

Chapter 30

The party raging in the Great Hall was even bigger than the one that took place after the First Task. Harry had no idea where they came from, but bottles of Butterbeer were being passed around to the upper-year students. After he was done getting congratulated by his classmates and his friends at Hogwarts, he spotted Professor Wilkinson at the Head Table talking to Flitwick and made his way over.

"Professor!" he called with a smile, his family trailing after him.

"Ah, Harry," Professor Wilkinson beamed. "A superb performance today."

"Thanks," Harry said.

"I'm sorry I didn't get to see the First Task. I had to get my new students settled, but from what I've read, it was quite something."

"It was one of the most spectacular things I've ever seen," Flitwick said, bouncing excitedly in his seat. "I'll have to show you the Pensieve memory of it. When you warned me he would be a handful, I never thought I'd have to worry about him riding a dragon."

"Harry doesn't cause trouble; he creates international incidents," Dora smirked.

"Only a couple," Harry grinned and shrugged. "What did you think of the broom?"

"I thought it was a brilliant idea," Wilkinson smiled. "Although I was a little surprised you didn't use a shield to protect yourself. I thought you would've learned your lesson after your experiments in the air."

"I did, but I didn't have time to figure it out," he told him. "I tried to use the same shield, but it didn't work underwater. It shatters if you go too fast."

"Ah, yes, it would, wouldn't it," Wilkinson said thoughtfully. "But I'm sure Filius won't mind helping you with it."

"Of course not," Flitwick chirped happily.

"And you might want to figure it out quickly," Wilkinson grinned. "I expect you'll be flooded with owls soon from broom companies wanting to license your new design."

"Why doesn't Harry just make the brooms himself?" Jenna asked curiously.

She blushed furiously when everyone turned to look at her.

"It's possible, certainly," Flitwick said, smiling kindly, "but it would take a lot of work. More than Mr. Potter could put into it while remaining a student. Creating a new broom company isn't a simple task."

"Oh," Jenna nodded.

"Oi, Harry!"

Harry turned. The twins were standing on a bench and gesticulating wildly for him to join them.

"You should get back to your friends," Wilkinson smiled.

Harry nodded and bid the professors a quick goodbye before making his way back over to the Gryffindor table. The benches were packed because of all the guests. He and Dora barely

managed to squeeze in between Jennifer and Michelle, who he noticed was clutching Hermione's hand under the table.

Because the Second Task started earlier and ended much sooner than the first, there was plenty of time for Harry to show Michelle around the school. Well, it was Harry's idea to show her around. Sirius hijacked it and began telling all kinds of wild tales from his Hogwarts days.

"You see that suit of armor over there, with the dented helmet?" he asked, pointing as they walked through the halls. "James did that. I hid inside it to scare him when he was coming back from detention with Filch. He hexed me good. Probably would've lost my head if it weren't for the helmet... Oh, see that door over there. We put enchanted mistletoe over it sixth year. We were trying to catch Dumbledore and McGonagall, but we got Filch and Pince instead. That wasn't pretty."

"You mean Madam Pince, the librarian?" Hermione asked, scandalized.

"Yup," Sirius grinned. "Could've been worse. James tried to use it on Lily, but he nearly ended up snogging Madam Pomfrey instead. He had to dive out of the way at the last second. Nearly gave himself a concussion."

"It would have been worse if he'd actually gotten Lily," Andromeda said.

"Probably," Sirius shrugged. "That reminds me, James, Remus, and I made a map of this place when we were students. It even showed everyone in the castle. I wonder what happened to it."

"You lost it?" Harry asked.

"No, we let Filch catch us with it on the very last day of school. We thought some future troublemakers would find it and make use of it. Not much point in hanging on to it after we graduated. I wonder if it's still in his office."

Sirius slowed to a stop, a thoughtful look on his face.

"I'm going to go talk to him. It might come in handy."

Before anyone could say anything, he turned and left suddenly. The group left behind turned to each other and shared a look in awkward silence.

"Let's finish that tour, shall we?" Andy said with a smile.

As they continued down the hall, Ted turned and looked at her curiously.

"Are you sure it's a good idea to let him go off on his own?" he asked. "You know how nostalgic he gets."

"Today, he's McGonagall's problem," she told him.

"Maybe I should go after him," Marlene suggested.

"I'm only teasing," Ted smiled. "I'm sure he'll be fine."

Marlene frowned, but stayed with the group as they continued through the halls. They returned to the Great Hall about an hour later, just in time for dinner. Sirius entered only a few minutes after they did.

"What took you so long?" Marlene asked, leaning up to give him a kiss as he sat down next to her.

"It took me a while to find Filch, and even longer to convince him to let me search his office," Sirius sighed.

"Did you find it?" Harry asked.

Sirius took a bite out of a dinner roll and shook his head.

"It wasn't there," he replied. "I'll send Remus an owl and ask him about making another one. He and James did most of the work."

"That's not a surprise," Andy muttered.

Harry grinned at Sirius's scowl.

"So, how long are you staying?" Dora asked curiously.

"Are you that anxious to get rid of us?" Ted asked good-naturedly. "We'll probably leave when the visiting students do. I think their Portkey is scheduled to leave in a couple of hours."

"I wish we didn't have to leave so soon," Michelle sighed.

Hermione blushed but smiled happily and kissed her on the cheek.

"If it's alright with Turner, you can go back with me," Sirius offered. "My Portkey doesn't leave until tomorrow morning."

"You're going back to America?" Harry asked.

"The Senate investigations committee is holding a hearing, and they want an in-person update on the investigation. Frank and I will be back in a couple of days."

"Thanks, Sirius," Michelle smiled. "I'll go ask Professor Turner if I can stay." Pausing, she turned to Hermione a little nervously. "I mean, if you want me to stay."

"Of course I do," Hermione said happily.

"I'll do it!" Harry said, jumping from his seat.

Before anyone could stop him, he rushed towards the Head Table. Michelle frowned and turned suspiciously to Dora.

"What is he up to?"

"How should I know?" Dora asked. "This all happened just now."

Michelle turned back to the Head Table. Harry spoke briefly with Professors Turner and McGonagall. A few moments later, he turned and jogged back to the table with a wide smile.

"What did you do?" Michelle asked demanding.

"I got permission from Professor Turner for you to stay the night," Harry grinned.

"I could have done that," she muttered, eyeing him closely.

"And I got permission from Professor McGonagall for Hermione to stay in the carriage tonight," he added triumphantly.

"Really?" Hermione asked excitedly.

“Yup,” Harry grinned, turning to Michelle. “You can thank me now.”

Michelle scoffed and tried to maintain her glare, but he saw the corner of her lips twitch.

“Thank you,” she said softly.

They finished dinner and continued to enjoy the company of their friends and family until it was time for the Portkey to leave. McGonagall stood and led the visitors back to her office. There was a bit of confusion when Michelle didn't leave with the others, but it was quickly explained. A few of her classmates were jealous, while others, mostly boys, looked between her and Hermione with suggestive grins. Gabrielle broke away to give Harry one last hug around the waist before rejoining her mother.

Once they left for McGonagall's office, Harry's family and Marlene, with the exception of Sirius, bid them goodbye and left for the front gate. Sirius hung around for a few more minutes before following Flitwick to the room he'd be staying in for the night.

The Great Hall began to empty after the visitors left. Most of the younger years went back to their common rooms, while a few of the older students stayed for a bit longer. As curfew neared, Michelle left with Hermione for Gryffindor Tower so Hermione could gather some clothes for the night. It took a while for them to return, so Harry and Dora set off in search of them.

They found them in a darkened alcove at the top of the grand staircase. Their arms were wrapped around each other as they made out. Harry and Dora shared a mischievous smile and waited for the perfect moment. It came about a minute later when Michelle's hand slid down Hermione's back. Harry waited until the precise moment she grabbed her ass.

“Ahem!”

Hermione and Michelle jumped apart like they'd been hit with a Stinging Hex. Hermione guiltily tried to straighten her clothes while Harry and Dora laughed.

"Funny," Michelle grumbled, running a hand through her curly hair in an attempt to tame it.

Harry grinned and shrugged unrepentantly.

"Come on, it's almost curfew," Dora said.

They walked down the stairs and out onto the front lawn. It was a short but cold trek to the Ilvermorny train. Harry jumped up first and then helped each of the girls up the stairs. The carriage was blissfully warm compared to the drafty castle. Shedding their cloaks, they lounged in the common area until it was time for bed.

"Where are we sleeping?" Michelle asked.

"Jennifer and Amanda said you can stay with them," Dora replied. "Or..."

She leaned forward suddenly and lowered her voice.

"Harry and I have a private room," she smirked. "You can stay with us, but I promised him a reward for finishing first. So, you can stay with us. We do our thing, and you can do yours. Or, if you want to keep it PG, you can stay with them."

Grinning at their blushing faces, she sat back and leaned against Harry. Michelle and Hermione shared a look, blushed even harder, and quickly looked away.

"I think you're starting to develop a thing for having an audience," Harry whispered to Dora, amusedly.

"It's Fleur's fault," she replied softly. "Blame her."

"I'll be sure to send her a 'thank you' card."

Dora smacked him in the stomach, causing him to grunt in surprise. They cuddled for a few more minutes, soaking in the awkward silence between Hermione and Michelle, until Professor Turner stepped out of her room.

"Time for bed, everyone," she declared. "You're back to your regular classes tomorrow."

Groaning and grumbling, students got up and made their way to their rooms.

"I trust you were able to make sleeping arrangements for the night?" Turner asked, looking at Hermione and Michelle.

"All set, Professor," Harry answered from them, flashing his headmistress a thumbs up and a grin.

Nodding, satisfied, she slipped back into her room and closed the door. Dora climbed to her feet, and Harry followed her lead. As one, they turned to Hermione and Michelle.

"You coming?" Dora asked.

Without waiting for an answer, she took Harry's hand and pulled him towards their room at the back of the carriage. He glanced over his shoulder and saw Hermione and Michelle following them. They were holding hands, their faces close as they whispered to each other. He couldn't hear what they were saying, but he could imagine.

The thought made him smirk.

Dora pushed open the door to their room, entered, and then they both turned to see what Hermione and Michelle would do. They paused just outside the doorway, and after a brief, hushed conversation, they entered with blushing faces.

"Make yourselves at home," Dora smirked.

Spinning away from them, she wrapped her arms around Harry and pressed her lips to his. They kissed passionately as they stumbled over to the bed. Placing her palms against his chest, she shoved him back onto the mattress. With a grin, Harry kicked off his shoes and scooted back. He waited for Dora to join him, but she paused at the end of the bed and looked back at Hermione and Michelle. They were still standing near the door nervously.

"Don't just stand there, come on," she said. "Here."

Climbing onto the bed, she straddled Harry. He caressed her jean-clad thighs as she reached over his head and grabbed two pillows from her side of the bed. She laid them out vertically in the center of the mattress, creating a divide.

"You take that side, and we'll take this side."

Dora watched them expectantly until they slowly and nervously approached the bed. They sat down on the edge of the mattress, legs hanging off the side. Flashing them a smile, Dora turned back to Harry, leaned down, and kissed him heatedly. Harry grasped her bum and gave it a squeeze, drawing a groan from her lips. They continued making out leisurely until they needed a break to catch their breath.

But even though their kiss had ended, the sounds had not. Looking to the side, they smirked. Hermione and Michelle were sprawled out on the bed, Hermione on top, and were making out just as heavily as they had been a moment ago.

Turning back to each other, they snickered silently. Dora pressed her hands against his chest and sat up. With a sparkle in her eyes, she grabbed the hem of her sweater and pulled it up over her head. A moment later, she unclasped her white bra, and it joined the sweater on the floor.

“Oh, Merlin,” Michelle muttered.

Harry and Dora turned to her with matching grins. They’d stopped kissing and were frozen, wide-eyed, staring at Dora’s breasts.

“You’re really going to do it with us here?” Michelle asked softly.

“I warned you,” Dora shrugged.

She leaned back down and captured Harry’s lips while his hands came up to caress her breasts. The moan that left her lips was probably louder than necessary. They stayed like that until they heard Hermione and Michelle making out next to them again. Dora pulled her lips from his and, with a mischievous smile, helped him shed his shirt. Once it was discarded to the growing pile on the floor, she started kissing her way down his chest.

Her hands rapidly unbuckled his belt. Harry lifted his hips so she could pull his pants down to his knees. There was a loud gasp, and he looked over to see Hermione and Michelle staring at his throbbing cock. He wasn’t sure which one of them made the noise, but he smirked as they eyed his towering erection with wide eyes.

Meanwhile, Dora removed his pants entirely and tossed them on the floor. Lying on her stomach between his legs, she grasped him by the shaft and stroked him lightly before turning her eyes to Hermione and Michelle. They looked away guiltily and turned to each other with uncertain expressions.

Harry watched them out of the corner of his eyes as Dora jerked him teasingly. They went back to kissing briefly before Michelle slipped her hands under the hem of Hermione’s sweater tentatively, questioningly. Hermione broke the kiss and hesitated. Casting a quick glance at

Harry and Dora, her eyes lingering on his cock, she took a deep breath and raised her arms. Michelle pulled the sweater over her head, revealing Hermione's pert breasts cupped in a plain white bra.

But she didn't give anyone much time to look at her. As soon as she was free, she grabbed the hem of Michelle's sweater and tugged it up. Because Michelle was on her back, she only managed to reveal her pale stomach. They rolled around, reversed their positions, and were finally able to remove it entirely.

Harry blinked and stared at Michelle's large breasts stuffed into a red bra that was obviously too small. He had no idea they were that big. He'd only ever seen her in baggy clothes and their school robes. He'd seen her in a bikini once, a couple of years earlier, and then her breasts looked about the same size as Hermione's looked now.

"When the hell did you grow those?" he asked aloud before he could stop himself.

"Shut it," Michelle growled, crossing her arms over her chest.

"I'm just saying you have a nice rack," Harry said.

Not the best choice of words, admittedly, but it was difficult to think under the current circumstances. Michelle responded by punching him in the arm. That had the unintentional effect of making her chest wobble alluringly, a sight well worth the pain he felt.

"Shouldn't you be paying attention to your girlfriend?" she asked archly.

Dora chose that moment to take him in her mouth. Harry groaned, threading his fingers through her bright pink hair as she bobbed up and down his length. Absently, he noticed Michelle turn her attention back to Hermione.

"You know, he's not wrong," Hermione said softly. "They are quite nice."

“Thanks,” Michelle whispered, smiling shyly. “I like yours, too.”

She dipped down to give Hermione a kiss, and Hermione brought her hands up to squeeze Michelle’s breasts. The bra was so tight that it looked ready to burst if she gave her breasts more than a moderate squeeze. Soft, pale skin bulged around the edges.

Harry turned his attention back to Dora, but her eyes were glued to Hermione and Michelle. The two girls had completely forgotten about their audience. Their hands were all over each other as they made out, and it didn’t take long before they unsnapped each other’s bras.

Hermione’s came off first, baring her perky, pale mounds. They looked almost exactly like Dora had imagined, though Hermione’s areolas were perhaps a shade lighter and larger.

Michelle’s bra came off a moment later, springing away from her body the moment the hooks were unlatched. Harry throbbed excitedly as he eyed her large, dangling breasts. They jiggled beautifully as she kissed Hermione heatedly and shifted around to slip a hand inside her panties.

His attention was drawn back to Dora when she pulled off of him. Rolling around at the foot of the bed, she struggled out of her tight jeans. Just as her foot came free, she rolled too far to the right and off the edge of the mattress. Her eyes widened comically before she disappeared out of sight and landed on the floor with a *thud*.

Hermione and Michelle stopped and looked over just as Dora jumped to her feet.

“I’m fine,” she said breathlessly.

Shucking off her panties, she climbed back onto the bed, straddled Harry’s waist, and sank down onto his cock with a sensual moan.

Hermione stared, flushed and wide-eyed, while Michelle ducked down and tugged off her pants and panties in a single move. For a moment, she looked slightly overwhelmed, like a deer frozen in headlights, and then Michelle dove between her legs. Hermione gripped the bedding, threw her head back, and moaned.

Harry and Dora watched raptly as they writhed together. Dora even leaned back on her arms so Hermione could see his cock moving in and out of her.

"Oh, God," Hermione gasped, threading her fingers through Michelle's thick mane of curly hair.

"Hey, Michelle," Harry called.

She looked up at him, the bottom half of her face obscured by Hermione's mound. Grinning, Harry placed his thumb just above Dora's clit and rubbed in slow, gentle circles.

"Oh, fuck!" Dora yelled, slamming herself down on his length.

Michelle looked up at Hermione and worked her arm around until she could do the same thing. Hermione gasped loudly and arched her back, thrusting her perky tits into the air.

"Ooh, that feels so good," she moaned, slowly lowering her back onto the mattress.

"You should try it with a big cock," Dora groaned, undulating her hips. "Fuck yeah, give it to me, baby."

She lurched forward. Harry moved his hands around to her ass, gripped it tightly, and gave her the fast, hammering thrusts he knew she liked. Dora screamed and arched her back, her breasts bouncing wildly just above his face. Her nails dug painfully into his shoulders as he pushed her into a shuddering climax.

Suddenly, Hermione let out a short, sharp cry. Her body arched and trembled as Michelle brought her to a powerful orgasm. Both girls shook and groaned for several seconds, then calmed at nearly the exact same moment.

“Wow,” they said in unison.

There was a beat of silence, they looked at each other, and then everyone burst into giggles. Dora lifted herself up and off of him, leaving his glistening, turgid length to the cool air, and opened the nightstand drawer. She rummaged around for a moment before pulling out a plastic bottle and tossing it at him. Harry looked at it curiously.

It was lube.

He looked up sharply, hopefully, and raised his eyebrows. Dora nodded to his unasked question.

“Out of the way,” she said, jerking her thumb.

Harry scrambled out of the way. Dora climbed onto the bed on all fours and looked back at him expectantly. Now, he scrambled excitedly back onto the bed and knelt behind her. Beside them, Hermione pulled Michelle down onto the mattress and reversed positions again, but this time, Harry didn’t pay much attention. He was too aroused by what he was about to do.

Dropping a large dollop of lube on his index and middle fingers, he pressed them against Dora’s wrinkled entrance. Once he was sure it was covered, he pressed the tip of his middle finger against her rosebud and pushed. It slid inside, her body stiffened, and her hair shifted through a kaleidoscope of colors.

“Oh!” she gasped.

“Okay?” Harry asked worriedly.

"I'm fine," Dora said, slowly getting her hair under control. "It feels weird. Good, but weird, you know?"

"Can't say that I do," Harry smirked.

"Wait," Michelle said as Hermione crawled between her legs. "You not...?"

Harry grinned at her wide-eyed look and slipped a second finger into Dora's ass. Dora groaned and dropped her upper body onto the mattress. Her eyes were closed, her hair constantly shifted from one color to the next, and her fingers clutched at the sheets.

"Okay, okay," Dora said, cracking her eyes open. "I think I'm ready."

Nodding, Harry pulled his fingers free and lined his swollen, purple head up with her tiny entrance.

"Are you actually going to bugger her?" Hermione asked.

She was still between Michelle's legs, but they'd both stopped to watch.

"That's the plan," Harry grinned.

He pushed forward firmly, so firmly that he thought she needed more firmly. Suddenly, she loosened up, and the next thing he knew, he was buried to the hilt.

"What the hell?" he asked.

"Sorry, I loosened up too much," Dora said. "I'll fix it. *Hurk!*"

Harry groaned as she tightened back up around him. Her hair stood on end and turned a brilliant white.

“Oh, my God, are you okay?” Hermione asked worriedly.

“Don’t. Move,” Dora groaned in a strained voice.

“Can’t you just loosen up a little if it hurts?” Michelle asked.

“I tried! Why do you think he’s buried balls deep! I’m not exactly used to shifting my asshole!” Dora yelled, her hair slowly fading to brown. “Okay, it’s getting better. You can move. Just slowly. Give me a minute before you start pounding away back there.”

Harry caressed her back and gently rocked his hips. They both groaned in unison.

Now that the crisis had passed, Hermione turned her attention back to Michelle. Face buried between her legs, she caressed her folds with her tongue using slow, teasing movements. Michelle moaned and caressed the top of her head. As Harry continued rocking gently, waiting patiently for Dora to get accustomed to him, he watched as Hermione wiggled an arm under her body. A few seconds later, Michelle’s eyes popped open wide.

“Oh!” she gasped.

Hermione paused, but when Michelle didn’t protest, her arm inched forward. Michelle’s whole body tightened up, and her mouth fell open wide.

“Hey, ‘Mione,” Harry called.

Grabbing the bottle of lube from the bed, he tossed it near her arm. Hermione smiled gratefully, applied a few drops to her finger, and then got back into position. Michelle groaned as her unexplored entrance was teased. A sudden, loud gasp told them when she'd pushed inside.

"Oh, that does feel weird," she said faintly.

"But good, right?" Dora asked. "You can go faster, Harry. I think I'm used to it now."

Harry pulled halfway out and then slid slowly back in. When her response was a deep, pleased moan, he fell into an easy rhythm. As he pumped back and forth, he glanced over at Michelle and her large, jiggling breasts as she writhed from Hermione's ministrations. Seeing his two close friends making love to each other really set his pulse racing.

Slowly, he sped up his thrusts until her was well and truly plundering his girlfriend's ass. She groaned and shivered under him, all while Michelle panted and writhed next to them. Harry felt his own climax finally approaching. The heat and excitement built between them. No one was watching their own partner; they were all interested in what the other was doing.

Dora was the first to break. She screamed out her climax, tightening spectacularly around him. The feeling pushed Harry over the edge suddenly. He buried himself in her depths and erupted with an animalistic grunt. The sight was enough to send Michelle spiraling into ecstasy a moment later.

Unlike Dora and Hermione, she didn't cry out. Her jaw clenched shut, and she groaned through her teeth as her back arched impressively. She shook, pounding her open hands against the mattress. The next moment, her body folded in on itself, her hands gripped the sheets tightly, and a long, strained groan escaped her lips.

Just as suddenly as it began, she collapsed bonelessly and breathlessly to the mattress, panting like she'd run a marathon.

With a tired, satisfied groan, Harry and Dora collapsed to their sides. His spent length slipped from her as they spooned, facing Hermione and Michelle. It took Michelle a little longer to recover. When she did, she cupped Hermione's cheeks and pulled her down for a tired but passionate kiss. They eventually settled into a similar position as Harry and Dora, with Hermione behind Michelle.

Smiling, Harry waved his hand, dimming the lights. But even in the dark, Harry couldn't help but stare at Michelle's chest. He had had no idea his friend was so stacked. Idly, he wished he could get his hands on them.

As if she was reading his mind, he felt Dora's breast swell against his hand. Raising his head slightly, he watched as they morphed to the exact size and shape as the girl he'd been staring at. Grinning, he settled back down, kissed the back of Dora's head affectionately, and explored them to his heart's content.

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Knock. Knock. Knock.

Sirius groaned and blinked his eyes open. The incessant knocking continued, and he sat up with a groan.

"I'm coming!" he yelled.

Glancing at the window, he realized it wasn't even light outside yet. Grumbling, he stumbled to the door of the guest room and yanked it open. He nearly recoiled when he was greeted by the sight of Alastor Moody's ravaged visage first thing in the morning.

"Moody?" he asked. "What time is it?"

"Quarter past six," Moody grunted.

"Quarter past... Why in hell are you waking me up at this ungodly hour?" Sirius asked.

"Crouch hasn't been to work in a month, and now he isn't even answering the Floo," Moody told him. "Bones wants me to do a welfare check. Considering how involved he is with the tournament, I thought you might like to tag along."

"Seriously?" Sirius asked. "You woke me up because Crouch is poorly?"

Moody's prosthetic eyes stopped whizzing in its socket and pinned him with a glare. Sirius didn't know how he could determine the emotions of a fake eye, but he could.

"Crouch hasn't missed more than a day of work in his entire career," Moody grumbled. "Even when his wife died, the man had to be forced to take a week of leave. It isn't like him. And you remember Bertha Jorkins went missing six months ago. She works for his department. There's something fishy going on. Now, are you coming or not?"

"Alright, alright," Sirius said. "Let me put some shoes on." Pausing, he glanced down at his legs. "And trousers," he added.

"Hurry it up," Moody grunted.

With a grunt of his own, Sirius closed the door. Getting dressed quickly, he left the castle with Moody. They Apparated to Crouch's manor home just as the sun peeked over the horizon. Stifling a yawn, Sirius leaned against the side of the door while Moody knocked loudly.

"Aurors!" he shouted.

There was no response.

Sirius waited impatiently as Moody knocked, waited, and then knocked again three separate times.

“This is ridiculous,” Sirius grumbled.

Straightening up, he pounded on the door as hard as he could.

“Crouch!” he shouted. “Wake your old arse up!”

Silence greeted him in response.

Growling in frustration, he reached for the knob to jiggle it, only to find the door unlocked. It turned smoothly in his hand, and the door swung open silently. He shared an unsettled look with Alastor. In unison, they drew their wands and pushed the door open the rest of the way.

“Crouch!” Sirius called.

Again, they heard nothing. Not even a creak.

Cautiously, they crept inside. A glance showed no one in the family room or kitchen. Turning down a hall, they found a door ajar and light spilling from within. Moody nudged it open, wand at the ready. It was the master bedroom, recently used, but currently empty. They checked the two other doors in the hall, but they only revealed an empty office and a bathroom.

Returning to the family room, they checked the rest of the house, but clearly no one was home.

“No signs of foul play, but no one’s been here in at least a week,” Moody said.

“How do you figure that?” Sirius asked.

“Milk in the fridge has gone bad, and the food in the trash is rotted,” he muttered. “Means his elf’s missing, too.”

“Well, fuck,” Sirius sighed.

Running a hand through his hair, he spotted a door next to the cupboard they hadn’t checked yet. With far less caution than before, he pulled the door open.

“Well, we haven’t checked the basement yet,” he said, looking back at Alastor.

Moody gave him a pointed look and then glanced down at his wooden leg.

“Fine,” Sirius sighed.

Despite his firm belief that the basement was empty, he still rushed down the stairs to avoid getting hexed in the legs in case someone was down there. He reached the bottom unscathed and looked around.

“Uh, Moody!” he yelled. “You need to see this.”

“You better have a good reason for making me walk my crippled arse down these stairs,” Moody warned.

The heavy clunk of wood on wood echoed through the basement as Moody lumbered down the stairs slowly. When he reached the bottom, he took a deep breath and followed Sirius’s gaze.

“Well, now,” he said, “why would something like that be down here?”

They both stared at the small bed and nightstand filled with Quidditch magazines.

“What the hell is going on in this place?” Sirius asked.

“I don’t know, but I need to contact Bones,” Moody said.

Turning, he grunted and lumbered his way back up the stairs. Sirius stayed in the basement and tapped his badge with his wand.

“Frank, you hear me?” he asked.

“I hear you,” Frank replied in his deep rumbling voice. “I was just about to leave for Hogwarts.”

“Yeah, well, I might be a little late,” Sirius sighed.