personal effects and placed them in her old school trunk. She then warded it through a series of interlocking, well, wards."

"Would I be correct in stating that over the last few years you have been slowly unraveling the wards?" Asks Snape with little inflection in his voice.

A nod, "yes Professor that would be correct. Now recently my skills reached a level where I made a major breakthrough, one which saw me break down ten of her ward levels at once."

"What did you find Mr Potter?" Asks Flitwick curiously, with a big smile on his face.

At this Harry takes a deep breath before reaching into the bag he carries with him and taking out three boxes. As he hands them to the professors he says, "these had your names on them. Professors Flitwick and Snape yours are from my mum, Professor McGonagall yours is from my father."

"Do you know what is in these Mr Potter?" Asks Professor Snape with a bit of emotion leaking into his question.

"No Professor. They were put in the chest by my parents next to a note where they ask for me to bring it to you and you alone." Seeing as his fellow professors are awestruck, Flitwick says, "we appreciate the gesture Mr Potter and thank you for the items."

"That is not a problem Professor, not a problem at all." Harry says with a nod and a bit of bow.

As he turns towards the door to head out McGonagall speaks, "Mr Potter, pardon me for this, but may I ask something." At Harry's nod she goes on, "would your parents portraits be in the chest?"

"Yes," Harry says with a nod. "For as my mum put it she didn't want me wasting away talking to the dead while there was living to be had."

This gets grins on all three faces, even Snape, who was fully amused at the truly Lily statement.

Once Harry was gone the three looked at each other and then the boxes in there hands.

"Well then," Snape says, "I must be off as I feel that it would be best to open this in private."

The two others look at each other as Minerva says, "we understand Severus, though we are here for you if you wish for us to be."
"I thank you both," Severus says with a nod, "but I feel this is something I must open and read alone." With that said he gets up and heads out of the room. An action quickly followed by the other two as they feel it might be a good idea to open the gift alone.

It will only be later, when the three are relaxing in Flitwick's quarters on a day off, that the nature of each gifts will be shared. Besides each getting a personal letter Filius got the personal charms work done by Lily, Minerva got a copy of James personal advanced transfiguration journal, and Severus got Lily's personal journal and potions text.

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A few days later sees Harry walking into the Gryffindor common room and stopping short as he sees the gathering of students of multiple years all sitting around.

"Hey all," he says, "what's up?"

After all greetings are finished it is Colin who says, "well we just finished playing games and are now figuring out what to do."

Harry nods at that before moving to sit down in an open chair next to where Neville and Luna are sitting.

As soon as he does so Luna speaks up, "I think we should share stories of good times and family." Though some heads tilt curiously others begin nodding in agreement. "Since I suggested it I will go first." Which she does, telling the story of when she helped her sadly departed mother work on a research project.

As her story was quite touching the rest of the gathered Gryffindors one by one began telling stories about family. Even Harry told a story, it was of a time when Remus and Sirius proved how much they cared for Harry.

Needless to say it was a good, soothing time for everyone.

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Date: Fourth Year, Early March

"To be poetic this is our third communal run," Fleur states as she comes up to where Cedric and Harry are standing before the run.

"That is true, with but one more!" States Viktor as he comes up to them with Vala next to him.

Cedric chuckles, "While true its too early to be waxing poetry." A pause to grin, "So let us just run."

Which gets some amused laughter as they begin to do just that.

"Morning Ron," Harry says upon sitting down next to his friend.

"Hey Harry, how was the run?" Is Ron's question.

"Viktor and Fleur were more chatty then normal, which was a bit bothersome to Cedric and I."

"Well you did stay up late last night having 'fun'," Neville comments from his seat.

A fond smile comes on Harry's face, "Yeah, yeah we did and it was quite fun." A pause as he moves to get some breakfast. "You know you could have stayed."

A chuckle, "Oh I know that, but when the Twins showed up and got the looks on their face I knew I had to leave."

Ginny, from a few seats down chuckles at that, "I can imagine with those two." A shake of the head. "So how long did you guys play for?"

"Harry didn't return to the dorm till like four in the morning," is Dean's comment from where he is sitting across from Ron.

Seamus nods at that before getting an upset look on his face, "Hey, why wasn't I included in this game? I would have joined."

This gets chuckles from all around before Harry says, "Sorry Seamus." A grin. "Honestly though it wasn't planned. I was talking to Cedric and then Balise came in with Terrence and so we started talking. Then five minutes later came the Twins, which is when we started playing."

"Which ended at four?"

"For Harry and Cedric and Terence maybe, but Blaise played with us all night." Fred says as he plops down in an open spot. As the others gaze at him he grins in amusement.

"How much sleep did you guys get?" Ron asks curiously.

"Like an hour," George answers upon sitting down.

"Yeah, we are exhausted."
Then the two look at each other, grin widely, and say, "But it was soooooo worth it!" They then high five each other.

Which causes laughter to erupt among all those who heard the comment.

"Am I really hearing this right, the residents of Delven Green Hundred are protesting House Valerius' construction of a new primary school?" Harry asks Remus in shock.

Remus nods, "Yep, that about sums it up. They find the idea unnecessary right now."

"Even with them knowing that payment is coming out of the House treasury rather than their hundred?"

"Even then," Remus says. He then pauses, "The truth is their main problems are more social, they don't like the idea that people from other hundreds will be brought to the hundred."

"And what, ruin there way of life. For real?"

"Yes, they are a very tightnит community, wary of outsiders."

"Right I see." A pause, "So they don't care that by bringing in the school they will get more tax revenue and other such benefits."

"No they don't."

At this point there is a knock at the door which turns out to be Charlie after Harry checks it. After greeting the man who sits down at a nearby couch Harry turns back to Remus and says, "Okay then. Are there any other hundreds nearby we could put the school?"

"The Daemois Obsidian Hundred a few spaces nearby, its still Valerius and was also on our radar. We choose Delven Green due to certain traits it had."

A nod, "Good to know. So though I could easily overrule there protest I won't, instead I will do what they ask - I will choose a different location for the school. Build it in Daemois Obsidian but require those of the Delven Green Hundred to send there children to said school as a matter of House law."

Two wide grins are given in response to that, for all that Charlie at least doesn't say anything.

Remus though nods as well and says, "Will do Harry." A pause, "Also its a good choice cub especially in the long term where said schooling will create a more open to others society."

"That's the goal. I'm fine with letting them think they have won for now for in the end what we actually want, a better educated and more open minded populace, is exactly what we will get."

"By the time they realize they have been outplayed it will be do late," Charlie says with a grin.

A grin is returned, "Exactly." Harry then turns to Remus and asks, "So anything else?"

A chuckle, "No not really, I want over everything that I wanted to."

As Harry is nodding at that Charlie looks at the large packet and gets a wide eyed look, "How long have you two been discussing such matters?"

"Today," Remus says, "for the last hour. It's been a quite productive meeting."
A shake of the head, "Though it has been I can't help but feel that as they know I'm getting older they are starting to take advantage of it more and more."

"That's the problem with success Harry, even those who don't know its you they do know their House is operating better and so they have begun complaining more." Remus explains matter of factly.

Closing his folder Harry then leans back, "So how are things."

Both Remus and Charlie chuckle at that, mostly because both of them have talked to or seen Harry not that long ago. Which meant that there wasn't anything really new going on in their lives that they didn't know about.

But it does what it was supposed to do, it opened the floodgates to them having a normal conversation. Which started with all three participating but eventually grew to where it became more and more Harry and Charlie talking to each other.

Which honestly didn't bother Remus that much, he remembered when his love for Sirius had first began. How so many times the conversation of the Mauraders had started at four before turning to him and Sirius talking and the other two sitting back.

With a slight chuckle, easily passed off with a gesture, Remus remembers when James started to date Lily. At that point the conversations of the five turned into James and Lily talking and Sirius and himself talking, with Peter looking confused at being left out. Of course when Peter got his own girlfriend later that year he sort of understood what was going on.

As Remus is thinking all this over he slowly stands up and begins making his way out of the room, not upset at all. With a small grin he decides to go find Sirius so the two can have there own 'conversation'.

Back in the room Charlie and Harry stop talking after Remus walks out. It is Harry that says, "Hmm, does he think we didn't realize he left?"

"Probably," Charlie says with a chuckle, "thought we are so focused on each other we didn't notice him."

A grin. "Right." A laugh, "So did you see his little smile, I think he is off to find Sirius for some mutural fun."

The two laugh at that before returning to their conversation.

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"Mr Potter have you seen Sirius?" Asks Ludo upon him walking into the small room where the champions had gathered for some pictures.

A nod, "Yeah but he is currently busy with Remus going over some paperwork."

"I see," Ludo says before nodding. "Okay even without him we can begin taking the necessary pictures."

As Ludo moves over where Fleur and Lucus are the Headmaster moves over to Harry and says, "Paperwork Mr Potter?" The twinkle in his eyes is blatant.

It recieves an answering one in Harry's eyes, who simply nods, "Paperwork Headmaster."
As the Headmaster heads off Cedric nudges him in the shoulder and says, "Paperwork," with a wink and a smirk.

Five minutes passed before the door opens leading to Sirius walking in with a swagger and a grin. "Hello folks, pardon me for my lateness, but I needed to finish some work with Remus. Paperwork you see!" A pause as he looks around, "So where are we on the photos?"

Cedric and Harry simply grin at each other in amusement as they both say, "Paperwork!"

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"So this is where you went," Philip says with a smile as he and Ginny come upon a quietly sitting Harry on a bench in the bridge.

Looking up Harry smiles, "Hey guys. I needed a bit of quiet." He then pats the seats near him in invite.

They both take him up on the offer.

Once they do so Philip comments, "Its funny that for despite all the changes you really are the same guy." Which gets a grin on Harry's face and a look of confusion on Ginny's. Which leads to him explaining, "back at primary there was a small gazebo in the playground of the school, for reasons none of know why. Anyway, Harry could often be found there during lunches he wasn't at the library."

"It was soothing and quiet, and with the teacher's nearby I wasn't bothered by Dudley."

A growl, "Yeah him." A pause, "Oh, so whatever happened with that?"

"Well I moved out of the Dursley's at the end of third year. But before I did you won't believe it but Dudly appolozed, said he didn't realize what he was doing till he met a squib councelor at his school."

A wide eyed look, "Oh really, wow. Well if he can change then I guess anyone can."

Harry nods before gesturing towards the two, "So, I'm going to ask, what's going on between you two?"

Which gets some laughter from both Philip and Ginny. It is Ginny who then says, "You know you are the first to actually ask." A pause, "Did you pay my brothers for that?"

A laugh, "Nah. I'm just a bit more fearless." A pause, "So?"

Two shrugs followed by Ginny saying, "I like him."

"And I like her."

"So we are planning to continue to talk outside of these tasks and maybe even meet up over the summer."

A nod, "Though we live in France," Philip says, "we have a vacation home near London which should make it easier for us to meet."

"Nifty." Harry says with a smile. "Well have fun you two and I wish you both happiness in getting to know each other further." He then gestures to Ginny, "Philip is a great guy Ginny, one of the best." He then says to Philip, "and Philip, you should know that not only does Ginny have seven
brothers," this is said with a grin as he indicates how he thinks of her, "but she is also pretty good with wand and words. Not to mention she is also a good person."

Both magicals grin at Harry at that.

Philip then tilts his own head, "So may I ask what is going on between you and the second oldest Weasley?"

Both Harry and Ginny chuckle at that while Harry says, "would you accept its complicated. Mostly because of our greater age differences." A pause, "But you can trust me when I say there are feelings." Harry then clears his throat, "so Philip what do you think of Hogwarts?"

Grinning at the very blatent topic changing Philip says, "It's brilliant, in a different and yet no less magical way then Beauxbaton is. Which you should visit at some point."

A nod, "I would like that yes."

Ginny then snorts which causes the two others to look at her and leads to her shaking her head. "Sorry, you mentioned fiferences and that led me to thinking about how Hermione has been going around trying to get a point by point description of the differences between the schools."

A wide grin. "How bad has it been?" Harry asks.

It is Philip who answers, "Mostly amusing rather than annoying actually. She reminds me of Helen, a friend of mine from Beauxbaton who is quite similar in personality." A pause, "In fact I gave them the other's postal name and they have been communicating on the education system of Albion."

Which gets some amused laughter before they change the topic and begin talking about a bunch of random things. Which while small did much to pass the time till the task was to start.

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"Okay all so this is the standard pre-task meeting." Ludo comments after the last of the champions have taken there seats.

"Thank you Ludo," comments Crouch from where he is sitting, "as that was something we didn't already know."

As Ludo blushes at the calling out Sirius comments, "Now now Barty, no need for such attitude." He turns towards Ludo, "Please go on."

"Ah, thanks Sirius. Well as I was saying this is our general meeting. The third task is water and is based on the dungeon motif. All three groups will start in the same dungeon at the same time but at different points. The goal is to get to the entrance to the next level while facing 'monsters' and finding treasure. Points will be allocated based on fights and rewards. Any question?"

Fleur raises her wand and then asks, "What happens if we come face to face with those of another school?"

"You may fight, though using a dueling style rather than a full battle style." A pause, "Those stunned or disarmed have to wait a certain amount of time before they can continue the path towards the goal."

"I will add," Sirius says, "that just because you are stunned once, or even twice, doesn't mean you should stop attempting to head to the end. You still have a chance of winning, the stages are big
Then Ludo says, "Right then, any other questions." A pause. "No, all right then, you have fifteen minutes before the start. If you have any questions you may ask them during the first five minutes of the task."

The judges then make their way out of the room so the champions can get themselves ready. 8888

"Hey all," Sirius says over speaker to both the champions and those watching. "So you may be wondering what the theme, the story, of this task is. Well wait no further for it is now time to reveal it." There is a somewhat long pause. "Right." Sirius then says, as if he was just speaking to someone else. "Anyway, the story is this: You are three groups of adventure archaeologists who are searching for the hidden temple holding Poseidon's Trident. After making your way through a jungle you stop right before a small clearing on a hill secured by a band of reptilian guards protecting the hole leading to the ruins." Another pause, "Okay then, begin."

Cedric and Harry simply look at each other for a moment before shaking their head and laughing.

"Right," Harry then says as soon as they stop, "so we need to deal with the reptilian magicals before we can get inside."

After sticking his head up a bit and looking about Cedric says, "Hmm, okay, so I see three slingers and eight javelin holding minions."

"So the slingers are going to want to move a bit distant while the others will try and get close to us." Harry comments.

"Well I'm glad we are allowed to use a dueling sword for this task," Cedric says with a nod. "Right so you are better at range then I am so how about you try and strike the slingers while I work on the warriors."

"Sounds great."

Which leads to them jumping from out of their hiding place and making a beeline for the clearing. Upon the reptiles seeing them they shriek and grab their weapons, which they had close by.

As Cedric was rushing up to some of the warriors Harry let out a bit of spellfire in the shape of an arrow, which struck a slinger and took it out.

Harry then had to make a leaping dodge as one of the other slingers sent a sling right near to where he had just been standing.

This action delayed Harry just enough that he became face to face with a few of the warriors set to fight him. Using magic to sheath his wand in a duel sword he parried and dodged the javelins coming his way. But then he struck out, hitting one, barely missing a second, but hitting a third.

As Cedric was dealing with a few other warriors Harry looked up and sent out a spell-arrow against the second of the three slingers. Hitting it directly and causing it to fall down 'dead'.

This led to the final slinger screeching before running to the shaft and climbing down to alert its allies.
Without the worry of being attacked at range the two wizards then jumped fully into melee in order to remove the remaining warriors.

"Okay lets head down the ladder before the slinger can get too many of its friends ready for us."

Cedric nods, then grins, before heading to the shaft so the two can head down. Which leads them to the top of a set of rough stone hewed stairs in an otherwise natural cavern.

Which they realized was done to give them a safe space for this part of the first stage.

As they look about they see rubble in front of the rough stairs and an even rougher looking statue in the nearby tunnel. Behind said statue lies six reptilian creatures looking ready for battle.

The moment the two champions make it down the stairs three reptiles bearing sword and shield quickly rush them in an attack. At the same time two others begin attacking with sling and a final voice begins praying to their gods.

With a grin at how entertaining this situation is the two wizards launch their own attacks - both spell and sword in quick succession.

After a number of strike and parries Cedric gets the idea to use magic to conjure a round shield attached to his arm by straps. After seeing how much of an advantage this gave Cedric, Harry grins before conjuring his own version.

This allows them to fell two of the three sword and shield reptilians before striking at the two ranged ones. Then, together with but a single look, the two wizards launch a dozen dizzying strikes against the reptilian 'priest'. A priest whose prayer magics had been spraying them with certain damaging effects.

"Let us not give the foes an advantage," Harry bellows, with a small grin, as the two wizards then run down the hallway into the next section.

Which leads them to stopping short as they see a larger cave opening whose back end turns into an actual carved wall. But what really brought the two up short was the presence of a clearly monstrous young dragon perched on a rock scratched into a comfortable shape.

"A dragon, of course there is a dragon, why should I be surprised," Harry comments with a shake of the head, while Cedric just grins at his friend.

Since he agrees, of course there is a dragon.

With but a moment to figure things out the dragon hisses for her minions to attack the 'petty humanoids', which leads to the ten minions doing just that.

After the two give a battle roar, they are fully into the 'roleplay' aspect of the dungeon, their wands flash as magic strikes out against the enemies.

Though the dragon is too large to fly about that doesn't stop her from striking with her claws and blasting with an icy blast.

The fight is hard and long and led to some scratches occurring to both wizards but thanks to their training and spellcasting eventually the reptilians are eventually wittled down to nearly nothing.

Which leads to the dragon giving out a mighty roar and one final wide area frozen blast. Which, though harmful is not strong enough to stop them from giving their own final blasts which work to
take her down. She gives out a single final mighty roar before fading to nothing upon death.

The two wizards nod at each other before moving forward towards the double doors at the back of the cavern. They each grab a door and pull it open, which leads to the environment shimmering as they get booted out of the dungeon.

Blinking at the sight of the full stadium Cedric and Harry quickly realize that while Viktor and Vala had finished as well, later learned not even a minute before, that Fleur and Lucus had not. Though within the next four minutes they too would finish the first stage of the dungeon.

"So Harry," Ron says a bit later as his friend is getting some food at the cafe station, "was that as fun as it looked?"

"Oh Merlin yes, very much so. It felt like I was in an actual dungeon fighting monsters, it was so cool." Harry says with a wide grin.

"It reminded me of a roleplaying game," Justin says with a smile from nearby, "except with a bit more live action to it."

"It honestly made me wonder if we could bring something like to Hogwarts as a normal weekend activity," Michael Corner comments.

"I don't know but I would love too," Harry says with a grin before heading back to the champions box.

Upon walking into the room, after being stopped a number of times by people wanting to talk, Harry says, "So did I miss much?"

"Nah, Glen Taylor just began his opening speech and should start singing any minute now." Is said by Lucus in response.

"Great, thanks!" Harry then chuckles, "I would have been here sooner but I got stopped by numerous people."

"Of course you did," Fleur says in good humor, before being respectfully shushed by Vala who loves the music of Glen Taylor.

As soon as the illusion is activated the two, well all six but only two are present, find themselves at the end of a hallway with the doors they had opened in the distance.

"I love how things flow together," Harry says with a nod and a gesture towards the previous door.

"Yeah it is nifty," Cedric says with a smile before it fades away as a serious look comes to his face.

Which they do, heading down a bit of a passageway that ends at a solid wall. They look around since both know there is no way its an actual solid wall.

That is when Cedric notices the panel on the ground and then at the same moment Harry notices a switch by a wall.
The two look at each other before moving to said positions, then at once Harry flips the lever and Cedric stands on the pressure late.

Cedric jumps up as a spear comes launching at his feet before ducking down as another spear attempts to hit his head.

At the same moment Harry moves to the side as a panel opens and a blade comes down and then rolls the other way when another sword comes.

"That was intense," Cedric says with shake of the head.

While Harry says, "Look," and then points at the now open door.

The two grin at each other before heading through the door and into the room behind.

A room that is rectangular with a crevasse near the start, alcoves along both sides, and a small antechamber in the back. An antechamber containing three hyena looking humanoid guards in full battle gear.

The moment both champions walk into the room the warriors bark a bit before one moves forward and moves a skull sitting in the floor before jumping back.

The moment the skull was moved hatches in the alcoves open up letting a fine mist of sand to begin flowing into the room. Its a sad which the two realized is quite slippery and has the effect of pushing them towards the crevasse.

After looking at each other Harry jumps forward in order to move the skull, shutting the sand off. At the same time Cedric is throwing spell fire at the guards, which has the effect of taking out one of them.

The second guard uses the second of distraction to jump forward himself in order to hit the skull, which turns the sand falling trap back on.

The two wizards grin at each other before both throw up their hands and send out piercing blasts of spell fire at the warriors. Both get hit and fall down, though one of the two manage to move himself just enough to hit the skull before dying.

That said, he didn't just hit the skull, he twisted it in such a way that it became stuck in the on position. A fact that the two wizards learned the moment they tried to shut it off.

They then head to the double doors at the back and try to open it up, but discover that its locked. Without pause Harry tries the door opening spell which works just fine, leading them to the next area.

"I am really surprised that worked," Harry says as they walk through the door.

"I know, me too," Cedric says with a chuckle before stopping at the sight before them. Which is that of a broad arched chamber with a casket in the middle surrounded by two small sarcophagi and a mighty throne of gold in the distance.

But even more there lies two hyena men in the front by the sarcophagi and a tough knight looking hyena with a massive bow by the throne.

Almost immediately the knight archer starts flinging arrows at the two of them. Then without pause the two sword bearing warriors launch themselves forward in order to attack the two champions.
Wands come out in a split second and spells begin to be launched at all seen opponents. Which turns out to be the important word - for the moment the two get near the casket four dire hyenas appear from where they had been hiding behind it and attack the two.

While being attacked at ground level by hyena, and sword at head height the random arrows really annoyed Harry and so he used a blast of aura magic to throw his attackers to the walls while casting a lance of fire at the archery leader. In one single swoop two hyenas, one guard, and the archer leader are all taken out.

while Harry is doing that Cedric took advantage of the other hyenas and guard being distracted in order to take them out as well.

Breathing heavy the two wizards stand in the room for a moment, "Wow," they say at the same time. They then stand up, given each other a nod, and head to the double doors that lay at the side of the back throne.

Heading through the door they find themselves in another ornate looking chamber, one whose central feature is a massive well. Surrounding said well are three fully armored hyena people wearing similar clothes to the master archer from the last room. Also present is an armored hyena man wearing a skull mask and a blood red robe and holding a massive mace.

What happens next is a very intense battle, though not entirely unexpected from Harry and Cedric's perspective. The archers begin firing their arrows at the same time as the mace wielding warrior attacks with said weapon.

In response Harry and Cedric begin casting spell after spell after spell, including some of those they knew but didn't really cast that often. Nothing of course illegal but the truth is both stretched the rules slightly, though nothing that would penalize them in the tournament.

In the end after the archers and the mace wielder had all died the two wizards gave each other a look before jumping into the well in the center. Of course not even moments into the fall the scene faded away and the two found themselves on the platform, the first of the schools to finish the stage.

8888

"Ron, Daphne, hows it going?" Harry says after they wave at him to come in as he passes them sitting on a balcony near the top of the stadium.

"Wicked!" Ron states as he gestures towards both the view past the windows in front of them and how pretty Daphne looks, a fact which he had just told her.

As Daphne and Harry shake their heads at his antics Daphne says, "While I wouldn't put it that way, it is quite nice out here."

As he sits down Harry says, "Well good on you both." A pause, "Though pardon me but how did you get in here?"

A wide grin from Ron, "Sirius gave us access via your crazy house elf."

Laughing, "Of course he, they, did." A pause, "Oh, before I go I need to ask, if I go where Hermione is will I hear more about the education project?"

"Yes," says Daphne with a firm nod. "I know you get to escape it considering your status as champion, but whenever she is not at the cafe she can be found researching the project." A pause,
"Which isn't entirely bad, I too enjoy the project, but not as often as she does."

"Right, thanks for the heads up." A wide grin. "I guess I will make my way back to the champion box rather than to the Hogwarts box."

"Good plan." Ron says with a nod, though then he grins. "Or you could go to the Potter box and hang out with Remus and Charlie and the others for a bit."

"Hmm, that's not a bad idea actually. It might be fun to see what Colin Nettie does with those two." He then grins, "Plus its not like Cedric will be at the champion box, he is visiting Terence." Harry then gets up, smiles at his two friends, and heads out of the room.

The two smile as well before turning back to their conversation at the same time as taking hold of each other's hand.

8888

Even as he continues to laugh at the jokes that Colin Nettie just told, Harry is getting up from his seat. Giving those present a smile he says, "Well I'll be off, its time for the third and final stage of today's task."

Reaching for his hand and giving it a tight squeeze Charlie says, "Have fun Harry."

"Yeah have fun cub, and good luck." Remus adds when he sees them stop holding hands.

As the others give their comments Harry gives them a slight wave before making his way out, whistling.

8888

As the illusion of the dungeon manifested around them Harry found himself shocked to see they had returned to the end room of the second dungeon.

The two grin at each other before casting three specific spells - one to keep them warm, another to to repel water, and a third to see in the darkness of water. Then, once that is done, the two step up to the well and jump in.

After seeming to fall for minutes the two land with a slash in tunnel full of water, cold dark water. Thankfully due to their spells they remain warm, dry, and can see.

Though they can't breath, which leads them to try and swim upward in order to get some air. Thankfully they find a bit of an air pocket at the top of the tunnel which lets them recharge their air as they begin searching for what to do next.

Which doesn't take that long for them to discover a switch that looks like it could adjust the water level. The problem though is that it needs a power source, which is currently not active.

So they continue to search down the tunnel, which leads them to a flooded room. At the back of the room they find another switch, which when toggled opens and closes the door.

After heading out for some air they come back and look around the room some more, which eventually leads them to finding a pressure plate. When pressed - a difficult process in the water - they can hear some sort of generator toggle on for a second before shutting off.

After getting some air, again, they begin looking around for something else. Which eventually leads
them to finding a button that when pressed led to a whirl sound before shutting off. This leads them
to realizing what needs to be done, which sees the two linking their auras together like they did at the
second taks.

"I think I get it," Harry says mentally in the time slowed space they reside. "If we shut the door and
press the button the water of the room will be drawn out. Then we can flip the switch and activate
the power switch."

"I wonder if another hatch will open up, otherwise we will be stuck here."

"Hmm, good point." Harry says thoughtfully.

Which then leads to Cedric saying, "Oh hey, idea. We split up. One of us do the tasks in the room
while the other stays outside."

"Oh that is brilliant," Harry says. They then decide who will do which before ending the aura
sharing.

Which leads them to doing exactly what they said they would do. After both takes a deep breath of
air - as neither knows how long the process would go - they split up.

Harry enters the room, toggles the door shut, presses the button to remove the water - which works
this time - and then stands on the pressure plate to activate the generator. As soon as Cedric hears the
water leaving the room and the signs of power being restored he flips the lever - draining the tunnel
of its water. Once all the water drains out Cedric yells for Harry to open the door, which is exactly
what he does and which happens.

"Right then, that was wicked, so let us continue," Harry says with a laugh as the two move next to
each other and begin walking down the now mostly dry tunnel.

Which eventually ends at a set of double doors that only open with a toggle switch - as the two
wizards can clearly tell it serves as an airlock of some sort. Upon entering they find themselves on a
small balcony mid way up the cylindrical chamber with many similar balconies at various heights
and points. In the center lies a tower wrapped with a balcony near the top containing a door. Upon
looking down they can see that a number of other balconies exist under a water level.

The two simply look at each other before giving a bit of a sigh.

Harry then says, "So how much do you want to bet that within various chambers are items to collect
and levers to push that will raise and lower the water levels."

"No bet as I figure that is exactly what we need to do." A pause, "Before we proceed I think we
should examine all the rooms we can access, to get the lay of the land."

"I agree." A pause, "So we jump."

A nod, "Yep, we jump."

Which is exactly what they did. This then became the final element of the third task. They would
swim around the flooded levels looking for rooms with switches, buttons, and items of value. They
would make note of anything they found, even if it did not have a current use for who knew if it will
be needed in the future.

Much to their utter sarcastic joy, which to those watching never failed to find amusing, the two often
ran into rooms filled with monsters of one kind or another. Most of these fights they took to dealing
with quickly, a smart move considering the lack of breathing room in most chambers.

Though complex the puzzle that they needed to solve wasn't difficult and so it did not take them long to raise the water to the second level. Which of course gave them access to even more rooms that needed to be explored and examined.

"The fact that even though the waters have risen to the second level the first level is still useful actually is fun for me," Cedric says at one point as the two spend a moment catching their breath and figuring things out.

"Really, it simply annoys me," Harry says with a slight chuckle. "I dislike these sorts of water dungeons."

So said the two then return to searching the depths for how to raise the water to the third, and hopefully final tier. Which of course they eventually did - though the victory is shortlived upon them realizing that they still needed to unlock the door to the center tower.

Said lock they soon realized being the shiny relic looking items they had been finding all the while figuring out the water table systems. Thankfully it is only eight keys they needed to find, and at that point they already had six.

"Of course the last two keys would be the hardest to find," Harry says with a grumble as they once again jumped into flooded rooms looking for them. Of course as luck would have it not long afterward Harry found one piece at the same time it turned out Cedric found the other.

Meeting up at the balcony at the center tower the two grin at each other before putting the two pieces into the mechanism. With the sound of turning gears the items faded into the machine and the door opened.

Which then leads to the image of the dungeon fading away as success is achieved.

"Oh," Harry says with a wide grin as he realizes it, they did it, they beat the dungeon. But even more they achieved it with a really good amount of time and no major failures.

Though they aren't the first, that honor is given to Viktor and Vala who had achieved success five minutes before. Though not without a blemish on their actions, a fact which took points from them.

It would be another ten minutes before Fleur and Lucus finished their own run through the dungeon, with what is by all means a respectable amount of time.

In the end, though all six champions look like they are standing their patiently waiting as the judges make their comments and give their point totals all they want to do is head out. Which is why once they finished none of the champions even delayed running from the platform.

8888

"Hey pup can we talk," Sirius says upon coming up to Harry with Percy in tow.

"Of course," is Harry's immediate response. He then gestures for them to go into the nearby side room. "What's up?"

"Lord Crouch has been missing since the mid afternoon and either owl or house elf can find him." Is Percy's immediate response.

"Even using my authority as both a Ministry and Hogwarts official I can't find him," Sirius adds.
"Who knows and what is the plan?"

"The other judges, the Minister, and Madam Bones," says Percy. A pause, "We plan on keeping it on the down low for now, probably even for next task."

"But you think its more?" Is Harry's next question.

Percy nods then takes a deep breath, "Look I know why you both dislike him and I'm not arguing the merits of it. But I have worked for him for almost a year now and I can firmly state that he doesn't do the dissapearing act. He doesn't have a mistress or secret vices or anything like that."

Sirius nods, "I agree." He then puts his hand on Percy's shoulder and says, "Your not wrong to be concerned nor am I dismissing this as him deciding to buy a farm."

"I agree Percy, you know us, please trust us that though we dislike the man we would not simply ignore that something is going on."

A nod, a smile, "thanks guys." A pause, "Well then I need to be off, I have some paperwork to go over."

"Do you need any assistance Percy because I can have the Ministry assign 'Crouch' an assistant who will work for you while you handle the matters that crop up."

Percy blinks at that before saying softly, "You would do that?"

"Of course. Crouch had you helping him and with him gone you need help. I can have someone send to your department in two days time and it willb e fully legal with all due required paperwork."

"Thanks Sirius," Percy says before shaking the man's hand, then shaking Harry's hand, before giving a nod, and then walking off.

After he is gone the two wizards look at each other before sighing. They also begin heading out of the room and walking the corridors of the stadium.

Harry then says, "Though there is more going on in this situation then we know I do feel we need to investigate."

"Should I coordinate with Albus?" A pause followed by, "How about Amelia?"

Firm nod. "Yes to both. Both are trustworthy and honestly should know that something is going on." Harry then takes a deep breath before saying, "Also, dispatch the Shadows to investigate the situation."

"Sounds good Harry." Sirius says with a nod. He then smiles. "Right so why don't you make your way to Hogwarts while I finish up some of the final work I have to do."

"Will do and sounds good. Don't take too long for we have a game to play!"

Which gets a smile, a laugh, and a quick hug before the two head in different directions.

Not that they won't be meeting up shortly, and be joined by Remus and Charlie, for a few hours of relaxing games and good company.

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Wizarding Culture

Date: Fourth Year, Late March

Harry had been sitting quietly at lunch reading his book and eating when first year muggleborn student James Corwin commented gently, "you know I don't understand why you are studying the traditions book, its not like they matter."

"Well since I'm in the magical world I figure it would be good to know the cultures and traditions of the magicals." Harry pitches his voice just loud enough that he can be heard by many in the hall. Harry then continues. "The thing is James would you move to Japan and never try and learn Japanese customs."

"But Harry that is not the same, muggle and magical British society are in the same country."

"They aren't though. In truth its two entirely separate countries that happen to share the same living space. The magical version is older, with a history over four thousand years old and an unbroken government from around 400 CE. In fact magicals are the senior branch of humanity in terms of culture." Was Harry's response to that.

"Wait, really," was James' question, "why aren't we taught this."

"Cause Binns is a joke and only teaches about goblin wars, rather than the richness of magical history." Harry says deadpan.

Neville, who had been sitting nearby, takes the opportunity to speak. "Well, most of what he said is taught at home by families, rather than here at Hogwarts."

Ron, not wanting to be ignored then speaks, "Yeah, mum taught us all about that. Its one of those things you just know when one grows up in magical society."

"Which is a shame," Harry says a moment later, "in that muggleborns should learn it as well. For if we did then we wouldn't be making as many social fails as we do."

"Hey Harry, what do you mean by we, your pureblood." Asked Michelle Reignstein, one of the younger students.

Harry nods at that. "Yeah technically I am as my ancestry is fully magical. But I was raised - terribly I should add - by muggles, I didn't even know about magic till I got my Hogwarts letter."

"Wait what!" Was the shout by a number of witches and wizards, all of which were of a younger year than Harry.

"Yep. Exactly. I didn't know the proper behaviors or customs, or even my status in this world, as nobody told me about them." He then stops and looks at the head table, who by this point were listening in, so Harry continued a second later. "I have to thank the professors, especially Professors McGonagall and Hagrid, for explaining matters to me and showing me around. If it wasn't for them, well, who knows what trouble I might have gotten into upon my return to this world."

His comment seemed perfectly timed as many turned to look at the two teachers, with even more respect than they had otherwise had. Especially for Hagrid who was right thankful for the positive
comment on the way he did the introduction.

James, after waiting a moment for the reaction to die down then says, "and you think this would be fixed if we all learned more about the customs and traditions of magical society."

"Of course. It would take time but where else better to learn than here at Hogwarts. Plus if you make mistakes then you have time to correct them in an environment a bit more open to that, as compared to the wider world." Was Harry's response.

Neville then says, "That would be nice. That way if someone made a mistake, say on the train coming to Hogwarts in their first year, then they wouldn't have to deal with it forever."

"Yep. I agree." Harry then just laughs. "Look at me, how many mistakes did I make in my first year before I learned better." A pause as he finishes his food. "Anyway, as I was saying James, there are many differences between the muggle and magical worlds. And I personally think that those who intend to stay here should learn all they can about the magical world, lest they be driven out."

Harry then looks at his finished plate and glances at Hermione and Neville. "I know I plan on staying here, this is my world and magicals are my people." A half smile as he turns towards James and says. "So James would you like to join us for a trip to the library so I can show you some of what the magical world has to offer."

A grateful smile then, "that sounds interesting Harry, sure."

"Not a problem James, always happy to help."

At that point Harry, Hermione, and Neville with James in tow leave the great hall to had to the library. They of course completely ignore the large explosion of talk as students all about begin discussing the pros and cons of studying traditional magical customs. Much to the amusement of many members of the staff.

As soon as they passed the doors they stopped and laughed, at least James, Hermione and Harry did. Its Neville who says, "wait, was that planned." A pause, "and you got a first year to participate in it?"

"Yes," Harry says with a smile, "James here had asked me about the subject a little while ago and Hermione had the brilliant idea about bringing it up in the great hall one day. James volunteered to be the one to start it off." He then smiles, "by the way, thanks James, that was pretty sweet of you."

A smile, "not a problem Harry, glad I could help with the little show."

"But everything you said," Neville wondered.

Harry gently interrupted, "was all true. I didn't lie and I am not manipulating, I just want them to think." Harry then gives a pause. "I won't hide the fact that when I take my seats on the Wizenemgot that is the path I will move to. I am pro-magical."

"Good to hear Mr Potter," comes the drawl of Professor Snape, "ten points to Gryffindor for making everyone think." The man then walks away with a swish of his robes. Before he can get too far he stops and turns slightly, "Oh, and Mr Potter."

"Yes professor."

"I look forward to hearing of your escapades in the Wizenemgot." Snape then disappears down the hallway.
The friends just look at each other for a moment before they laugh a bit at that.

"So library," Neville says, "as that is where everyone expects you to be."

"I agree, to the library we go." Harry says while gesturing, and the group head there.

The next day, to the surprise of no one really, the headline in the Daily Prophet is:

"Harry Potter says Hogwarts should teach Wizarding Culture to its students."

Following up by.

"Harry Potter declares his love for the magical world and its traditions."

When Harry sees that he laughs into his food at the fact that his words were translated so quickly to the wizarding population. Of course, though he kept this quiet, he knew he was the cause for he had contacted the chief editor of the Daily Prophet himself.

A little while later he was walking through the halls of Hogwarts when he came upon Draco. The two smiled at each other as Harry said, "so how long before your father begins moving the board to establish a Wizarding Culture's class here at Hogwarts."

"I give it a week, two tops, before the meeting begins. But its pretty much entirely guarantied to exist by next year." Draco says with a laugh as the two then part ways with a friendly nod.
Easter Break

Date: Fourth Year, Early April

As they turn the corner of the school during their morning run Harry says, "oh I just remembered I meant to ask what happened, you missed the party yesterday."

Cedric chuckles slightly, "I was with Terence."

"Oooh, I see, so you were having your own party." Wide grin followed by a suggestive leer.

Cedric laughs softly, while also blushing a bit. He then says, "Honestly, I needed it, this year has been something."

Harry nods at that, "Oh yeah, you don't have to tell me, I know." He then lets out a sigh.

"I wish we could get some peace and quiet, I really need it." A shake of the head. "As Hogwarts isn't cutting it."

"Hmm," Harry then says with a thoughtful look coming to his face, "I wonder." He then shakes his head, gives Cedric a wide grin and comments, "May I have permission to organize something."

"Oh Merlin yes, please do, use your Potter luck and get me a chance to relax."

"Great," Harry says nodding, "and will do." A pause followed by a soft sigh, "Though we still have some classes to get through."

Both give each other a look before breaking out in a slight grin as the run continues.

8888

"How's it going pup," Sirius says upon seeing Harry sitting on a bench in a covered walkway.

Smiling up at his godfather, mentor, and good friend Harry gestures for him to sit down. He then says, "Pretty good, I'm tired, but still pretty good."

Moving to sit down Sirius then gives Harry a full once over before saying, "It's that bad, huh?"

A nod, "And not just for me either, but Cedric and the others as well."

"Makes sense Harry," Sirius says with a soft smile. "Would you like me to do anything about it?"

"Well," Harry says, "I do have an idea, but its a bit out of your role as my High Chancellor."

"Is it something you want me to do as your godfather, because trust me pup I'll help you in that capacity as well."

Harry nods then gives his godfather a grateful smile before launching into what he is thinking. Which has Sirius nodding along, commenting where appropriate, and making mental notes on what he is going to need to do.

8888
As Sirius is walking out of the Headmaster's Tower, Severus says in a slightly dazed tone, "Well, that was a first."

"What do you mean Severus?" Asks Pomona curiously,

Shaking his head slightly he turns his gaze on the others and says, "I do believe that was the first time I interacted with Sirius Black as godfather and not Sirius Black as a Chancellor or Lord."

Nods at that, with grins coming to both Minerva and Filius, and a full blown twinkle in the eye of Albus.

Filius then says, "It was a great sight to see."

"From who he was to basically a parent, its beautiful," says Minerva.

Grins and nods at that.

Severus then speaks in his smooth tone, "For the record as long as he gets parental approval I have no issue with Mr Higgs heading to Potter Manor."

"Same with my and Ms Lovegood," adds Filius.

"Or me and Mr Diggory," Pomona says before adding, "In fact I welcome it, he deserves the moment to relax."

"I agree as well," Minerva states. She then grins while adding, "Which is important considering the majority of the students trying to relax are from Gryffindor."

Stroking his beard softly, Albus then nods before speaking, "I see no reason to deny the request, especially as Sirius brought with him the signed permission of the Board of Governors." There is a moment of pause before he adds, "But even more both Mr Potter and Mr Diggory deserve it, considering the year they have had."

Albus then gives all a wide grin while flipping open the folder on his desk. "So, since you are all here, and before you go, let us talk finances."

There is a groan, from who nobody can tell, but the small group gets out their files and begin going over the material.

8888

"Thank you for this Harry," Cedric says with a smile upon appearing in the gateway chamber of Potter Manor. He then moves forward and hugs Harry tightly, "Thank you," he breaths out into his neck.

"Should I be worried," Terence says with humor in his voice as he pops in the manor himself.

Chuckling Harry says, after being let go of, "Hey, it was your man who hugged me." A pause as he holds out his hands, "But if it makes you feel better, want to hug?"

"Sure," Terence says, much to the amusement of the others and the shocked surprise of Cedric. "Proving his words he moves forward and gives Harry a big hug."

Once they pull back from each other, with laughter in their eyes, Harry turns to the others, "So anyone else want a hug?"
"I wouldn't object to one," says the voice of Charlie as he leans up against the door frame leading into the room.

As Ron and the Twins say, "Charlie," Harry laughs and moves up to the man for said hug.

As that hug, a much longer one than the others is going on, Sirius comes forward, greets the gathered, and says, "For the record both Bill and Percy will be coming here as well."

"Already here," says Percy coming into the room while sidestepping, in amusement, the quietly talking Harry and Charlie. "Hey all," he greets then turns towards Hermione and says, "hello Hermione."

Who blushes and moves up to him saying, "Hello Percy, its ever so great to see you!"

Remus comes in himself at that point and moves over to shake the hands of those present, including Neville, Luna, and Blaise so they didn't feel left out.

At this point Charlie moves to greet his siblings, but then stops, looks around, and says, "Where's Gin, I thought she was coming?"

It is Luna that answers, "She was delayed by a meeting of the club she attends."

Nodding at his friend Ron adds, "Bill said he would bring her after he finishes some last minute work."

"Well then lets head inside and begin relaxing," Harry says in a happy relaxed voice. One which gets smiles on the other's faces as they do just that.

8888

"Look here a Slytherin all on his own," says Charlie as he comes into the kitchen early in the morning and sees a calmly sitting Blaise.

With amusement in his voice Blaise says, "Oh no, what will this Slytherin do now that he has been caught."

"Break it up you two," says Sirius with a grin as he comes into the room, "no flirting, its a rule."

"Oh, you're one to talk," Harry says with a laugh as he enters himself in his jogging clothes, "you flirt everywhere and with everyone."

He nods at those present, though his eyes linger a bit on Charlie and Blaise, then walks out of the kitchen with the bottle of juice he came to get.

Sirius just chuckles at that, grabs the bowl of fruit he came for, gives the two a grin, and then walks out.

Quiet descends on the room which ends when Blaise clears his throat and says, "So, what will you be doing with this all alone Slytherin."

Which causes Charlie to burst out laughing before shaking his head and saying, "Honestly, nothing, sorry."

"Oh well," Blaise says with a smirk, "I was looking forward to it."

The two grin at each other. A real grin, not a Slytherin upturn of a lip sort of grin.
There is a bit of pause as the grin fades which leads to Blaise tilting his head curiously.

"Yes," Charlie says in all seriousness with an eyebrow raise.

"Ah," Blaise eventually says, "do you mind how physically close Harry and I are?"

"No, not at all," Charlie says firmly. "In fact I am both happy and glad that you are." A pause as he sighs, "Honestly, you are providing him with certain needs that I can't provide yet. So its fine."

A nod at that before Blaise says, "Though we are having fun, and I am enjoying it immensely, I can also say I have no interest in actually dating him." A pause as he takes a deep breath, "Or anyone really, at least not now."

"Understood," Charlie says. He then clears his throat in universal manner of a subject change before asking, "So what woke you up so early?"

Which leads to an explanation and the start of a conversation, one which continues till a number of others walk into the kitchen for breakfast.

8888

"ooh," Ron suddenly says as the group of friends and family are sitting in a lounge figuring out what to do.

Blinking at the sudden sound Neville says, "what's your idea?"

A wide grin, "I don't know why this didn't come to me, but why don't we play a Quidditch game. Between us all we should have enough players for it."

"I abstain," Neville says immediately.

"You can be the referee," Harry says almost as immediately.

"I'm good too," Hermione says quickly, "though I think its a good idea."

"It will clear your pours," Luna says in her airy voice, which she immediately ruins by grinning at her friends.

The group laugh before immediately leaping into conversation about teams and plans and other such important matters. In fact, they are having so much fun that even Percy agrees to play the game, much to his siblings amusement.

Percy turns out to be really good.

8888

Halfway into his sentence to Bill, Harry trails off upon seeing Sirius and Remus at the door with a packet of papers in his hand. Shaking his head he holds his hands up in the air, "No, whatever it is, no. I'm on a mini-vacation."

"Sorry pup," Sirius says with a grin, "but this can't wait."

"Yeah cub, you need to hear this, it's important." Remus adds.

Into the sudden silence Bill says, "Ah, should I head out?"
"Nah," Remus comments, "its not necessary, not with the oaths of secrecy you have sworn."

Nodding at that Sirius continues after passing the packet to Harry, "So it seems that Dowager Lady Sona Petit of the Albion city-state of Ara'sha is attempting to throw the forces of the Great Houses out of her city."

"What," Harry says shocked at the information, "what in Merlin's name would let her thing something like that is going to be tolerated."

A small cough from the door leads the small group turning towards it, where both Charlie and Arthur are standing.

It is Arthur who says, "Pardon me for the interruption but, well, I know why she is doing it."

"Oh," Harry says while gesturing for the two wizards who also happen to be Lords and Heads of their own Great Houses into the room. "Please explain, because it seems crazy."

Arthur begins by saying. "House Petit is a House Minor of little note, if it wasn't for the fact that for the last millennium it held the fief of Ara'sha. It was a fief they gained due to a business deal turned marriage contract leading to victory in the war that occurred at the time." A pause then, "I mention the backstory only due to the fact that for them its incredibly important."

Harry nods at that, "I can imagine that, it is what got them their own piece of territory."

Charlie then smirks, "What it did was make them feel important while giving them an over-inflated ego."

"Exactly," Arthur says with a nod towards his son's comment, "and which recently led to the issues that Sirius is talking about."

A grin then a gesture for Sirius to explain. Which he does so, by saying, "Well there was a parade recently and the pureblood nobles of a dozen Great Houses refused to bend knee in supplication, for all that they showed the proper respect. When confronted they answered that such oaths were restricted to their own Houses and so couldn't be given to the liege of the city-state."

A tilt of the head as Harry asks, "Was this a simple, normal parade?"

"No pup, it wasn't," Sirius says, "it was a mortuary parade to honor the life of the recently departed Lord Mario Petit."

A short closing of the eyes before he says, "Please tell me their action wasn't done during the funeral."

"It wasn't," Charlie says with a soft smile. "The parade was two weeks after the funeral ceremonies, which was done according to all standards."

"Right." Harry says getting the picture. "So in response to what she perceived as utter disrespect she is kicking us out." A pause, "what of our kin who live and own property in the area?"

"She is beginning to seize their lands," Sirius says sadly.

"I see." Harry gives a firm nod at that. "Well, you were right that there is no way I can simply ignore this." A pause then to Arthur he says, "Arthur, is the British Ministry doing anything?"

"Unfortunately no, mostly because the territory is not a part of the British Prefecture."
A nod, "I can see how that would limit them." A pause then a look to Sirius, "What about the Wizenemgot, it covers all of Albion."

"Though there is some talk in the body, there is also some resistance." Sirius explains.

At Harry's slight look of confusion Remus says, "Remember how I said that since the fall of the Last Monarch the Wizenemgot has focused on Britain rather than Albion, this is the result."

Eyes widen in understanding, "Right, I see." He then turns towards Charlie and Arthur and says, "Lord Weasley, Lord Sidus, would your Houses join with mine if a vote came up to censure and worse came up."

"You would have my unconditional support Lord Potter," says Charlie with a firm nod.

"I would support such measures as well," says Arthur with a frown at the thought of what is going on.

"Thank you both, you honor me with your continued faith." A pause as Harry turns towards both Remus and Sirius. "Right, so internally Remus I want Guard regiments from each House effected assigned to our properties there while securing the wards using the heaviest of rites." As Remus is nodding at that Harry turns towards Sirius and says, "Sirius, you are to bring forth a measure in the Wizenemgot to both censure and block her actions. You may choose House Black or Potter for this, which ever you feel is better." There is a longer pause, "Contact any and every House with property there and inform them of my plan to do something, and that we would be honored if they joined us."

"Even House Crouch?"

"No, not them, as even my consideration has limit." A fierce grin comes to Harry's face at that.

Hiding his own grin Arthur says, "I actually have a list of Houses with properties there."

Giving Arthur a smile at that, Sirius says, "Really, thank you, that will make my life easier."

Harry nods at that before shaking his head, "As an aside also send my agents, I want to know what exactly is going on there. Especially what they are not telling anyone."

"Will do pup, will do." Sirius says before standing up, which Remus and Arthur do as well. With a gesture to encompass the other two he says, "Well, we will off following your will." A wide grin.

After they leave Charlie says, as he stretches in his chair, "so, what were you two talking about, and can I join."

Which they say, and he does, and they have some fun..

8888

"Hey all, want to get out of the house for the evening?" Harry says upon walking into the dining room of Potter Manor as lunch was about to begin.

"Will I be able to attend as well Harry dear," Molly says with a soft smile from her seat.

"What about me," says Arthur as he walks into the room, on a weekday where he should have been at work. "Hey all," he greets before taking a seat next to his wife.

Harry grins at her, "Of course, both of you and all of us." The grin gets wider as he holds up a packet of tickets. "So I got us all tickets to both a circus show and a dinner theater, which should
occupy us for the rest of the day."

As the conversation flows on how great this is Neville leans towards Harry and says, "Is there anything we need?"

"Nope," Harry says with a pop to the 'P'. "You just need to bring yourself for everything else has been handled."

At Harry's eyebrow raise in Blaise's direction he simply says, “Do you own both facilities?"

Harry grins, "The dinner theater yes but the circus no."

Charlie then grins, "Because I own the circus."

At this questions are asked, and answered, as lunch continues for some time longer.

8888

"So wait Hermione, if muggles can't talk to animals then how do they train them to perform in similar shows?" Ron asks during an intermission between acts.

Giving a slight sigh she then says, "well it's complicated. But they basically train the animals to perform on command."

"But," Ron then starts to say only to have the twins shush him by throwing bits of popcorn at him. Ron, being Ron, grabs the first popcorn and eats it while catching the others with his mouth.

Though amusing the action did what the twins wanted it to, it distracted Ron.

8888

Upon them flooing into the dinner theater the maitre d' steps forward and says, "welcome and thank you for coming." A pause, "if I may see your tickers please."

Harry steps forward and hands the man his bundle of tickets. As he checks them over his eyes widen in shock upon realizing who exactly is before him. He then gives a slight bow, the only sign of said recognition, before saying, "if you and your group would come this way I will escort you to your seating area."

Harry gives a nod at that and then gestures for the rest of the group to follow as well. As they walk down hallways and into the main dining and theater room the man speaks. "The Mcguire Family Dinner Theater was first formed ten years into the reign of King Arthur and has continued to provide daily shows." A slight pause then, "fifty years later the Crown gave us the land rights to turn its property into an expanded wizard space, which is what you see before you."

At this point he then stops and gestures towards the small raised platform near to the stage with but a single two person table on it. "As you head up the stairs please keep your ticket out, it is what will let you onto it."

Upon walking onto the raise the group realize the platform is much larger than first thought - besides a table big enough to support all of them, the platform contains a side bar, a buffet table, and three doors. One marked with the sign of restroom, the second 'employee only', and the third had an image of a gazebo.

As soon as those present were situated the maitre 'd spoke again, "while the main course is
personally served the drinks, appetizers, salads, soups, and deserts are buffet style. Movement and conversation within this platform is masked from the stage and the audience, with the exception of acts of clapping. If you wish for some fresh air the door marked gazebo leads to a private outside balcony and the one marked restroom leads to, well, a private restroom. He then gives a small grin as the group laughs in amusement at that. He soon continues, "additionally the main doors lead to a small gift shop, which you are welcome to visit if you so wish." A pause, "are there any questions?"

Percy then asks, "pardon me, but if we leave the platform do we need to have out ticket?"

"Upon stepping on here your auras were recorded which means you may come and go without needing to show your tickets." He stops to see if anyone has any more questions, which leads him to bowing once more before saying, "the preshow will start in thirty minutes and the play itself in an hour. There is also a schedule on your table and a bell you may ring if you wish to speak to your wait staff, which for this evening is waiter Julie and busser Nelson."

As soon as he leaves a bit of silence covers the room before Sirius chuckles, "wow, that was nifty." He then turns towards Remus, "we should come here more often, this is fun."

"Wait till you eat the food first before judging whether you want to come back or not," Remus says with a smile towards his mate.

This gets a large amount of laughter and leads to the start of open conversation.

8888

It was nearing the end of the show when Harry made his way to the door marked 'employee only' and entered it. As he moved through the barrier his Head Ring lit up to prove to the magic that he belonged.

He did not even make it two steps into the kitchen before a slight hush fell over the crowded work room. He also heard a few "its Harry Potter" from those in the room.

Giving everyone a smile he then says, "Pardon me for the interruption, I will only take a minute of your time as I know you are all busy. But I wanted to thank you for what an amazing experience you have given to my family and myself and that we definitely plan on coming back again."

One of the women in the room steps forward bows a bit and says, "thank you Lord Potter, we appreciate it."

Upon her saying that the crowd seems to erupt with many of the workers asking questions of Harry. Who lets it flow for a moment before raising his hand amusingly. "Okay, okay, please calm down. There are so many of you and one of me. Now, like I said, I don't want to take up your time but I couldn't leave without thanking you for all your hard work." He then grins before reaching into a pocket and taking out a bundle of personally signed cards and hands them out. "There is enough for everyone and I hope you take it in the spirit it is offered, as there is too little time for me to sign a card for every one of you."

Harry gets a large number of "it's fine," and "no worries," and comments like that which bring a smile to his face.

He then gives his own bow before saying, "Well then I take my leave, but as I said I wanted to thank you all." With that said he heads out, though not before personally thanking the main actors that performed the play.

8888
"So Harry, what are you planning on doing today?" Asks Terence upon coming into the living room where Harry was sitting.

"Not a thing Terence, not a thing." Harry says with a grin. "We have only a few more days before having to return to Hogwarts and I plan on making the best out of them."

"Sounds smart," Cedric says upon entering the room, "and pretty close to what we will be doing as well."

Harry then grins, which gets a smirk on Terence's face, just as Harry says, "nah, what you two will be doing is each other, not nothing."

"Harry," Cedric says in the fake shocked tone, though it didn't stop the blush.

Which just leads to Harry laughing.

8888

"Oh look, the prodigal son has returned to let us bask in his presence," Draco says from the covenant section upon Harry walking into it.

Before he can say anything in response Daphne snorts in amusement while adding, "don't listen to him, he is just sad that with you here he won't get to preen like a peacock to all the nobles he smoozed these last few weeks."

"Hey," Draco says with a pout, "you are not supposed to say such things."

"Well just because I was not able to attend didn't mean I had to be on your side," Daphne says in response.

After laughing in amusement at Draco's predicament, Harry turns towards Daphne and says, "I'm still sorry about that, I tried."

A shake of the head, "No worries, and don't be. I knew it was going to be near impossible to get permission from Father. I'm his little girl and his Heir and though you are Lord Potter he doesn't personally know you." A pause, "plus he is not entirely happy with me dating Ron, not that he will formally block me."

"Well that is good to hear, as Ron doesn't deserve such blocks." Harry says in his lordly tone of voice. He then shakes his head, gives a small grin, and clearly changes the subject by saying, "so, what happened here while I was gone."

Which gets a gleeful smirk on Draco's face, a soft sigh on Daphne, and an amused shake of the head from a number of others present. Then Draco does what he had hoped to do since Harry walked in, he opened his mouth and began explaining what happened, in exacting detail.

8888

It was the end of Care of Magical Creatures and Harry stayed back a bit. Approaching Hagrid he says, "Hey Hagrid, how was the break?"

"Great Harry," Hagrid says with a booming laugh, "went with Maxima to France, quite beautiful."

"Really, that's great. So was this your first time there?"

A nod, "never saw the point before," he says a bit softly. But then he grins, "but it was a nice thing
now."

"Honestly, that's really great and you deserve it." A pause, "so tell me, what did you see?"

Which Hagrid does, and it's an hour later before they part ways.

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Levant Revelations

Levant Revelations
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Date: Fourth Year, Mid April

As they finish going over the assigned material via mirror call Pernelle asks, "so Harry, is there anything you want to double check on?"

Harry gives her a small smile as he always liked the fact that she asked this. He then quickly goes over the notes he had made on the current topics and realized that for the most part he was good to go on the material.

That said, there was one topic he was interested in asking more on.

"Yes and no," is what he after finishing checking his notes. At her curious look he explains, "well no in the sense of the assigned topics, I honestly think I am good to go on them. But yes in something I have been meaning to ask."

"So what what makes this topic important to ask now," she questions softly.

"Well, many of my House Levant reports are increasingly coming to relate to the topic."

A nod, for that makes sense, "I see, so what is the question?"

"It's a general thing, but do you know how far back magical society goes and what, well, started it?"

She leans back in her chair and hums, "oh, now that is an intriguing, and complicated question." She then gives him a smile, "one of which only someone like you would truly wonder about."

Harry grins at her before saying, "well I always wondered you know but I have so many other pressing topics to cover that the distant past - while important - always seems to get pushed to the back."

"Makes sense Harry, you are after all the active Head of eleven Houses and connected to many more." A pause, "okay, so the fundamental basics you need to know is that our birth has more myth and legend to it then what mundanes would claim as concrete facts. This is mostly because the world was a much more magically fluid place and so the temporal magics weren't as restrained as it is now."

A blink at that, "wait, really? So did early magicals use time magic commonly?"

A negative shake of the head, "no, not the Magicals but rather the progenitor race, the First Ones as we know them. They were the first sentient magical beings to walk the young material world, and they walked it like gods. They were powerful, mighty, and very much alone."

"What did they do?"

"They first shaped assistants and then found others they hoped to share the world with. We don't know much about this period but we do know at some point they found some humans who had the spark of magic and took them in. These became the earliest magicals and they were part pet, part servant, part child, and part apprentice to the First Ones." She then stops and grins, "in time it would be from these earliest magicals that the Seven Utmost, Three Sacred, and House Emrys would come
from, though that was not yet for thousands of years."

All the while Harry was listening his magic was taking it in, and singing to it. Considering his connection to three of the seven, one of the three, and House Emrys his Head Rings rang out confirmation of the truth being said.

As soon as she trails off Harry says, "talking about this all occurring long before the Houses began, well, it seems the Head Rings agree with that. They are all but singing in acceptance, while not having recorded memory of the events you are talking about." A pause as Pernelle nods which then leads to Harry saying, "so what happened?"

"The legends say the First Ones got bored of reality and so choose to leave it, to ascend to a higher state. Though they took their great works of artifice and some of their shaped races they left the majority of them, and all magicals." A slight pause, "though the human magicals simply returned to human society and began making names for themselves as wise ones and the like the created races had nothing supporting them with their masters gone."

Harry sighs at this then says, "let me guess, fractions were born and wars occurred."

A pleased smile and a nod, "of course, as you expected. For how long they fought we don't know but myths indicate it was a dangerous time to be human. That humanity only survived because the magicals used the arts they were taught to protect human communities from the eyes and arms of the warring races."

A moment of connection to the Potter Head Ring leads to Harry seeing images of what she is talking about, of the first Potter Head working to protect the community of his wife's lineage. Of him taking in her father's skills with pottery and using it to fashion magical items with potent wards. A blink and he is back, which is when he realizes he was in the memories for over ten minutes.

"What did you see?"

"The start of House Potter," he says in awe. He then shakes his head and gestures Pernelle to go on.

She smiles before saying, "well the First Ones came back, chastised the warring races, started the healing process for the world, aided them in getting their own homes and declared Earth to be for humans. The First Ones then left, never to return - at least as far as myth and legend notes."

"Oh, wow," Harry says still very much awed. "Thank you for the information, its given me a lot to think about."

Pernelle nods at that, smiles at Harry, and then says her goodbye, for the tutoring session was basically over.

8888

Some days later, as he sits down at his desk, Harry thinks, 'right let's do this.' He then takes out the mirror, activates it, and says, "activate multi-call functions. Remus, Sirius, and Ragnok."


In front of him appears Remus, who is sitting at his own desk. Seconds later the image of the desk shifts so that it fits into the appearance of his own room. Giving Harry a smile he says while looking around, "hey cub, I like how the mirror combines the locations."

Though Harry has enough time to grin what he was about to say was cut off by Sirius appearing,
also sitting at his desk, which was clearly a different office in Potter Manor.

Then the image of the desks of both Sirius and Remus shift and move, so as to better fit into the design of Harry's real office.

"Hey pup, wow, how cool is this, its like we are all together." He then tries to touch Remus, with an obvious result of his hand going through the image body of Remus.

Chuckling at that Harry just has a moment to say "really," before the third call activates and Ragnok appears, and so does his desk. Which sees the image moving and shifting till his seat seems to fit perfectly in the room.

As everyone settles Harry says simply, "magic is amazing." He then gestures to Ragnok and says, "right, so down to business, Ragnok you first."

A nod, "Your personal and private accounts are doing well, as are the charity accounts. The funding for your projects are also doing well enough that I have little new to report." A pause, "You should have already received the reports, I sent them right before the meeting." He waits for two nods, which he gets as both Harry and Remus have received the reports. "That said, I have been noticing an increase in overspending among the sheriffs, bailiffs, and reeves of your various Houses."

As soon as he stops speaking Harry asks, "is this a matter of theft, wrongful purchasing, or just general so happy to have a boss again they are overspending to prove their worth?"

"All three, but most cases are of the third category you mention. Those who I am sure are stealing have had their files transferred to the proper House department while their accounts are being heavily monitored. While those of the other two category have had their information reported to Remus, as its more of his manner then mine."

As Harry's eyes turn towards him Remus says, "we are refunding those who made wrongful purchases and working to develop more fiscal responsibility in those overspending out of trying to do well." A pause, "as for those stealing, well the guard and the courts have been responding to them as your laws require."

"Sounds perfect." A turn towards Ragnok, "how are these issues effecting actual finances."

"They really aren't, at least so far as the bottom line is concerned. Both yourself and your Houses are collectively making more gold then anyone can possibly spend. On those accounts that are loosing money I have already established auto-refill policies that top them off to efficient levels. All such information is in the reports I have sent."

"Sounds good." Harry says with a nod. "Now before you leave please provide full reports on the accounts that I have forewarned you I wanted to know more about."

"Of course," Ragnok says with a sharp tooth grin before launching into a forty-five minute long conversation on said accounts.

8888

"Wow," Harry comments moments after Ragnok's image disappears from the office after he finished his updates, "that was intense."

There is a chuckle from the other two at that comment.

Giving them a grin Harry then says, "oh by the way, I meant to ask where are you guys?"
Sirius speaks up first, "Remus is at Potter Manor and I'm at the Wizenemgot, it was just simply easier considering I have a bunch of meetings a bit later today."

"Makes sense, makes sense," Harry says with a grin. He then gestures towards both men, "so who wants to go first?"

The two mates look at each other in silent communication before Remus grins and says, "I win." He then turns towards Harry and comments, "so my main update right now is that I am getting many reports that certain sheriffs are being too quick to unleash the Guard."

"Are people getting hurt in these deployments?"

"No, thankfully, but that's more out of the Guard forces being well trained then it is due to sheriff orders."

A nod at that then, "we need to tell the guard captains to praise their troops for keeping cool even in the case of say a ranting sheriff." A pause as Remus nods which is followed by Harry saying, "so do you want to issue reprimands or do you want to wait till the summer and my meeting with the the sheriffs."

"Hey pup," Sirius says speaking up after giving a gesture to Remus and getting a nod in return. "Why don't you do both? Right now Remus could meet with the other Seneschals and a memo can be sent out about when its proper to use the Guard."

Remus gives a firm nod at that, "that actually sounds good. We can then work out a more in depth review of practices for the convention next summer."

A look of acceptance and an nod of agreement comes to Harry's face on that. "Okay, good ideas, I accept." A pause, "so is there anything else Remus?"

"Not really no, though I do have some reports I will be sending you that need to be read and reviewed. But other than that I'm good for now."

"Sounds good and will do Remus." He then gives a slight grin, "though I admit I doubt it will be right now."

"No problem cub, I know how busy you are, though I must say they do have 'must read by' dates on them."

After giving Remus a grin at that Harry gestures towards Sirius to make his own update.

"Well pup, there are two current Wizenemgot issues that I wanted to inform you of. The first involves a potential law moving through council that seeks to restrict the buying and selling of certain magical items. I'm sending you the list, it has over twenty items on it."

As soon as the report comes in from their shared message tin Harry begins looking through it. Looking up from the quick read through he notices that Remus was doing the same, with his own copy. Giving a small nod of approval at that Harry then says, "right, so I can see how this is going to get complicated. Some should be banned, some I'm open to banning, while others should not be banned, and a few will be banned over my dead body."

Which gets chuckles at the nature of the statement.

"Quick question though, will your input on these effect your work to impede the Dowager Lady in her mad rampage to kick everyone out?"
"No, not even one bit." Sirius says with a gleam in his eye, "in fact that whole initiative is pushing forward the visibility of your Houses, even those no one knows you are the Head of."

"Sounds good Sirius sounds good," Harry says with a grin. He then tilts his head, "so what is the second issue."

"The Wizenemgot is interested in reviewing Britain's continued support to the ICW's judicial and military divisions."

"Is that even legal?" Remus says curiously.

"Nope," Sirius says with humor in his eyes. At the confused looks he explains, "those 'laws' they want to review aren't so much laws as official Imperial decrees established by the Last Monarch near the end of his reign. He wrote them in order to make sure the Empire of Albion remained an actual functional global magical state."

"Riiiiiiight," Harry says in a drawl extending the word out quite a while. He then shakes his head, "so why are they doing it?"

"From what I gather there are two camps among the actual sponsors. The most vocal are basically naive and believe they can overrule the Last Monarch. The more quiet group simply wants the first group to fail so they can come forward with a more logical answer, which would then pass."

"That's actually brilliant," Harry says with a nod. "So what is there goal?"

"To reduce the required tax money the Great Houses and various Ministries pay to the ICW."

"Oh, so their goals are more economical than disruptive and disloyal." Nod. Nod. "I can accept that as not an entirely evil reason to do something."

"Yeah I figured you would pup." Sirius says with a nod of his own. He then pauses, "so my plan is to play both sides against each other in order to stall the motion long enough for it to be tabled."

"Sounds good," Harry says agreeably. He then stops, gets a thinking look on his face, and says with a smirk, "or you could play it so that instead of pulling our support from the ICW we actually increase our support for it and international cooperation."

A tilt, "that will be hard," a pause, "but could be fun and will be worth it." Nod. Nod. "I will see what I can do." Another pause, "I will send you the reports about the proposal as soon as my team finishes writing it.

There is quiet in the office as all three wizards take the time to flip through their files to to see if there is anything else they need to go through.

Remus is the first to pick his head up and say, "well, that's it for me. Like I said."

Sirius nods in agreement, "yep, same with me." A pause then a tilt of the head, "so Harry, anything you want to mention."

"Yes actually." He then explains the story that Pernelle told him a few days earlier. Once its finished he adds, "which makes me think that maybe the ruins under Levant Manor are either from the First Ones or one of their the created races."

"Well either way the find is priceless." Sirius says still thinking it over. "Though I wonder how House Levant got access to it, they aren't an Utmost House which means they weren't around during
the time of the First Ones."

After nodding in agreement Harry closes his eyes and reaches towards the magic held by the Head Ring of House Levant. What he sees is a blank, a curious blank, as if something was stored but was removed. Eyes opening wide, "oh, now that is curious."

"What happened cub," Remus says worriedly.

"Are you okay pup," Sirius just to make sue.

A nod is given as he explains the feeling of information removed. "Its something we will have to investigate when we are able to." He then shakes his head, "well, anyway, I think that's it for now."

A small smile, "any issue with me ending the call?"

"Not on my end cub," Remus says with a smile.

"No, not at all." He then pauses before saying, "can you keep Remus and I's call open pup, I wanted to talk to him a moment."

Harry blinks at that, "sure, I think, let me see. If it does work can you message me so I know."

"Sure pup, will do, have a good rest of the day," Sirius says with a smile.

Harry gives one final nod before saying, "Mirror, end my call but keep the calls of Sirius and Remus still active."

"Affirmative," the mirror says before ending the projections of both Sirius and Remus.

A few moments later Harry receives a message from Sirius. "It worked pup, we can still talk. In fact our mirrors told us how to deactivate the shared call when we are done."

Harry nods at that before taking a deep breath, closing his folders, and heading out into the covenant commons to relax with some friends.

8888

It was some time later that saw Harry walking into the Gryffindor common room Harry moves towards to a gathering of younger year students about to play a game. Smiling at them he says, "is the game private Nelson or can anyone join."

Nelson grins and moves over a seat to make room for Harry while Violet says, "of course you can play!"

"Great," a pause, "so what are you all playing?"

Which gets some amused laughter as Chelsea explains the rules for the new magical game they are playing. As she does so others also come by and before long almost half the house are gathered around talking and playing and generally having fun.

Right before Harry turns all his attention onto the game he looks up to see Neville sitting in the corner with some first years around him. The two smile at each other, give a nod, and then turn to focus on those around them.

It felt good, Harry thought, to spend time with his house mates.

8888
It was a few days later and Harry was updating Charlie with the discovery of what might actually be under Levant Manor.

After a bit of pause as Charlie contemplates it he goes, "hmm, you know none of it can be a coincidence." At Harry's look of confusion he says, "well first my Dragon Sanctuary uncovers cave ruins that have relics of ancient magical society, then two dragon eggs Aithusa bore centuries ago hatch, certain prophecies are made, and you unlock a perfectly preserved artifice of First Ones related culture."

A chuckle, "you know when you put it that way, yeah, its too convenient."

"Quite." Charlie says with a nod. He then looks up, though Harry can't see at what it seems to be at the sky. "So much is happening and yet for most people everything is the status quo." A pause as he turns to meet Harry's eyes, "but I think this is important and that we should investigate what both of our sites mean."

A nod. "I agree on that." A pause then grin, "hey, I'll show you mine if you show me yours!"

Silence, then a snort, then a giggle. "Really Harry, really."

A wide grin, "what, I'm talking about our relic sites. What did you think I meant?" An innocent grin, clearly fake to those who know him, which Charlie does, comes on his face in response.

The two then laugh as they let the humor wash over them.

Harry then gestures in the way that means 'lets put this aside' before saying, "oh anyway, how are things?"

"Pretty good actually." he then stops and laughs as a thought comes to him, "oh, do I have a story to tell you." Which leads to them sharing stories of events more fun then troublesome.

That said, even though neither talk about it at the moment, a kernel of thought appears in both of their heads - why shouldn't they each visit the ancient sites of the other. Especially considering that Harry has never been to Romania, not really anyway, or more importantly its Dragon Sanctuary.

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"Hey Harry, may I have a moment of your time?" Bill says one day upon catching Harry sitting with Ron and Hermione on the covered bridge.

Giving the man a grin Harry nods, "of course Bill, what's up?"

"Nothing deadly but I was contacted by Thaddeus Sprigg, a cursebreaker working on a House Gryffindor working." A shake of the head, "anyway he was curious on who he should actually address his, well not concerns exactly but problems."

Harry blinks at that before answering. "Well each of my Houses have their own official Warder, House Gryffindor not being an exception on that."

A nod, "yeah that is what I said but I think he was hoping to be able to go a bit higher than a single House Warder." A pause, "if you know what I mean."

Harry nods on that. He then gives a grin, "while I understand what you mean unfortunately I do not have a High Warder at this time." A shrug, "it was honestly not something I thought I needed."

Hermione then speaks up, "may I ask what changed your mind?"

Seeing the curious looks on the faces of the others Harry grins, "I was recently handed a packet as thick as Hogwarts A History detailing all the warding operations being done. Without a High Warder overseeing it directly that falls to Remus as my High Seneschal, and he is busy enough as it is without that packet being added to it."

This gets some laughs as the others realize how much Harry must have expanded his operations. Of course for Bill, he doesn't have to imagine, he knows, especially since he was part of a lot of the initial attempts. Which is why he gives Harry a knowing look followed by a gentle smile, "well if Remus needs any help don't hesitate to have him contact me."

"Thanks Bill and will do." A pause and then a small gesture, "tell your friend that though I don't have a High Warder I will be getting one soon. Also add that if he feels it necessary he can write to me and I will look into his issue." Harry then gives a slight tilt to his head. "Oh, and Bill, if both of you are comfortable doing it, he can share with you the problem and you can then tell me about it."

Bill nods firmly at that, "will do Harry, especially as that is not a problem for me. Like I said I am willing to help you in anyway I can." He then shakes Harry's hand, nods towards Hermione, hugs Ron, and makes his way off the bridge.

A few moments later Ron clears his throat and says, "I know the look you have, it usually precedes you making major life decisions that effect others."

Which gets a surprised snort from Harry and a grin from Hermione. "Oh?"

A nod is the response. Ron then says, pretending to speak over Harry, "so Hermione what do you think the odds are that my brother gets offered the High Warder position by one Lord Potter?"
"Very good I would say," is Hermione's deadpan answer, which gets even more grins.

Harry just shakes his head, refusing to be bated into making a comment at the moment. Though he does give both friends a big amused grin.

8888

"So I am thinking I need to establish a High Warder position for my accumulated Great Houses," Harry says a few days later in mirror meeting with both Sirius and Remus.

"I'm for it," Remus says immediately, with no pause or indecision in his voice. "In fact I would love it as then I would only get a single page memo on the topic rather than a document that was twice as large as Hogwarts A History."

Harry gives a grin but then says, confused, "my report was only equal to Hogwarts A History not double it, why the difference?"

A nod, "that's because after I got my double copy I cut parts of the report that were pointless for you to read at this time. Especially since you actually read the update reports sent by the team leaders."

Sirius gives a grin at that before saying, "I have to agree that a High Warder will smooth matters out a bit." A shrug, "it will also aid in organization."

After nodding at that Remus asks, "do you have a person in mind?"

"I was thinking Bill Weasley, he has definitely proven himself not just skilled but also trustworthy." Is Harry's immediate answer.

"You will want to speak to Ragnok first," Sirius says with a grin, "as his acceptance of the post means he will cease to be employed by Gringotts."

"I was going to yes," Harry says with a smile, "but before that I wanted to get the opinions you both might have on it."

"I'm for it," says Remus, "both your hiring of a High Warder and you choosing Bill Weasley for said position."

"I agree with Remus," Sirius says with a smile. "Also, let's be honest, Potter Warder McAlistair is not exactly as focused as he would have been decades ago."

Nods of agreement come without pause from the other two.

"Okay then, with that discussed, so any other topics?"

The grin on Remus face shows that yes, there is many things he has to suggest.

8888

"So Ragnok," Harry says near the end of their meeting, "what would you say if I commented that I was thinking of hiring Bill Weasley as my High Warder?"

"I would say that its about time you appointed someone to the position." A pause, "I would also say that out of all the potential candidates you have to choose from Bill Weasley is one of, if not the best." He then gives a sharp tooth grin at that.

Harry grins himself, "so what would Gringotts say about my potential poaching?"
"Gringotts will have no issue with it, especially if you are willing to let us continue to partake of his skills and knowledge." Is Ragnok's answer.

"Oh." A tilt of his head then, "something tells me that Gringotts has experience with this."

A nod followed by a sharptooth grin, "you would be right. In fact it happens more often then you would imagine. A cursebreaker works for us, becomes known and then gets scooped up by a Great House, while we ask to still have access."

"Nifty," is what Harry says on that.

8888

"Your year has a very nice set up," Bill says as he walks through the hall and into the private office of Harry in the covenant section.

Harry grins, "thanks. Though it was a completely random find it has become a home away from home."

"I can believe that, after four years this place has all the personal touches one may find at home." After saying that Bill pauses till they sit down at Harry's desk. He then tilts his head and asks, "so is everything all right?"

"Oh, what makes you think its not?"

"Well you did bring me into what is clearly your private office." A pause and then a gesture, "where you have some paperwork laid out on said desk."

Harry chuckles then shakes his head, "sorry. This isn't a test or anything. But yeah, your right, there is a reason for me asking you here."

"I figured." Bill says with a smile on his face. "So what's up?"

Instead of directly answering the question Harry asks, "so what do you think of the organization of my ward operations?"

After looking at Harry for a second Bill shrugs and then says, "it could be better. Though your Houses are organized individually on a combined level you are lacking a bit."

Harry grins at that, "direct and too the point, I like it." A pause, "so Bill, what do you say about becoming my High Warder?"

"That it would be a great honor." He then pauses, "honestly, after talking to Remus a bunch while coordinating with some others I have kind of wanted to take charge."

"Really?"

A nod, "yeah." A pause, "I must say that I am not more in shock due to certain hints Durval had made."

A chuckle, "oh really, that's sad. I was hoping for a bit more surprise."

A grin comes to Bill's face on that. He then laughs, "honestly, I only picked up on the hints due to having worked with him for almost a decade now."

Harry chuckles at that for a moment before getting a series look on his face, one shared by Bill. "So
Lord William Weasley do you accept the role as my High Warder?"

"Yes, Lord Potter I accept the office of your High Warder."

Manifesting the amulet of office Harry smiles at him, gives a firm nod, then says, "so be it William Weasley." Holding out the amulet he says, "take it, and become my High Warder!"

Bill gives Harry a shaky smile, as this act means quite a lot to him. But then, with steady hands, for he has faith in his capabilities, he reaches out for the amulet and puts it around his neck.

Magic flows over him, though its sudden it is in no way unexpected. Following the magic comes knowledge, and a lot of it. Bill suddenly knew about all the operations and projects going on, and the personnel assigned to them. He even saw his own 'file', which made sense considering he was a freelance employee for the House of Potter. Before pulling out of the magic he immediately made some slight changes and reorganizations.

Opening his eyes he grins at Harry, "well that was fun." He then chuckles, "so, are you free to discuss what I already figure out needs changes and updating?"

A nod with a grin, "of course." A pause as he reaches into a cabinet and takes out a message mirror and tin, which he hands to Bill. "Considering how important and dynamic the work you will be performing is I figure an easy way for you to contact me is important." He then sits back and gives a gesture, "okay, that said, lets talk."

Which they do.

For almost three hours. During that time they cover every one of Harry’s Houses, and all of the warding operations that are being conducted within them. Some they just glance over as the reports coming in already sufficing for them. While others they focus on, with some even being micromanaged in order to remove the inconsistencies and failures going on. A few were brought up more for how meaningful they were - such as the work on Emrys properties and the investigations of Levant ruins - rather than the nature of the operators there.

In the end every project was touched in some ways, all for the better, to the point that Harry, Sirius, and Remus would begin receiving thank you messages from many employees on how their work was made better and or easier.

Which not just put a smile on Bill’s face when he heard, but made it so Harry and Remus were even more thrilled at the choice of him for the position.

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Fifth Task - Earth Maze

Chapter Notes

So I decided, today just because, to post three sections of the story this week and then the final three sections next week. I did this because as we know Book 4, the between, Book 5, basically all but five sections of Book 6, and then the between story are all done so why drag it out longer.

Additionally, remember, time is running out for those who have interesting in providing questions for the in-universe Q&A story that I will be posting as soon as this book is done.

So, without further ado, I hope you enjoy these three sections!

Fifth Task - Earth Maze
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Date: Fourth Year, Mid May

"Where are the others?" Harry asks of Cedric upon reaching the entrance way to the outside.

"They are coming but were slightly delayed." Cedric says with a smile. "It seems that both schools were up late last night having a bit of a party."

"Oh really, cool." Harry says with a chuckle, "Are they already celebrating?"

A similar laugh, "Nah." A pause, "At least they aren't celebrating winning the tournament. It seems that a Karl Martin from Durmstrang just proposed to his boyfriend Olivier Allen, who attends Beauxbaton."

"Oh wow, nifty. Do you know what years they are?"

"Seventh," is said by Viktor with a bit of yawn in his voice as he comes by. "So yeah as you can assume the fun was quite long lasting last night."

"Most of my fellows are still in bed," Lucus comments while starting to stretch.

Vala nods at that while adding, "Same with ours."

"We would have stayed in bed as well if we didn't need to run," Fleur states with a bit of attitude born out of tiredness.

"Well you don't need to," Harry says in a drawl.

Which gets some amused looks and Fleur saying, "What, and let you win because we are not in shape. Niet!"

Which gets some laughter before the stretches finish and the run begins.

At one point in it Vala says, "You know, this is going to be it, the last time we run, the last time we
see each other this way."

A bit of surprised upset comes to many of the champion's faces, they didn't think about what it would mean and now they are its sad.

"Honestly," Harry says, "whatever happens, whichever school wins, this has been a great experience. One I don't think I'm going to forget, nor will I forget any of you."

"The same," Viktor says firmly. "This has been quite unique."

"Even considering your quidditch playing?" Is asked by Fleur with a smile.

A nod, "Yes, even with that." Is the answer given as they turn a corner and continue the run.

8888

"Lord Potter thank you for agreeing to an interview with me," Rita Skeeter comments as soon as Harry and Regina Remont, his High Attorney, sit down.

"I would say it is not a problem, but we know that would be a lie Ms Skeeter." Harry says firmly he then gives her a false smile before saying, "Oh, pardon me, but this is Lady Regina Remont, my High Attorney."

"Lady Remont," Skeeter says with a nod, one which gets a nod in return. She then turns towards Harry and says, "Lady Remond and I have met before."

"Ah splendid, so you are aware of the nature of this interview." Getting a nod in return he gestures, "well then, please go on."

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Rita SKEETER: Hello all so today I am sitting with one Lord Harry Potter, one of the two Hogwarts champions. Lord Potter, thank you for agreeing to this interview.

Harry POTTER: Of course. How could I not speak to you, especially after your recent article about the Nooman Movement. It was inspiration."

Skeeter: Why thank you Lord Potter. Though we are not hear to talk about me, but rather you. If I may, let us start at the begining. What do you think about the Tournament as a whole.

Potter: That is a complicated question, though not one I don't have an answer for. For you see I am incredibly grateful for how this one has been one - two champions per school and four elementally aligned tasks are much more better than what it had once been. What makes it even better is that it can be repeated in a few years with the same set up but new champions and still not feel boring.

Skeeter: So you think it should be repeated in the future?

Potter: Of course yes, especially if its in this form. Though I will admit that maybe it should be opened to the other schools of Albion rather than just us three.

Skeeter: But with fourteen schools in Albion alone, sixteen if we include our closest allies Scandia and Japan, or nineteen if the whole magical world is included wouldn't that cause champion bloat.

*At this I must say dear readers that Lord Potter gives a slight chuckle.*

Potter: While that is quite true, you see there is a way to get around that bloat. The Hexwizard
Tournament could become like the World Cup and become divided into multiple phases.

Skeeter: Well that is quite an interesting idea Lord Potter, one I wish you luck on developing further.

Potter: Why thank you Ms Skeeter for I too hope it progresses further.

Skeeter: Let's move on if I may. Though this is a delicate question, I feel I must ask it anyway. What are your thoughts on your nomination for the tournament?

Potter: Well first of all I have sworn on my very magic that I didn't put my name in the Goblet of Fire, nor did I ask or hint or have anyone else put my name in it.

Skeeter: Well Lord Potter considering you still have your magic then someone else must have done it. Do you have any thoughts?

Potter: Plenty, though none of which I will speak of since I have no actual proof on who may have done it. But I will say that whomever did it is an enemy of the House of Potter that is for sure.

Skeeter: To slightly focus the question, how has the fact that you didn't choose to participate effect your playing.

Potter: Not at all actually, especially with this set of tasks. The other champions, including Cedric, have been nothing but amazing and the whole experience has been quite fun. Dangerous, scary, but at the same time fun.

Skeeter: I have one final question to ask, and this might be a hard one, but I think its important. So Lord Potter, if your parents were here today what would they say about your presence in the Tournament.

*Dear readers at this point Lord Potter gives me a grateful nod at my gentle tact before breaking out in a grin.*

Potter: Well I have to believe that they would both be front and center cheering me on. Father would have been quick to find it all the more exhilarating, and probably would yell at the stage about how the judges aren't fair because I was obviously the best. Mum would be a bit more quiet, but no less enjoying it, which would be shown when she slips me spell notes after each task. Even though I tell her she isn't supposed to do that.

Skeeter: Thank you for that Lord Potter. Well with that said, I do believe all my questions have been answered. Once again, thank you for accepting this interview.

*It is at this point the interview stops dear readers.*

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As the interview ended and the recording quill was put away Skeeter simply stares at Harry.

"Yes?" Harry says curiously.

"Lord Potter, honestly, how long am I going to be on probation with you?"

Harry then turns towards Regina and says, "security non-disclosure spell."

Regina nods at that while taking out her wand, which she then waves with both finnese and a flourish as she casts the requested spells.
Harry lets the magic take hold, then tests it with his Head Ring, before nodding and turning towards Skeeter. "Yes?"

"I want to know, how long will you keep me on probation?"

"The better statement is more, 'thank you Lord Potter for not firing me', rather than how long will you be monitored. Which is, by the way, forever, or at least as long as you work for any organization with my name associated with it."

"Why? What did I do to you?"

A snort, "Really, you ask that. Skeeter, I have hundreds of pages worth of information where you manipulated information and made use of your animagus form to spy on people."

A wide eyed grin. "You know about that?"

"Of course I do. You signed a magically binding contract with the Daily Prophet, an organization backed by Royal Writ which thus means House magic. I am the majority shareowner and thus can direct said House magic. Animagus potential and training shows up on that if one knows how to look." A pause, "Which I do."

"So why haven't you fired me, or sent me to jail?"

"Because while your words have done harm nobody has died due to them. Because your actions skirt the law but don't really go past it. But most importantly you are useful where you are and doing what you do."

"So that is why you agreed to this interview."

"Of course, it's not like I like you. Or trust you. Or even respect you. You are useful, nothing more."

Which gets a shocked stare. One that goes on for a long enough time that Regina clears her throat and looks at her watch. Harry seeing that nods, "Right, I have to go, so is that all Skeeter?"

A nod, "Yes Lord Potter that is all. Thank you for your time."

"Your welcome Ms Skeeter," Harry says pleasantly before walking out of the room with Regina.

As the two are walking down the hall he stops and turns towards her, "You okay?"

She blinks and then grins and nods, "Oh yes very much so Harry." She then shakes her head, "I knew you had it in you I just hadn't experienced you doing such a thing personally. It's why it caught me off guard. But yes I'm fine and we are good."

Harry nods, "Great to hear that." Which leads the two to smile at each other before they continue walking down the hall.

8888

"Well look at that, its Harry Potter," Charlie Weasley says upon detaching himself from where he is leaning on a wall at a corridor that Harry is walking past.

Stopping as he hears the greeting he then laughs, "well hello Charlie, what a surprise to see you here."

"Its a total surprise right, you never expected me to be here. Like at all!"
The two then laugh at the ridiculous nature of the conversation while moving next to each other and continuing down the hallway.

"The truth is," Charlie says, "that after this point you are going to be quite busy and so I sought you out."

Giving Charlie a small smile Harry stops them at an alcove in front of a big picture window with statue in front. He then says, "Honestly Charlie, though the world may seek me out you are one of the few who I will always be pleased, be happy, to see."

Looking into there eyes the two lean forward and kiss, a soft, gentle, romantic kiss. As they pull back Charlie says, "as a gesture of luck."

They then move to the nearby bench before sitting down. The two clasp hands as Harry says, with a soft smile, "the truth is part of me is looking forward to the task while another part of me is worried."

A nod, "on who put you in the tournament, right?"

"Yep exactly." Here Harry makes a soft wave into the air with his free hand. "Now I know most would think me worried about the actual event, but honestly, nah."

A chuckle, "I don't think any of you champions are worried about that."

"Your right on that, all of us are ready and willing and able. Self-study and group practice, both among our own schools and with the others as well."

Nod. "Its great how you are all more friends then full on competitors."

Harry grins at this, "Why we all want to win we also want to have fun." Here he stops. "Especially considering as purebloods all of us are, well, rich."

At this Charlie stares at Harry then laughs, "Oh, of course. So do any of you care about the prize money?"

"Nah, not at all. All of us have trust funds of some sort." A soft chuckle. "In fact some of us even have active income sources."

"Like Viktor who is a world famous quidditch player."

"Yeah exactly, or say Lucus who has controlling interest in two different well off businesses."

"Well nifty, very nifty. So if you win what are you planning on doing with the prize?"

"Donate it to charity or gift it to a friend or two who want to start up a business." Harry says while carefully hiding his grin.

"Oh," Charlie says with growing amusement, "anyone I know?"

"Maybe," is the response followed by a gesture with his free hand as if he is zipping up his mouth.

With a laugh, "Of course, nothing will be said."

They then lean back a bit and begin discussing small matters, like the weather or what breakfast was like.

A bit of time later they hear a small throat clearing and look up to see - "Bill, hey, hows it going."
Harry says.

"Hey Harry, Charlie," Bill says with a smile and nod. "Sorry for interrupting but I wanted to wish you well and give you a thumbs up."

"Really, thanks, I appreciate that."

"Of course." A pause, "I, ah, also wanted to ask, do you by any chance know where Fleur is, I want to say it to her as well."

With a wide grin Harry nods and says, "I see." A pause, "Well yeah I do, she should be in the back fields riding a threstal. It soothes her."

"Really, brilliant, thank you." A pause as he moves forward and shakes Harry's hand, nods at Charlie, and then goes off with a smile on his face.

Chuckling slightly the two look at each other before Charlie says, "So Bill and Fleur, interesting."

"Very," Harry comments. "You know I noticed them talking a lot at the heir table during the wedding but I didn't realize how much they had hit it off."

"It must have been very well I guess," Charlie comments amused. A pause then a grin, "Well I plan on doing my brotherly duties and messing with him on this."

"Of course, have fun," Harry says with a chuckle.

Giving Harry a grin the two return to the conversation they were having before Bill had come up.

8888

It is a bit into the meal before Harry says, "So I'm curious, why didn't we have a tournament luncheon the other three task days?"

As the other champions nod at that Sirius says, "Ludo and I tried but Crouch and Igor rejected it."

"I thought it was distracting," says Headmaster Karkaroff, "but I was overruled this time."

Percy then spoke up, as it was he who took Crouch's place after the man dissapeared, "I just thought that unity makes us all that much better."

"Which it does, it benefits us all," Headmaster Dumbeldore says, "for there is much good in good will."

Chuckles at that as Harry holds up his goblet and says, "Let's toast. To us, our schools, and to Albion!"

"To us, our schools, and Albion!" The champions and the judges all call out.

Bang!

The flame of the candle in the middle of the table grows tall and wide before wooshing out and going out with a burst of magic.

Magic not created by any of those present.

"Oh," Harry says in complete and utter awe at the fact that Magic had chosen to bless them. It also
made him wonder what it all meant.

"I hope you aren't planning on going into the Forbidden Forest?" Harry says as he moves next to Ginny and Philip as they are looking over said forest.

With a laugh Philip shakes his head negatively, "Nope. But I was talking to Ginny about how Beauxbaton has something similar - the Dark Park in English. Its a former garden where supposedly bad things happened though I reckon its restricted due to ancient magic."

"Oh that's wicked," Harry says with a smile.

"I was telling Philip that the depths of the Forbidden Forest contains ancient ruins and relics of a time before time." Ginny says with a smile towards Philip.

A nod, "It's true, though I don't know how you heard about such thing."

"The cursebreakers you have hired don't always put the books they borrow away when researching," Ginny says matter of factly. She then laughs, "This includes my brother, especially when he gets super enthralled in what he is working on."

"Oh that's amusing," Harry says with a laugh. "I guess I better remember to restrict what libraries my agents use when working on a secret project." A big grin comes to his face.

"Oops," Ginny says.

Which garners a laugh from Philip. "Don't blame them too much for I know many who do the same." A pause, "See Beauxbaton has one of the largest libraries in France and so both Minstral and House cursebreakers often make use of the library. So much so that they installed a second door for them that bypasses the student hallways."

It is Ginny that asks, "So is your school not that restricted on who comes and goes?"

A tilt of Philip's head as he thinks on it. "Well it depends, magically speaking the school is as protected as Hogwarts and the others. But yes, on a day to day basis we do have more non-students come and go then from what I have heard Hogwarts gets."

Harry chuckles, and then at their looks, he explains. "It's just funny that despite us writing back and forth for the last three years we didn't really talk about the physical structure of our particular schools."

There is a bit of silence as Philip thinks back on their letters. He then laughs at realizing yeah, "oh wow, yeah, that's true."

After giving Harry a slight look Ginny smiles and says, "So tell us more about it, as you have obviously seen Hogwarts. What would be good to know before we visit?"

Which gets Philip talking, much to the enjoyment of both Hogwarts students.

"Right, right right, you are all here, so let us begin," Ludo says in a way that seems a bit frazzled.

"Are you okay Mr Bagman," Harry asks after seeing his jittering nature.
"Don't worry about it Harry," Sirius speaks up, "our friend here simply got into a bit of a financial issue. Nothing that he won't solve in time. Right."

Wiping his brow and taking a deep breath Ludo nods, "Right. Like Sirius said, don't you champions be worrying about it." He then claps his hands to get attention. "Right, so the final task is about to start. The elemental earth task is a maze, as we have said previously. There will be three runs through it, with the maze changing slightly between runs. At the center of the first two runs lie a statue of the Goblet but at the third run it will be the actual Goblet."

"Now remember folks, just because a team gets to the Goblet first doesn't mean they win the whole tournament. That is based on points all the way up to this point." Percy comments.

Giving Percy a nod Sirius adds, "within the maze lie traps, puzzles, creatures all designed to slow you down. Additionally if you run into each other you may fight, using the rules of a combat duel."

"So with that said, any questions?" A pause, "No, good, then you have twenty minutes before the task starts. Once it does you have five minutes to ask questions and then off into the maze you all go."

Which gets amused laughter and shakes of the head from the champions and a wide grin from Sirius.

8888

"So," Harry says as soon as they are given leave to begin the journey, "how do you want to take this?"

"I hear that a maze is best handled by going right at every fork," is Cedric's immediate response.

With a shrug, "While I don't know how true that is at least its a plan and thus better then nothing." So said he begins moving foward, an act quickly followed by Cedric.

They amke it to a fork, they head right.

They continue down the path for a bit before arriving at another fork, they choose right again.

Right. Right. Right.

Which leads them to a ledge with a sheer drop off that leads to Cedric saying, "Well this is surprising."

"Hmm yeah, it is," is Harry's response. But then he grins, "But its also too our benefit." He then points to a location distant, "See that, that looks like the path we need to head to."

"Wicked." A pause, "So how far back do you think we should redo?"

"Just one I think, there is no need to take it all the way back."

Which leads them back to a location where they had gone right and instead now they go left.

Which led them to seeing a dark shambling dementor coming toward them. With a fierce grin Harry says, "Expecto Patronum." Which leads to the boggart dementor exploding into a silver flakes.

As Cedric looks at Harry in awe Harry simply shrugs, "As I learned last year boggarts are no match for me."

Which gets a bit of a laugh as they continue down the path.
"I hope that wasn't the only boggart in the maze," Sirius says from the judge's booth.

"What just happened?" Asks Maxime in confusion.

"Mr Potter has a skilled defense against dementors and the boggarts which take their form." Dumbledore comments with a twinkle in his eye.

"Well that's a way to put it, a better way is his spellwork makes them explode." Sirius says with a hand gesture indicating something going poof.

"I see," drawls out Karkaroff.

"I really don't like riddles," Harry states as they successfully walk past the sphinx after solving her riddle.

"I'm not much of of them either, my mind always comes up with other solutions."

"That's exactly my problem." Harry says with a grin. "You give me an issue or a problem and I give you a solution, either direct or roundabout. But I hate being forced to only accept one solution."

They then make a turn to the right as the path splits and the maze continues.

"I wish this was more exciting," states Ron with a sigh as he watches his friends make another turn.

"Well they did just fight a series of spiders," says Hermione matter of factly.

"I know that," Ron states, "but after the duels and the archery golf, and the dungeon this is so much less exciting."

"What makes it worse," Blaise adds speaking up, "is that this is the final task. If it was the first task then great, nice start, but as the last," a shake of the head.

They turn back to the task as all three groups make another turn at an intersection.

"Oh look the end," Cedric says happily as they turn the corner and enter the middle of the arena.

"Hey Fleur, Lucus," Harry says with a smile upon seeing that they aren't the first to make it this far. "So how long have you both been hear?"

"Only a few minutes," Fleur answers.

Lucus smiles, "It was pretty much the best thing we could ever see."

"Oh don't I know it!" Harry says with a chuckle and smile, just as Viktor and Vala arrive and the event ends.

"I have to say Harry that I am quite glad at there being an intermission," Cedric comments as the two
walk to the champion box.

"Same with me," Harry says with a nod. He then chuckles, "Which is funny as I didn't at first, I thought it was a waste of time. But now I like it."

Moments later they stop as they walk into the room and see Lucus hugging a younger girl. With a smile he pulls back and says to the others, "Hey all, this is my sister Valentina, Valentina this is my fellow champions." Which leads to many and varied greetings.

Almost ten minutes later there conversation stopped when they heard an announcer declare that in two minutes the Leonid Five would perform a few of their hit numbers.

Which led to the group moving about to find there seats. Mostly anyway for Harry took the opportunity to take some food orders and then head out to the nearby cafe.

Only to run into Charlie in the nearby snack area ordering food. The two smile at each other, followed by Harry placing his own order. They then move to one of the nearby seats on a balcony ledge overlooking the concert stage.

As they wait for their food the two pass the time by talking. Which leads to Harry quietly saying to Charlie, "What has me spooked is that so far nothing has happened yet."

A nod, "And you know that something has to."

"Well yeah, of course, I mean why else put my name into the tournament. Plus the dissapearance of Crouch and the discovery that his son is not just alive but an active Death Eater, yeah, I am expecting something."

"So what are you going to do?"

"Nothing," says the voice of Luna from the small entrnace way to the balcony. "At least nothing beyond being prepared for the unexpected and thus ready for anything."

"Do you know something Luna?" Asks Charlie curiously.

"Nothing more than you do." A pause, "Though I will admit to noticing the ether has become a whirlpool of turbulence." A longer pause, "It's disconcerting."

The three magicals look at each other for a moment then Harry sighs. "Well considering the prophecy of the 'dark one's rebirth' I can see why the ether is turbulent." A long sigh, "But your right there is little I can do about it, well beyond telling Cedric to be careful."

"You won't need to say it," Charlie states. "He will realize something is up and know to be on the look out. He knows you."

A nod. "Which I am grateful for as us being able to read each other wordlessly is what will let us both survive whatever is to come."

"Have you spoken to Sirius or Remus about your concerns?" Charlie asks.

"Not really no, though I know they are as worried about the unknown something as I am. But the single answer of me not participating can't happen and so my hands are tied."

"Pardon Tinky sirs but your foodz are done," comments the house elf working at the food stand.

Harry nods at that and is about to stand up when Charlie says, "Tinky would you be willing to bring
my order to the Potter Box and Harry's to the champion box. With a note to both that we are staying here to watch to music."

Nod. Nod. Wide grin. "Tinky would be more than happy to help sirs with this so Tinky will do it!" Tinky then snaps his fingers and both him and the two food trays disappear.

Moving to sit back down Harry grins, gestures for Luna to join them, and says, "Right, perfect."

"May I join as well," comes the voice of Neville by the opening.

"Neville," Harry says with a great big grin. "Of course of course, come sit, I do believe the chair by Luna is free." Which gets some amused laughter as he does exactly that.

Then all talk ceases as the small group turns towards the stage in order to watch as the small concert began.

8888

"Okay Cedric so this is it," Harry comments as they began walking through the maze.

There is a pause then Cedric shakes his head. "Ah Harry, do you have the feeling we are being watched?" At Harry's 'really' look he chuckles upon realizing what it sounded like. "Right duh, but no, I don't mean like being watched by judges and fans but a more sinister watching."

"Yes," Harry says with a nod, "and I am glad that I am not alone." A pause as he says softly, "We need to be prepared for anything!"

As Cedric nods in agreement the two make it to a intersection where they turn right.

8888

Leaning towards Albus, Sirius says, "We need to be careful because I have a feeling that something is going to happen."

"You as well Sirius," is Dumbledore's immediate response, twinkle absent.

"Harry too I think feels something, though he hasn't said anything to me."

"Probably doesn't want to worry anybody," Percy adds from nearby. As eyes turn towards him he blushes and turns forward. Which is why he misses the pleased look that comes on both older wizard's faces.

8888

Turning the corner the last thing Harry or Cedric had expected to see was the unconscious bodies of Fleur and Lucus laying on the ground.

"What?" Cedric exclaims confused.

"I'm not sure what could have done this, but let us be careful."

"Should we do anything?"

"Let's send up a red flare just in case, though honestly others should be on their way to retrieve them."
"True." Cedric then casts the red flare before saying, "Especially considering the whole event is being watched."

The two give themselves a look before continuing down the path as is expected of them.

8888

"Who would think having to deal with some skrewts would be so messy," Cedric says as he casts a cleaning spell on both him and Harry.

A snort, "You did sort of explode them Cedric, what else did you think would happen."

A slight blush is the response to that as they continue down the path.

8888

"Okay now I know something sinister is going on," Cedric says upon them coming to a opening and seeing the sight before them.

Which was both Viktor and Vala unconscious on the ground, wands pointed at each other.

"Your right," Harry says with a nod before casting a red flare into the air. "There is no way they choose on their own to attack each other."

"What do you want us to do Harry?" Cedric asks, for though he is older then Harry it is Harry who has more experiences handling such situations.

"We have no choice Cedric but to go forward, the magic of the Goblet of Fire requires it."

"Right," he says before giving a slight shudder as the two head forward.

8888

"Madam Bones just retrieved Fleur and Lucus and now we see something happened to Viktor and Vala, what is going on?" Ludo Bagman says storming into the judge's box.

"I don't know Ludo but what I can say is that it wasn't Mr Potter or Mr Diggory that is for sure."

"Of course not," Sirius says, "especially since the image we have on them never faded. Unlike the slight interruption that blocked us from seeing the other four champions.

"Look, its happening, the Potter and Diggory lads are at the Goblet," Karkaroff states while pointing. Which leads to silence in the judge's box as the stare at what is about to unfold.

8888

"We are here," Cedric says upon them entering the clearing after having to deal with another riddle.

"Yes we are, the first, which means the goblet is ours to claim."

"To be honest I really don't want to," is Cedric's response as he looks back at the path they just came.

"I know, same with me, but we have to go forward, there is no going back. So come on!"

The two them move towards the goblet, taking a deep breath as they do so. Then they do it, they reach out and touch it. It is upon touching the Goblet of Fire that both Harry and Cedric feel a tug on
their navels as they are portkeyed away to somewhere unknown!

Right before their thoughts fade into the trip both think - 'this isn't supposed to happen!'

~~~
Dark Lord’s Rebirth

Date: Fourth Year, Mid May

A graveyard.

That is where Harry Potter and Cedric Diggory found themselves portkeyed after touching the Goblet of Fire.

"This can't be good," Cedric says in a whisper as he takes a look around. He stops as an animal crows in the distance. Then he turns to Harry and says, "Do you think this is part of the tournament?"

"No," Harry says firmly, "This is not part of the tournament."

"What do you want to do?"

"We need to hide," is the immediate response.

"Ooh master the wards have gone off," says Alecto Carrows.

"Splendid," says a groaning voice from within a bassinet by the fireplace. "Then it is time for the hour of my rebirth." A pause, "bring me to the grave."

"Come out come out children," growls Fenrir Greyback as he moves into the cemetery. "I know you are here, you smell delicious."

"Stop playing with them," says Amycus, "our Lord will be arriving soon and we need to secure the Potter lad."

Instead of answering Greyback simply growls in response.

From behind their hiding place Harry turns to Cedric and says, "You must not let yourself be captured."

"The same with you," Cedric responds.

A shake of the head, "No, they need me alive."

After a deep breath Cedric breaths out, "But they don't need me!"

Harry nods sadly at that, but before he can speak he feels a warmth around his neck. Reaching into his shirt he pulls out the Goblin wrought necklace containing the artifact which manifested in Harry's second year.

Knowing exactly what to do with it he pulls it off his head and hands it to Cedric, "Wear this and when you are the most worried ask for its aid and my Family will guide you."
"What?"

"Trust me, I don't have time to explain but it will work." Harry says as the mutterings of the Death Eaters begin to come closer. "Oh, and Cedric," a fierce grin, "do not hide your animagus potential."

A wide grin.

"Ooh looky looky what I found," says Greyback with a hungry sneer in his voice.

"Kill the spare," comes a groaning voice from within the bassinet.

"Hmm, good, more for me to eat," Greyback says with an angry voice.

"Go!" Harry says suddenly before taking out his wand and casting a shield spell.

Which works to distract the three death eaters just enough for Cedric to get up and make a break for it.

"Avada Kedavra," says Alecto from where she is standing a bit distant.

Even before she starts casting the spell Cedric is already shifting and becoming his animagus form. Which saves his life for where he had been when the casting began was not where he was when the killing curse struck.

After giving a mighty neigh Cedric runs past a number of gravestones before transforming back into a human. He then takes a deep breath and hide runs to a different gravestone and rests his head against it.

Breathing heavily, though quietly, Cedric tries to calm his racing heart. "Right, think think, what to do, how can I help Harry."

As he is softly saying that he unconciously reaches out to grab the necklace that Harry had given him.

"Harry, you said to trust you, and I do, but what did you mean. What do I have to do."

The necklace suddenly gets warm, a warmth that then runs up his hand before covering his whole body. Then he feels it, a weight covering his body and he looks down -

- and sees nothing!

His body is gone.

"What?" He breathes out in shock before his eyes widen in understanding.

The invisibility cloak. No. Harry's invisibility cloak. It is here, it is covering him.

He grins widely as a plan comes to his mind.

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Moments after Harry cast the shield spell Greyback roared in anger while striking against it with his fist. This is a fist enhanced by the natural magics that the Shifters can call upon.

Needless to say the strike pushe dright through the shield and sending Harry to the ground.
That is all the distraction that they needed to get close enough to Harry to stun him.

Amycus then moves forward and picks up Harry, dragging him up to the center area where the bassinet is laying.

"Lift me up," says the voice hidden in the cart, "I want to see the boy."

Which, after Alecto does so, leads to Harry seeing what had happened to Voldemort.

He had become a sort of ugly baby thing.

Considering Harry knew that they still needed him alive he says, through the stun effect, "Hello Tom, looking a bit like a mutated baby."

"You dare mock the Dark Lord," exclaims Amycus while Alecto hisses in outrage.

Harry simply grins, "Yep I do."

Alecto moves forward and slaps Harry across the face.

Spitting the blood out he then says, "Oh is that all you got, you hit like a girl, oh wait!"

What Harry had not expected is for Voldemort to simply laugh at that. "So I see the attitude has not left you, well it will in time." He then pauses, "Alecto, Amycus prepare the ritual for it is time for my full rebirth."

With no hesitation the two begin gathering the necessary materials for the ritual. When they are ready they began.

"Bone of the father unknowingly given, you will renew your son," says Amycus.

He then throws the bone into the cauldron.

"Flesh of the servants, willingly given, will work to revive the master."

Both Carrows say at the same time while using a silent cutting spell to slice the hand off the other so they fall into the cauldron.

Magic rises up from the cauldron and a gold band forms around their wrist, stopping the blood loss.

Then Alecto comes forward and says, "Blood of the enemy, forcibly taken, you will resurrect your foe!"

She then drags a struggling but frozen Harry to the cauldron and holds up his arms before cutting into them, letting seven drops of blood flow into the cauldron.

With that said Amycus then places the baby-form of Voldemort into the cauldron.

Smoke bubbles up blocking the view of what is going on. Then magic rises, first dim, before growing in brightness and potency before exploding outward.

When it dims there are some changes.

Both Carrows have regained the hand lost in the ritual, for their loyalty is true.

But even more the cauldron was gone and where it had been instead stood the Dark Lord.
"Hey Tommy boy, how's it going," Harry says almost immediately.

It got him a crucio for his troubles but the widening of the eyes in anger made the pain worth it. For you see Harry, with but a single word, had ruined the so-called solemnness of the ritual.

"You dare!" The Dark Lord then says. "You are my captive and should call me by my rightful title, the Lord Voldemort."

"Nah," Harry then says, which of course leads to another crucio.

"You will suffer such pain and agony for your impudence." Voldemort states. "But first, let me see what I have become."

He then uses wandless magic to conjure a mirror, which allows him to look over his face. His pale, bony, snake-like face.

"Well you won't win any beauty contests that's for sure," Harry says and then waits, and yep, crucio as expected. After catching his breath he adds, "Which is a pity as from my studies one Tom Marvalo Riddle was quite good looking back in his day."

There are blinks of confusion in the eyes of both Carrows as they couldn't tell if their Master had been insulted or complimented.

"But now you look more like a rotting corpse," Harry finishes with.

Ah, insulted, they think as their Lord says, "Crucio."

"Though this is pleasant," the Dark Lord states, "I have other matters to attend to." A pause, "Amycus present your arm, I have Death Eaters to call!"

He moves forward and obeys with a slight bow, allowing his Master to reach forward with his bony finger and tap the mark with his long nail. The Dark Mark lights up with heat and a dark glow.

Pop. Pop. Pop.

Suddenly the graveyard is filled by Death Eaters. First just a few but then dozens and then scores from when it started to when the last straggler appeared some six minutes later.

Upon the arrival of the last of his servant, the Dark Lord begins circling around the room. "Hello ... friends ... I have returned."

"Master," some say, while others state "My Lord," while even others simply bow in respect.

"You call me 'Master' and your 'Lord' but besides these three none of you even attempted to find me all these years." A pause, "Rather it was these three and the work of Barty Crouch Jr, who infiltrated Hogwarts as their Defense Professor to make this possible!"

There are some attempts at commenting but the Dark Lord cuts them off, "Silence! Crucio!" With the last part being at the same time as an expression of wandless magic to strike every other Death Eater.

As they get back up he says, "But that is okay, I forgive you for you see I am a kind and benevolent master."

What he is about to say is cut off by Harry laughing, "Kind, benevolent, really, how ridiculous. You are nothing of the kind you narcissistic fool!"
"Crucio. Crucio. Crucio."

After spitting out some blood due to him biting his own tongue he says, "Is that all you have, that stupid spell. I thought you were more versatile than that."

"You dare mock our master," says one of the Death Eaters.

"Yep," Harry says with a nod, which results in him being slapped hard by Alecto in response.

"Now now my dear Alecto though I thank you for that defense there is no need for violence. As Mr Potter -" he is cut off.

"That's Lord Potter to you for my rights have been vested into me by the authority of Albion!"

As the others sort of shift in shock at the words a growl comes out of Riddle's throat at that, "We will duel for crucio is too good for you, I want you to suffer."

"Oh good, I thought I was going to die of boredom." Which of course gets him another crucio, not that this surprised him.

Voldemort then waves his hands and uses his great skill of wandless magic to summon his wand, from wherever it had been. "If we are to duel then we must duel properly." He then waves his wand and removes the stun effect on Harry.

Harry then slowly stands up and stretches a bit, "So we duel. Do you want to use the Country Style, the Masked Style," a long pause, "or how about Salazar's own self-made style."

"You will pay for your mockery," is Voldemort's next words.

"I don't think so," Harry states before casting a dueling spell and dodging out of the way of the fire spell the Dark Lord sent in his direction.

The duel is then on.

Though deeply in pain Harry kept up moving, dodging here and there, even hiding behind gravestones before popping out to cast a spell.

Harry let the spells fly, both those he learned officially and those he learned as a Head of House privately.

Which means he didn't simply stick to the legal, he also cast those on the other side of the line.

"Come on, is that all you got Volde," Harry taunted.

"I will get you Potter," the Dark Lord then comments.

Then it happened.

"Expelliarmus," from Harry.

"Avada Kedavra," from Voldemort.

The two spells struck each other at the same time leading to the appearance of golden thread connecting the two wands, which then began to glow and vibrate, before manifesting a lattice covered shield.
"What?" The Dark Lord says shocked at the display.

"Ooh what do we have here," Harry says instead, much more willing to accept the unknown.

The beam of light connecting the two dueling then grows so bright it becomes near impossible to see what is happening.

Then it dims a bit, but not a lot, and suddenly ghostly people start manifesting.

First an old muggle man, "Oh boy, my name is Frank Bryce and he murdered me, avenge me!"

Then a witch who Harry knew was Bertha Jorkins, "Lord Potter please avenge my murder!"

Then suddenly the light grew even more powerful, his Potter Head Ring began glowing at the same time as a light somewhere distant in the graveyard appeared.

Then appears both James and Lily Potter, at the same time, right before him. "Mum, dad, how is this possible?"

"With magic my son," James says with a soft smile, "all things are possible."

"Including us being here right now my beautiful boy," Lily states.

The two then glance at the Dark Lord before turning back. It is James that says, "We will distract the Dark Lord."

"Find your friend, get to the Goblet, and get out!"

"Will do mum, and thanks dad." He pauses before saying, "Mum, dad."

"We know son, and its okay." A pause, "We don't have much time my love but know that your father and I love you deeply, always have and always will." Lily says as she sheds a single tear.

"Yeah son, we are quite proud of everything you have done and that you are planning to do," James adds. He then grins, "Now before we go do what must be done, I just wanted to say its great how you accepted both Sirius and Remus so deeply."

"We also approve of your choice of partner, he is quite a match," Lily can't help but adding with a soft smile.

But then they get serious as they stand up. "Right, its time," James states.

"Remember, find Cedric, get away." Lily states as she begins moving towards the Dark Lord, being quickly followed by the other three.

"Will do Mum, Dad, thank you and I love you!" Harry says as he gets ready for their act.

Which occurs the moment they reach Voldemort and start taunting him. All it takes is for James to turn back once and nod and Harry is concentrating on his magic as he moves his wand sharply, breaking the connection.

Even as the shield is fading Harry is running and casting spell after spell in all directions. Some general - the surrounding Death Eaters - some targeted - the Carrows - and some specific - Greyback.

In fact it was that Shifter who bore the brunt of Harry's power and anger, including hundreds of stone transfigured javelins of silver launched directly at him.
But all that was side to him getting out of the way and while working to find Cedric. Which turned out to be easier than it seemed, not only did he feel the location of the invisibility cloak but he could sense the ethereal light of his necklace around Cedric's neck.

Of course it also helped that Cedric was making use of the time and distractions to launch as many devastating spell attacks against those present as he could.

"Let's go Harry," Cedric says the moment Harry slams the ground behind a tombstone. Of course even before Harry answers Cedric grabs him with one hand while summoning the goblet with his other hand.

The goblet came flying towards them and the moment Cedric and Harry touched it they are whisked away.

To Hogwarts and safety.

Well mostly, for within minutes Harry found himself looking up to see none other than Professor Moody, the Defense Professor. Now, considering what the Dark Lord had said, he did not pause in taking out his wand and casting "stupery!"

Moody fell like a rock onto the stage.

Harry just smirks as people move close by before saying, "polyjuice potion," before passing out.

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Harry was laying on a bed in the Hospital Wing surrounded by many individuals who were waiting for him to tell them what had happened. This included the Headmaster, the Minister, Sirius and Remus, many of the staff of Hogwarts, most Weasley's, and Hermione.

It was the Headmaster that spoke first. "Please tell us what happened Harry."

"Well, upon touching the trophy we were portkeyed away to a graveyard. Once there I was pretty quickly subdued by Fenris Greyback, Alecto Carrow, and Amycus Carrow who had decided to work together to bring back Voldemort. I should mention I know their names and faces as I have made it a habit to study those who have harmed my family and Houses."

"He's dead, he's not coming back!" Says Fudge shaking his head in complete disbelief.

"Minister, I said that those three, with Barty Crouch Jr helping as a note, had a plan to bring him back."

"Oh," is Fudge's response, for even he could believe Death Eaters seeking to bring their master back.

"Right. So where was I." A pause as the other's look at him. "Ah, right. So they began conducting a ritual which would see their master return. It involved blood and bone and magic. After having them think I was weak I managed to slip the bonds, call my wand, and get out of there."

"I don't believe that You-Know-Who is back, Mr Potter."

"If you say so Minister. What I can say truthfully is that Death Eaters are planning rituals and so even if their 'master' -," the sneer is clearly heard, "- isn't back at this point they will be acting in his name throughout Briton."

The Minister opens his mouth but before he can speak Harry continues. "Something happened at the end of the tournament and people know it. So you should announce, just like at the World Cup, that there are some dark wizards doing corrupt things. If you have Aurors looking out for it you will be seen as proactive, which will be a good thing Minister."

"Yes. Yes. That makes sense. I will have Madam Bones send out Aurors to investigate the dark wizards." A pause. "Thank you Mr Potter, here is your part of the winnings." And then he thrusts the bag with the 1000 gold into Harry's hands. Upon which he, and his bodyguards walk away.

Harry raises his hand to stop anyone from speaking as the Minister and his supporters leave the room. When its just those he trusted he looks them dead in the eye and says. "Voldemort's back!"

It causes an instant uproar as everyone starts to speak. Harry just leans back on the bed and takes a drink of water. He decides to wait them out.

Eventually enough quiet occurs that everyone can hear Arthur Weasley ask. "If he is back then why did you lie and make it seem like he wasn't."

"Because Fudge would not have believed me, and worse, he would have actively fought to discredit
me. Me saying what I said gives him just enough to put the Aurors on alert, since dark activity is quite believable, rather than have him panic." Harry says and then turns to look Dumbledore in the eye. "Voldemort will not be able to do anything for a little while, I can guarantee that so we have a bit of time."

Its the twins, after looking at each other, who say. "What did you do to him?"

A sharp grin, with teeth showing that causes some of the others around Harry to shiver. "Well, let me just say he is hurting. They are all hurting."

Then Harry turns to Remus and reaches for his hand, who accepts without knowing why. "Remus, just so you are aware Greyback is dead."

If it wasn't for the fact that Sirius immediately conjured a chair for Remus to sit on the later man would have collapsed to the ground.

"What?" Was all that Remus could stutter out.

"He was present for the rebirth, though I am not sure why Riddle choose him, probably as he was available." A shake of his head. "Anyway, during the battle I transfigured a dozen stones into silver spikes and then, well, launched them into him. Unless they have a Healer with them there is no way that he could survive that much silver exposure nor undo my transfiguration in time. The holes they made were pretty big."

Remus reaches out to hug Harry. "Thank you Harry, that means a lot."

Before Dumbledore could say anything about it being murder Harry interrupts. "Do not even attempt to try and get me to feel guilty for killing that beast of a man. For all the harm that he had done in this world he deserves what he got." Then a pause. "As for the rest, well the sister has no leg and the brother is now missing an arm, sadly not the wand arm. Neither can be reattached. Riddle also will need some potions to grow back skin, a lot of it is gone due to my various offensive spells."

Dumbledore seeing the looks on everyone's face as they expected him to argue raises his hand in supplication. "I believe in second chances, that is true, but I don't believe in a hundred chances. Fenris has harmed enough people that what happened is what happened." Then he looks around and after a second continues. "Its not like you randomly went up to them and started attacking, they attacked you first. So I say good job Harry, good job." A pause. "Now I am going to let you rest while I send word that the old crowd needs to come together again. We must plan."

Harry nods, just as Madam Pomfrey begins ushering everyone out. Before they fully leave Harry comments to the Headmaster, "when I get out of here we need to have a conversation, Sirius and Remus included.

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Even before Harry had been cleared to leave the hospital wing it was decided that they needed to have the conversation. Which is why the Headmaster, Sirius, Remus could be found sitting around Harry’s bed with the curtains drawn and a powerful set of secrecy spells applied.

After everyone gets a bit of tea it is the Headmaster that begins speaking. "So what is it that you wanted to speak about."

Harry gets a grin on his face as he puts the cup down. "Riddle used my blood in the ritual."

Sirius sits up and says, "Why are you smiling Harry, that is not a good thing."
"Yes, normally." Harry says the grin not fading. "But Sirius, think about it, not only am I Lord Potter, but I am also the last of my line." At this point he sees the dawning realizing on the Headmaster's face, with even Remus seeming to start to get it. Giving them a sharp grin Harry says, "His ritual actions were a form of Line Theft, which as you should know, is abhorrent to the Great Houses of Albion."

The Headmaster does something most people wouldn't expect, he barks out a laugh as he sits back in his chair. His face once again getting the twinkling that had not been there at the start. "That gives us an advantage we could use in our work to defeat him. May I say we should look up the traditions of such a declaration and save it till the moment is right."

Everyone nods at that as a quiet comes into the room. Soon afterward Remus then speaks, "As a precaution do we need to rethink the blood wards on Potter Manor."

All three look to Harry, for as Lord Potter they know he would have the most experience with the magic of the residence. "No," he says without missing a beat, "we wouldn't. Access to the property is by List, of which I have full and complete control of, nobody else. Not even a blood relative would have influence over it. But even more once I get back there after term ends I can put him on a different List, one which personally declares him an enemy of the Potters, it will block him from being able to access the property."

"That is good to hear," says Dumbledore with conviction. "Now before we leave if you are feeling up to it can we discuss the events exactly."

"Let us do one thing better," says Harry, "if you get out a pensive I can show you the events from portkey to portkey." Which is what they did, and it took about an hour to go over it all, even with some parts fast forward through.

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Date: Fourth Year, Late May

It was the hospital wing the day after the night that was the cemetery. Both Cedric and Harry were laying in their hospital beds recuperating from the events they had just gone through. Out of nowhere the silence that had come over the room was broken by speech.

"If Potter hadn't been involved you would have never gotten injured," says Amos Diggery, his father, to Cedric a few beds away from where Harry is laying.

"No father, if Harry wasn't there then I would be dead, dead father." Cedric says firmly. "He saved my life, got me out of the way, and gave me a potent piece of magic that made it impossible for the Death Eaters to find me." A pause and deep breath. "I owe him my life."

Seeing the belief in his son's eyes Amos sighs and just sits down, as all the strength leaves him. "I know, I know. I just, its easier to blame him for putting you in danger."

"I understand father, but you can't, mustn't, Harry doesn't deserve it. You know we've been friends since my third year when we started running together. I don't blame him, not for anything, and you shouldn't either." There is some rustling as Cedric reaches for his father's hand. "I'm alive dad, I'm alive."

"Yes, yes you are. For that I will forever be grateful to Potter, he brought my son home to me."

"It wasn't just alive father, he brought me home basically uninjured. I'm mostly sitting here to rest and ignore the crowds that probably want to celebrate how great we did."

"I get that," Amos firmly nods, "you rest for a little while." He then stands up, "I'm going to go and find Black and Lupin. The House of Diggery will be standing with that of Potter in the upcoming war, and I need to know what they want me to do." With that said he nods at his son, smiles fully, and then walks out.

Silence once again fills the hall before Harry heard some movement and, upon glancing, up saw that Cedric was coming towards him.

Giving him a smile Harry then asked, "Hey Cedric how do you feel."

"I'm good, thanks to you Harry." A pause as before he says, "you saved my life back there and I wanted to say thank you."

"It's not a problem Cedric. I'm just glad I was able to react fast enough to save you. The entire event was me reacting on pure instinct."

"If that's just instinct I will eat the hat I don't wear," which gets a bit of a laugh. He then gets serious as he states, not questions but states, "so you heard my father right."

"Yes, and I don't blame him for blaming me for it all as its true. My presence did make it more dangerous."

"But that is not your fault, you didn't ask for it, nor did you want it. You can't be blamed for the
actions of others, that is not how things work. You have to take the cards that fate and magic have
delt you, some of which is shitty."

"Very," Harry says with a smile and laugh. "That said I'm used to it now and honestly I don't think I
could live any other way. Its also getting better, it has been for the last few years."

"Yeah I know," Cedric says with knowledge, as they do talk about their lives while running. "In
some ways your paranoia has rubbed off on me so I watch out."

"Its not paranoia if they really are out to get you," Harry says half-jokingly.

"Oh I agree, especially as its that paranoia that saved our lives back there. I knew something was up
the moment your eyes widened and you moved yourself into a battle stance. Not a 'this is a game'
stance, but an honest 'I'm in battle for my life' stance."

"We work well together Cedric," Harry says with a smirk, "and maybe in another life our passions
could become enflamed."

Cedric actually blushes, blushes, a sight very cute to Harry. He then says, "Ah, yeah, maybe." He
then laughs. "Though I'm not sure that my boyfriend Terence would approve of that." He then grins
as he shakes his head, "oh who am I kidding, he would love watching us together."

Which causes Harry to laugh heavily at that, "I know Terence, not as well as you of course, but I
know him. The Slytherin would totally love the idea of the three of us getting into some fun."

Trying to get Harry to blush Cedric says, "Well I will talk to him about it, maybe we can have a
celebratory party just the three of us."

No blush just a nod and a smirk, "I'm all for it, in fact there are some moves that I think would be fun
to try."

A shake of his head as Cedric gives up on trying to get Harry to blush. So he decides to change
tracks and get back on topic, "Anyway, as I was trying to say, it helped that we have known each
other for the last four years. I knew your ready stance and when I saw it I knew battle was coming."

Smiling first cause of the subject change and then getting serious, Harry replies. "It was a good thing.
Us knowing each other made our passing of nonverbal cues much easier to do. We survived because
of that."

"Its going to get complicated now isn't it," Cedric says into the silence.

"Yes, somewhat, more for me than you though as I'm Harry bloody Potter. Voldemort, or as I often
say Tom Riddle, is back and will begin planning for his new war. I will be firmly against him and
thus will be at the center of it. You don't have to, at least not in a direct outside of your school way."

"You know I'm on your side and I will make sure my father sees it that way as well, the House of
Diggory is with you," a soft smile is direct towards Harry at that.

"Thank you, I appreciate that. To you, and those who ask you, I say study hard and train even
harder. Do not go out looking for trouble but if you see it then help those who can't help
themselves." A pause as Harry thinks. "I will keep you informed about major movements and if you
need information feel free to message Sirius Black or Remus Lupin."

"Right." A pause. "I'm tired of the seriousness lets talk about something else. So did you ever get a
chance to read the book I mentioned."
And off the two went on a completely unrelated to the war topic. One they were even continuing to talk about for the next two hours, till Madam Pomfrey came and released them from the hospital wing.

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Business Deals

Date: Fourth Year, Early June

Harry is sitting at his desk in the covenant section talking to Fred and George. "Look guys, Riddle is back and because of that the world is going to get a lot darker in the coming days."

"What do you want us to do about that," Fred asks.

"As we are already involved and on your side," George finishes with.

"I want you guys to do what you two do best, make people laugh," is Harry's response.

"I think that is not as important in a world at war," Fred says.

"No, that is wrong, it is even more important. People need to be able to laugh, to remember and have good times. I want you do to that, while also researching and making things for the war effort, of course," Harry says.

"So what are you offering," George says with knowing smile.

"I will bankroll your business operation. It will remain a secret but you may use Potter contacts and resources to buy land, outfit facilities, design a storefront, and generally make an operation. I get thirty percent, you each get thirty five, so you have majority shares." Is Harry's direct response.

"Are you willing to negotiate the nature of the deal," Fred asks.

"Of course," Harry says with a smile, "this isn't a do or do not sort of situation. You are my friends and I will do right by you. I think that this can benefit us strongly, for the long haul, and I want to be in on it from the beginning."

"It's impressive of course, and we would be stupid not to consider it," George says.

"We just need to discuss it, to go over it," Fred finishes.

"Of course, this isn't something you need to answer right this second. Think on it, sleep on it, talk to your older brothers, get advisement with lawyers and financial experts, make sure it all makes sense and is what you want." Harry says and then sits back.

Fred and George laugh at that.

"Sorry," Fred says.

"We are not laughing at you," George continues.

"It's just that we haven't really seen full on business politics Harry and," Fred explains.

"It caught us by surprise you see," George finishes.

Harry smiles at that as well, "understood. You don't really see my in full on House Head mode do you guys. You see frantic Research Harry often as well as Fun Harry, but not Business Harry or Politics Harry." A pause. "Not that I have multiple personalities but I think you get what I mean."
"Completely," the twins say without issue as the meeting switches focus and becomes much more fun.

"So I gave it to a former Gringotts coworker of mine to look over," Bill was saying as he sat across from the twins in Hogsmeade during a Hogsmeade Weekend. "As you asked and he read over it."

"So what did he say," Fred asks.

"He wasn't an account manager was he," George comments.

"No, at least not for the last fifty years as he transferred out of that division." Bill then pauses. "So he read it and all he could say was that the two of you were being given a great deal."

"We trust Harry, we just wanted to make sure," George says.

"That is quite understandable." A pause before Bill says with conviction, "see the thing to note is that the contract isn't for a one time loan. Rather the reason he wishes for some influence is that he is providing you two with access to the many contacts and resources that he can personally bring to bear in this matter." Another pause, “which is not just House Potter for all that he is famous for that but rather all of his Houses."

"So what, is it the long term that he is focused on," Fred says in response.

"Exactly," Bill says. "Now I wish the House of Weasley could have supported you on this but unfortunately we can't. But this is the next best deal, so I would suggest taking it." A pause. "If you feel that this is what you want."

"Its everything we want," George says.

"Its what we have dreamed about," Fred adds.

"Well then good, do it. There is no trap here." Bill grins at his brothers as he says. "Plus consider it a benefit of having such good grades."

The twins actually laugh at that, with a big smile.

"Funny enough that is also due to Harry," Fred says.

"He suggested to us to do more work and then share what we wrote for pranks," George continues.

"Which we did and it led to us having both better grades and better pranks," Fred finishes.

"Well good," Bill says firmly but then he laughs, "no matter the reason good grades at Hogwarts helps."

"If nothing it got mum off our backs," George says.

"Which was the best thing ever," Fred finished.

Bill smiles as he rubs his two brother's heads, which make them laugh and try and move away. They then change the topic and begin talking about other matters.
It was two days later before they met with Harry once again in his covenant office. “We have thought about it,” Fred starts.

“Even discussed it with Bill and an agent at Gringotts,” George continues.

“And are interested in accepting it,” the two say as one.

Harry smiles at that, “wicked guys, that’s quite wicked.” He then moves around a bunch of papers labeled on various political, economic, and social topics while looking for one in particular. “Ah, here it is!” Is what Harry exclaims as he pulls out a particular binder. He then sits up so he can talk to them fully on, waves his wand to shut the door, and then says, “okay, so until you graduate the compact provides you mostly with information assets, though there is just enough financial resources to begin the setting up of your business.”

Nods at that but then Fred says, “which I was wondering about. Why are you waiting for us to graduate?”

Harry gives them a grin, “two reasons, one professional and one personal. The professional is that with NEWT scores and a Hogwarts graduation certificate you are more …” At this point he trails off. “Worthy of a business relationship,” says George with a humor in his voice. He then shrugs, “it’s cool, no worries, cause I can see where you are coming from.”

A nod, “yeah,” a pause, “thanks for understanding.” After they give him a wide grin he continues, “and on the personal level, seriously guys you deserve to focus on your school work and if I gave you all the assets and you quit, your mum would kill me.” A pause, “that is not a danger I want to have to face.” Then a grin.

Which gets chuckles from the two twins as they nod in sympathy at Harry’s plight. Fred then says, “understood, so what do we do now?”

Harry then holds up a thick file that bears the Gringotts seal and the stamps of not just House Potter but all of Harry’s houses. “Once you sign the preliminary deal I can hand you this file.” A grin, “a file which contains all the necessary contacts and information for you to begin designing, organizing, setting up, and establishing your business.” Another pause as he holds up device, a call mirror, and says, “I will also give you a call mirror, one designed to allow you to contact myself, my High Seneschal Remus Lupin, my High Chancellor Sirius Black, my High Treasurer Ragnok, my High Attorney Regina Remont.” He then pauses, “plus any Weasley assigned mirror.”

Eyes widen at the information. “Wow,” Fred then says, “that is some nice contacts.”

Harry gives a grin at that, “yep, useful isn’t it.” A pause then in a very serious tone he adds, “now you are not, not I say, to use the mirrors to talk to Sirius or Remus as Padfoot or Moony, that is absolutely very much banned forever.” All three hold the seriousness for a moment before losing it to laughter as they all know that yeah, such restriction ain’t going to be followed.

Once the amusement stops Harry pushes forward the official document, the same document unchanged from what they had read before. Which was why they didn’t hesitate to sign it and impress upon the paper their magic. Once Harry signed it himself he did not hesitate to hand them the packet of information before smiling. “So, with that done there are some minor matters of organization I wish to discuss with you before I give you leave to basically test out the mirror by calling everyone available and introducing yourself.”

Which is exactly what they do, they discuss some administrative operations before they head out to
their own office in order to begin making calls.
Hello folks this is the last update for Book Four, which means its now finished and entirely in your hands. I want to thank you for joining me on this journey and I want to say I appreciate all comments and feedback, even if I don't really respond to most of them.

But I thank you for writing and reading and commenting and most especially enjoying what I have done here!

Next week comes the between story, which I can say is basically a Q&A with Harry's schoolmates asking questions and him answering them. (If you have questions yourself you may post them here and I might include them in the story as part of it.)

So, as of this moment the next between, Book Five, the between after, Book Six, and the between after that are all done. As is the between post Book Seven, which is right now the only book in this saga that I haven't written yet (the summer pre-seven is outlined as is the school year from start to December, what happens from January to the end is not.) I am currently on hiatus from writing this saga, not that you will notice it as there is enough already written to keep sections every week going for a while.

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Years End!

Date: Fourth Year, Late June

"So another year is finished," Cedric says as they are going for there morning run the day before leaving.

Chuckling Harry says, "I think we say this every year."

Giving a grin, "while that maybe it doesn't change the fact that's it true."

Both chuckle at this.

A few moments later Cedric lets out a deep breath before saying, "honestly Harry, I just wanted to say thank you. If it wasn't for my animagus form I would have died at the Graveyard."

Harry gives a soft smile and reaches over to take Cedric's hand in his for a moment before releasing. "I am so glad you survived, that you had learned that skill. You are one of my best friends and I would not want you hurt!"

Cedric smiles at him before shaking his head and saying, in a clearly fake tone, "oh, so I heard this joke of a story that I wanted to share with you!"

Which is exactly what he does for the last part of the run.

8888
"Wow, what a year," Harry says as he collapses onto the couch in the covenant section.

"It was, wasn't it," comments Blaise from the nearby couch.

A clearing of throat and then Mandy asks, "how are you doing Harry, really?"

Harry gives her a small tired smile, "I'm alright."

"Probably because he is not really that surprised," adds Crabbe.

Harry gives him a grin, "you're not entirely wrong." At the looks of surprise on the face of many of his year mates he sits up a bit. "I'm not saying I expected THIS, but that said I expected SOMETHING." A pause, "if nothing else then my forced participation basically required it."

"So what now?" Asks Terry curiously, worryingly.

"Nothing much from your perspective. School's out so you head home for the summer vacation. Rest, relax, and do your summer assignments."

"What about you?" Is the question that Justin asks.

"I'm mostly going to do the same, though with some politics added to it." A shake of the head followed by, "seriously, don't you worry about it. Even those among us whose family has a place in what is too come will probably have a normal summer this year."

At this Ron clears his throat and as everyone looks towards him he grins, "so, with this being the last free point of the year lets play games!"

Which is what they do, after the appropriate amount of laughter.

8888

"Mr Potter if I may borrow you for a moment?" The Headmaster asks of Harry as they meet up in a hallway.

"Of course Professor," Harry says immediately while moving in step with the Headmaster as they make their way to his office.

Once inside and sitting down the Headmaster says, "with the revelation of Riddle's return there is much that is going to happen, I was curious on what you will be doing right now?"

Harry gives him a grin before leaning back and saying, "with everything in the air I don't plan on doing much." A pause, "at least right now." Another grin, "mostly I am having my people and agencies dispatched to monitor the situation so that I know pretty much instantly when anyone related to the situation moves."

A twinkle comes to the Headmaster's eye after that. "Splendid Mr Potter, splendid. I am glad that you are being patient on this rather than leaping into the fray."

A nod, "well until we get to see and know all the sides, and who is in what, its hard to actually act." A pause as he grins, "I mean we know that you and I are on one side and that Riddle is on the other, but beyond that its not so clear."

A twinkle and a smile, "quite so, quite so." A pause then, "may I assume that you will have Sirius keep his eyes and ears out in the Ministry?"
"You would be quite correct on that." A small frown, "which basically means Sirius is going to be quite quite busy this coming summer." The frown leaves as he grins.

The Headmaster chuckles at that for a moment. Then, with a grin, he says, "in thanks to the trust you are showing in me I will simply state that externally I will be waiting and monitoring as well." A pause, "but internally I am gathering the old crowd once again, just in case."

Nod. Nod. "That makes sense and is perfect set of actions."

A twinkle eyed grin comes to the Headmaster's table before he stands up, "well, thank you Mr Potter for meeting me. I do believe dinner will be soon so feel free to head out."

A grin, a handshake, and then Harry heads out of the office with a smile on his face and a jump in his step.

8888

"Oh hey Professors, I'm glad to have run into you all at once." Harry says upon coming up to where the Professors Vector and Babbling are standing in the hallway.

Both grin at Harry before Vector says, "hello Mr Potter, so how we may be of use?"

"Well meeting you here now gives me the perfect opportunity to hand you both the official application paperwork for the summer work my House is doing." A pause for a moment as he gets the paperwork out of his bag and hands it to them. "I honestly have to say I think you both will find them particularly intriguing."

Babbling smiles at that before flipping over to the description part of the document. Her eyes widen at what she reads and she says, "wait, really, and you are inviting me to participate?"

"Of course," Harry says with a gesture to make sure they know he means both of them. "Between being in your class and seeing the results of your summer work last year how could I not offer you both the opportunity."

"Splendid Mr Potter, splendid," says Vector.

"Thank you Mr Potter, I do believe I speak for us both when I say we appreciate it." Babbling adds.

Harry gives them both a smile, a nod, and then makes his way towards the common room.

"Will the lad ever stop being surprising?" Vector asks as said lad heads down the hall.

Babbling laughs, "I don't think he is capable of that."

This gets a bit of laughter as the two continue walking down the hall.

8888

Silence comes over the great hall near the end of dinner when the Headmaster stood up. Giving all a smile he then says, "so once again we reach the ending of a year. A year that turned out to be quite different than what is normal." A pause, "of course change and is not necessary bad, and there was much in this year that we could consider good."

"Like meeting those from the other schools!" Harry calls out after meeting the eyes of the Headmaster and getting a silent cue.
"The games were fun too," says Fred, or was it George, only a few of those gathered could tell.

"Though we missed Quidditch," was voiced by someone among the student body, though who was not entirely clear.

As laughter covers the hall the Headmaster's eyes twinkle for a moment. "Yes, those points are all true." A pause, "including the last one, sadly, though don't worry for next year Quidditch will be back!"

Cheers from most of the student body.

Once it calms down the Headmaster's gaze goes a little steely eyed and the twinkle fades. "But unfortunately there was also an event quite dark which took place. Now some of your parents, and the adults of the Wizarding World, would not want me to say this. But I feel I must, that it is your right to know!"

The Headmaster stops at this point as an utter silence comes over the hall.

After waiting what feels like a minute he says, "during the last phase of the fourth tournament a portkey took our school champions and brought them to a graveyard. Once there they were present for a dark ritual, one which saw the rebirth of the Dark Lord Voldemort."

Gasps of shock, of fear, but also a bit of awe in the thought that two of their number actually faced said Dark Lord and lived to tell it.

"Due to both luck and training they thankfully not only survived the encounter but returned to us whole." A pause as both his and the rest of the school's eyes turn towards both Harry and Cedric. Once he feels that was enough the Headmaster speaks again, "I tell you all this not to scare you, for you are quite safe both here and in your homes, but to prepare you for the events that are to come."

Once again silence, which the Headmaster lets wash over the crowd. He then smiles, fully the grandfatherly figure, before saying, "now, please don't dwell on this too much, rather focus on the fact that once again a school year has ended and you all get to enjoy the summer holidays!"

With that said he then sits down to continue enjoying the last part of his meal. As the eyes of the student body are still on him he clearly turns towards Minerva and engages her in conversation - one about socks.

Back at the Gryffindor table Harry nods firmly before turning towards Hermione and saying, "you know Hermione I think the magical quill is better then the pen!"

Hermione gives him a frown, for all that she quickly realized what was going on, then opened her mouth and began to lecture Harry on how that was blatantly untrue.

As expected, and wanted, this distracted the student body just enough that normal conversation once again flowed.

8888

"Did you know what the Headmaster was going to say?" Asks Draco later that evening as their year gathered once again in the covenant section.

"Nope," Harry says simply, "though the moment he stood up I figured something about the event was going to be said."
"You know this puts us in a scary position," says Pansy a moment after Harry stops speaking.

Surprisingly enough it is Theo who answers, with a "not really though." Seeing her confusion he continues, "remember we are under the Pact of Hogwarts which grants us some freedom from the politics of the wider world."

The other pure bloods nod at that as Justin raises his wand and asks, "ah, pardon me, but what is that?"

It is Padma who answers by saying, "its an ancient tradition that basically states what happens at Hogwarts stays at Hogwarts."

Blaise adds, "which in practice means pureblood nobles are allowed to stretch the nature of pureblood politics a bit."

"It also means that technically feuds that occur here at Hogwarts stay at Hogwarts rather than crossing over into official House feuds." Draco explains.

With a smile Ron adds, "it really allows heirs to fight without Houses having to deal with it politically."

After grinning at that Harry says, "what it basically means is that we will be safe to continue our hanging out, and nobody will say differently."

"Ah," adds Wayne into the silence, "that is good to know."

Harry just grins, clears his throat, and says, "so, before we part ways and head back to our own common rooms anyone want to play a game?"

Which is what they did.

8888

"Hey Harry, can I talk to you for a moment?" Is asked by Teresa, an older Gryffindor.

"Of course, what's up?" Harry answers without pause.

"Well my parents work for the Ministry and there are already reports that state the Dark Lord did not come back."

Harry nods at that before saying, in a serious tone, "unfortunately that is not true, for all that it is what we told the Minister."

A blink, "ah, I see." A pause as she looks at Harry, "so how long before the truth comes out?"

A grin, "I believe some time this coming summer."

A nod, "okay, that is good to know." A pause, "I won't ask what will happen as the less I know the better."

A soft smile and nod, "I understood." A pause, "though trust me when I say it shouldn't cause your parents any issues."

A grin, a sigh, "that is good to hear." A pause, "well, have a good summer Harry."

"You too Teresa!"
Upon finding a number of first years huddled together in the common room couch Harry clears his throat so they know he is present. As they turn to look at him he smiles and says, "so what is worrying you?"

It is Troy who answers, "we were talking about what the Headmaster was saying."

Harry gives them a soft smile and gestures for them to move over slightly so he can join them. Once they do he sits down and says, "please don't dwell on it. As the Headmaster said you are safe both here and at home, there is nothing to worry about."

"But I head stories about Death Eaters going to people's homes and killing them," says Simon into the pause.

Harry gives a soft smile, "I won't lie and say that didn't happen, but that was in the past. Right now, right here, that is not what is happening, you do not have to worry about it." A pause as his gaze gets sharp, "trust me!"

Nods, from all around, for out of everything that is one thing they can say they do - trust him that is.

The sharpness fades into gentleness, "now I know it all seems scary but none of you have anything to worry about." He then smiles before saying, "so, why don't we get everyone and try and have a Gryffindor wide game?"

As the first years cheer Harry grins and stands up to begin organizing that. Which is what the house does before its time for bed.

"Did you really need to pop in and say goodbye to every person?" Asks Ron curiously as Harry comes back into their compartment.

As the others chuckle in amusement Hermione asks, "was this a standard act or a political move?"

"Political of course," Harry says simply as he sits down.

"Let me guess," Ron says, "you wanted to make sure that the others remember how kind and sane you are."

"But," Hermione comments with a tilt of her head, "if that is true then you think the Ministry is going to go down a route of claiming you are crazy."

"They would try that tactic yes, which is why I plan on preempting it." Harry simply says.

"It might work in a world similar but different to our own," Luna says in her resonant voice. "But here events are playing out different and your sanity is honestly not in question."

"Good to know Luna," is Harry's immediate response after she finishes speaking.

Giving her friend a smile Luna adds, "though it doesn't mean what you did was pointless."

Harry grins, "I didn't think so." A pause then, "enough of that lets play a game or talk about something more relaxing and fun!"

Which is what they do.
"Lord and Lady Malfoy, Lady Zabini, how pleasant it is meeting you here."

"Lord Potter," all three individuals say almost at the same time.

"If I may, I would like to congratulate you on your joint victory at the Tournament," says Lord Malfoy the moment the greetings pass.

Harry smiles at that, "of course you may, and I thank you for it. It was quite a hard encounter but with Heir Diggory's assistance we were able to push through any difficulties. Especially those at the final task."

A lifting of an eyebrow is the response at that before Lucius nods, gestures for his wife and son, and gives his salutations and heads out.

As soon as he does so Harry grins in response, only to have Blaise say, "did you really need to cause trouble with Lord Malfoy."

Before Harry responds Lady Zabini says, "that wasn't him causing trouble, rather it was him saying nothing happened he couldn't handle." A pause as she gives Harry a small bow of respect, "if I may say, well done Lord Potter, well done."

A slight blush comes on his face as he smiles and says, "thank you Lady Zabini for the kind words."

"Is this true, am I seeing what I am seeing, is Harry Potter blushing," comes the voice of Sirius Black coming upon where Harry is standing.

Harry shakes his head at his godfather's antics, "really Sirius, is that how we are going to reunite." Which honestly was a lie as the two had seen each other just a few days before.

"Blah," he says before turning towards Lady Zabini and giving her his quite proper introduction. When he finishes he smiles, "come on Harry, you have some more people to say goodbye to or we will never head back to Potter Manor."

As Blaise grins at the antics his mother laughs softly before gesturing in a way that indicates its fine for Harry to leave. Of course before he does so Blaise makes his own goodbyes to his friend, right before him and his mother head out of the station.

As they leave Harry and Sirius watch then go with Harry turning to his godfather and saying, "perfect timing Sirius." A nod, "well then, let us finish up the goodbyes, I have manor that I wish to return to soon!"

Which is exactly what happens, they meet and greet a bit before flooing back to Potter Manor as another school year comes to a close.

The end, at least till next year!

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Chapter End Notes
Well that's it, at least for the Fourth Book. I hope to see you again for what comes next, for there is still much more to come!

End Notes

Thank you for reading to this point. Remember comments, thoughts, criticisms are all welcome - as are ideas for potential plot points, ideas which might be accepted and turned into full blown sections of their own. :)

Honestly, and truthfully, thank you for continuing to read and enjoy my works.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!