

Chapter 12

Harry sat down at the Gryffindor table the morning they were to leave for Christmas break, excited and nervous about spending the next two months with his grandparents. Aunt Petunia had never told him anything about them, not even so much as mentioning their names.

While he was certainly happy to be spending time with his family, the approaching holiday was also a bitter reminder of what he was missing. This would be the first time since joining the Wizarding World that he wouldn't get to spend it with Hermione or the Weasleys. Harry was actually happy to leave the castle for once. Everywhere he looked, he saw something that brought back memories of his time with his two closest friends.

"Merlin, what happened to our points?" Marlene gasped.

Harry shook off his thoughts and saw that Gryffindor had lost a significant amount of house points. Well over one hundred if he remembered correctly. As the girls started speculating about what could have happened, Harry looked up and down the table. It didn't take him long to spot James, Remus, and Peter whispering together with sad, angry looks. The fact that he didn't see Sirius anywhere was ominous. Wracking his brain, he tried to remember if Sirius or Remus had told him about anything big happening in their sixth year. There was only one incident he could think of, but he thought that was supposed to happen later in the year.

Had things already changed that much, he wondered.

"Mr. Potter," Professor McGonagall said behind him. "I need to see you in my office."

Harry looked behind him and saw her lips were pressed into a thin line and the corners of her eyes wrinkled into an unpleasant expression.

"Er, sure, professor," Harry said.

Standing up, he followed McGonagall as she marched stiffly out of the hall. He looked over at the Slytherin table, and his heart sank into his stomach when he noticed Snape glaring hatefully over at James.

In silence, Harry followed Professor McGonagall down the hall to her office, where she closed the door and sat down behind her desk.

“Sit,” McGonagall barked.

“Something wrong, professor?” Harry asked as he took a seat.

McGonagall’s lips thinned further as she reached into her pocket and set a Prefects badge on the desk.

“Last night, there was a – incident – involving your roommates,” McGonagall said. “As you were the only one not involved, the Prefects badge goes to you.”

As she finished speaking, she pushed the golden badge across the desk towards him. Harry’s mouth hung half open. He wanted to defend Remus, to tell her it wasn’t his fault Sirius had led Snape to the Shrieking Shack but stopped himself at the last second. There was no way he could explain knowing what happened without getting into trouble himself and making the situation worse. Closing his mouth, Harry reached out and took the badge.

“Ms. Evans will tell you everything you need to know,” McGonagall said. “You’d best get going, Mr. Potter. The carriages will be leaving soon. Enjoy your holiday.”

“You too, professor,” Harry said.

Rising from her seat, he walked out of the office and back to the Great Hall in a daze. From what he remembered, Remus hadn’t lost his Prefects badge last time. Of course, there hadn’t been anyone else for Professor McGonagall to give it to the first time. Harry couldn’t help but

feel a bit guilty as the weight of the Prefects badge settled heavily in his pocket. If he wasn't here, Remus would have never lost it.

Pausing outside of the Great Hall, Harry forcefully shook away the thought. He had the chance to save hundreds, if not thousands, of lives by being here. If that meant Remus losing a silly little badge, then so be it. He was certain that if Remus knew the truth, he would be happy to give it up.

"What did Professor McGonagall want?" Lily asked as he took a seat next to her.

"I'll tell you later," Harry said.

Lily looked disappointed but nodded.

After they finished their breakfast, Harry and the girls got in line for the carriages. It was a quick, pleasant trip down to the station at Hogsmeade, where they boarded the train. During the trip, Harry debated with himself on exactly what to tell Lily. Part of him wanted to tell her the truth just so he had someone to talk to about his life, but another part of him thought it wasn't for him to tell.

"Let's find a compartment," Alice said.

"Lily and I will catch up," Harry told her, pulling Lily to a stop.

Alice and Marlene both gave them knowing grins that had both Harry and Lily rolling their eyes.

"Well, have fun," Alice teased.

As the girls walked further down the train, Harry led Lily into one of the smaller but empty compartments at the front of the train and locked the door.

“Is this about what McGonagall talked to you about?” Lily asked curiously.

“Sort of,” Harry said as they took seats next to each other.

Reaching into his pocket, he pulled out the Prefects badge. Lily gasped when she saw it.

“McGonagall said that something happened last night, and Remus lost his badge. Since I’m the only one that wasn’t involved, she gave it to me,” Harry explained.

“Did she say what happened?” Lily asked. “It must’ve been pretty bad for Remus to lose his position as Prefect.”

“She didn’t tell me, but I have a pretty good idea,” Harry sighed. “Sirius really took things too far with a prank.”

“What did he do?” Lily asked.

“What do you know about Remus’ condition?” Harry asked instead of answering.

Lily smiled, “If you’re asking if I know that he’s a Werewolf, then yes. I figured it out third year.”

“Yeah. Well, Snape started getting suspicious and following him around, so Sirius decided to teach him a lesson,” Harry sighed. “He told Snape to go to the Shrieking Shack at midnight if he wanted to know what was happening with Remus. Of course, that’s where Remus went to transform.”

Lily gasped and covered her mouth, her eyes wide.

“He didn’t!” she exclaimed.

Harry nodded heavily.

“Yeah. Snape popped his head up through the trap door and came face to face with a fully transformed Werewolf,” Harry said. “Fortunately, Sirius told James what he’d done, and James saved Snape before he could be bitten. At least, that’s what happened last time. I don’t know if it was the same this time around.”

“Potter saved him?” she asked incredulously.

“Like I said, they’re not bad guys; they’re just stupid and immature sometimes,” Harry told her. “Although I think he was more focused on protecting Remus at the time.”

“What the hell was Black thinking!?” Lily exclaimed furiously. “If Potter hadn’t stopped Severus, he could have turned or killed! Not to mention what would have happened to Remus. He’d have been expelled for sure, not to mention what the Ministry would have done to him.”

“I know,” Harry said. “I’m not defending what he did, but Sirius isn’t in a good place right now. His parents disowned him over the Summer, and his brother is set on following Voldemort.”

Lily sighed and ran a hand through her hair.

“That’s terrible, but it doesn’t excuse what he did,” she said firmly.

“I know,” Harry conceded.

“Wait. If it was Black’s idea, why did McGonagall take away Remus’ Prefects badge?” Lily asked.

“I don’t know,” Harry shrugged. “Maybe they felt like they had to punish everyone involved? Maybe he lied and took some of the blame to protect Sirius? Who knows?”

“Why can’t they all just grow up and stop acting like idiots?” Lily asked, leaning her head against his shoulder.

“I wish I knew,” Harry said.

~~~~~

After joining the rest of their friends in their compartment, they spent the rest of the trip to London relaxing and playing a few games of Exploding Snaps. Neither of them mentioned anything about what happened between the Marauders and Snape to anyone else, though Harry did tell them about being made Prefect. That meant there was some rampant and rather humorous speculation about how what had happened for the rest of the trip.

When they arrived at King’s Cross Station, Harry and Lily bid their friends a Happy Christmas and exchanged hugs before passing through the barrier to find her parents. Cynthia and Gerald waved happily when they spotted them, though Petunia looked quite unhappy to be there.

In short order, Harry and Gerald had loaded the trunks in the boot, and they began the long drive back to the Evans’ home. Harry ended up seated between the two sisters, with Petunia practically hugging the door to sit as far from him as possible.

“So, how was school?” Cynthia asked from the front passenger seat.

“It was good. Harry’s club is a ton of fun, and we’re learning a lot,” Lily replied proudly. “Oh, and Harry was made Prefect.”

“Really? That’s wonderful, dear,” Cynthia said while looking back to smile at Harry.

“Anything else interesting happen?” Gerald asked, looking at them through the rearview mirror.

“Not really,” Lily said. “Just the same old classes.”

“So, do Giants attack the village near your school often?” he asked with a raised brow.

“You, uh, you heard about that?” Lily asked quietly, looking down at her lap to avoid her parents’ eyes.

“One of the other Muggleborn parents mentioned it while we were waiting for you,” Cynthia said. “Sweetheart, why didn’t you tell us?”

“I didn’t want you to worry,” Lily said, then sat up straight and crossed her arms over her chest. “And I’m not leaving Hogwarts.”

Petunia snorted in disgust and turned to look out the window with a huff.

“No one’s talking about taking you out of Hogwarts,” Cynthia said.

A moment later, Gerald grunted in disagreement.

“Er, Mr. and Mrs. Evan,” Harry said. “I know it’s not really my place, but Hogwarts really is the safest place for Lily to be.”

“How, exactly, is my daughter safer around Giants than she is at home?” Gerald asked gruffly.

“She’s safer where she can learn to defend herself,” Harry told him. “Besides, she was never really in that much danger. Even if the Giant hadn’t been stopped, she still would have gotten back to the castle before it even got close to her.”

“What was a Giant even doing near the school in the first place?” Cynthia asked curiously. “Are there that many in England?”

“Er, not really,” Harry said, glancing at Lily.

“There aren’t supposed to be Giants in England,” Lily told her. “They’re not sure why it was there.”

Not untrue, though Lily was leaving any mention of Voldemort, he noticed.

“Just let us know if something like this happens again,” Cynthia said. “We just worry about you.”

Petunia muttered something under her breath, but Harry couldn’t make out what she said.

“Alright,” Lily said.

“Promise us,” Gerald said firmly.

“I promise,” Lily said with a sigh.

The rest of the drive to Lily’s house was much more comfortable as the conversation turned to more pleasant subjects. Harry noticed that Lily liked talking about his fight with the Giant and the DA quite a lot. The proud smile she directed at him as she talked about how much she learned from the DA, and how impressive his fight with the Giant was, filled him with a warmth he’d experienced very few times in his life. It also left him blushing like a Weasley with how impressed her parents were.

When they reached the house, Lily showed Harry to the guest room upstairs and helped him get settled in. The first couple of days, he felt a bit out of place, like he normally did when

visiting a new place, but Cynthia and Gerald were very welcoming. By his third night, Harry felt just as at home as he did at the Burrow. He had been worried about living in the same house as Petunia again, but she spent the majority of her time either in her room or visiting Vernon. The only time he really spent any time around her was at the dinner table, and even then, she acted as if he wasn't there. Harry could see how much her behavior bothered her parents, and he felt bad for them, but there wasn't much he could do about it.

Or, perhaps there was.

A few days into his stay, as they sat around the table after dinner, Cynthia began asking questions to get to know him better.

"Harry, can I ask you something? You don't have to answer if you don't want to," she assured him.

"Sure," Harry said.

"I know you said your parents were killed, but where did you stay after that?" Cynthia asked.

"Mum," Lily hissed.

"It's fine," Harry said, glancing over at Petunia as she picked at her food with a bored expression.

"I grew up with my aunt and uncle," Harry said. "It... wasn't pleasant."

"What do you mean?" Cynthia asked.

Harry debated with himself for a moment. On the one hand, talking about how his family treated him was something he normally avoided at all costs. On the other, they were family,

and there was no guarantee that he won't still be born in this world. If something did happen to him, and little Harry still ended up living with Petunia, this might be his only chance to ensure he was treated better. Oddly, the thought of Lily and James getting together bothered him more than he'd like to admit.

"Like I said, you don't have to talk about it if you don't want to," Cynthia told him when he didn't answer.

"Sorry, I was just thinking," Harry said, giving her a small smile before he turned serious. "My aunt and uncle hated magic. I think my aunt was jealous of my mum, but I don't know what my uncle had against it. They – well, to be honest, they treated me horribly. They made me sleep in the cupboard under the stairs even though my cousin had two bedrooms and there was a guest room. I did chores like cooking, cleaning, and gardening since I can remember, and they only let me eat when everyone else was finished.

"They even lied to me about my parents. They told me my dad was a drunk, and they died in a car crash when they were really killed by a dark wizard. The worst part, though, was the names they called me. When I first started school, I thought my name was Freak Boy because that's what they always called me. I didn't even know my name was Harry until the teacher told me."

Harry paused, lost in a sea of unpleasant memories he'd suppressed long ago. It wasn't until Lily put her hand over his that he looked up. Cynthia had tears in her eyes, and both Lily and Gerald looked furious. Harry turned his hand over and gave Lily's hand a squeeze just as she turned to look at her sister. He shook his head subtly, hoping she wouldn't start a fight now. This Petunia hadn't done anything wrong yet, to him, at least.

"Did – did they hit you?" Lily asked, her hand trembling slightly in his.

"Sometimes," Harry admitted.

The plates, silverware, and glasses on the table shook from Lily's wild magic as she closed her eyes and took a deep breath.

"I'm so sorry, dear," Cynthia said tearfully. "I shouldn't have asked. I--"

"It's alright," Harry assured her with a smile.

"Girls, I want you both to promise me neither of you will treat each other's children like that if something happens to one of you," Gerald said firmly.

"I promise," Lily said.

"As if I would let a freak raise a child of mine," Petunia sneered.

"Petunia!" Cynthia exclaimed.

Petunia flushed and looked away shamefully from the glares of Lily and her parents.

"I don't ever want to hear you call someone that word ever again, Petunia. Now, apologize to your sister," Gerald demanded.

"But --"

"Now," he repeated firmly.

"I'm sorry," Petunia mumbled.

"Er, I didn't mean to cause any problems...," Harry said, not having expected things to take such a turn, or to hit so close to home.

"It's not your fault," Gerald assured him. "In fact, I should probably thank you. This is something we should have dealt with a long time ago. I'm sorry, but would you mind giving us a few minutes alone?"

Lily opened her mouth to protest on his behalf, but Harry patted her hand before she could speak.

"Sure," he said.

Standing, Harry left the kitchen and closed the door behind him. Hearing mumbled voices through the door, he hesitated for a moment. For a moment, he wished he had a pair of Extendable Ears on him to listen in. Just as he remembered he had some in his trunk, he pushed the thought away.

I hope this helps, Harry thought.

Turning, he slowly headed up the stairs.

Over the next hour, as he read quietly, he heard raised voices only a couple of times, usually ending when Gerald spoke up loudly, though not angrily. Eventually, Petunia stomped upstairs and glared murderously at him as she passed his room. Seconds later, he heard her slam her door shut down the hall. Less than a minute after that, Lily walked into his room and sat down on the bed next to him, her arms crossed and an unhappy look on her face.

"Is everything okay?" Harry asked.

"That stupid – urgh! I can't believe her! She acts all high and mighty - like she's better than me because she doesn't have magic - when I know for a fact she sent a letter to Dumbledore *begging* to be let into Hogwarts," Lily huffed.

"Seriously?" Harry asked incredulously.

“Yeah,” Lily said, her face turning red. “I can’t believe she treated you like that!”

Quickly, Harry picked up his wand and tossed a Muffliato Charm at the door so they wouldn’t be overheard.

“You have no idea how bad I wanted to hex her,” she continued, slowly working herself up into a rage. “I swear, no child of mine is ever going to live with Petunia. They’d be better off in an orphanage than being raised by that – that –”

“She hasn’t done anything yet,” Harry reminded her.

“How can you defend her?” Lily asked angrily.

“She’s family,” Harry said with a shrug. “Until I came here, she was the only family I had left. Don’t get me wrong, I hate the way she and Vernon treated me, and the way they raised Dudley was nearly as bad, but...”

Again, Harry could only shrug.

Lily opened her mouth, then closed it and shook her head with a smile tugging at the corners of her lips. Grabbing his hand, she threaded her fingers through his and rested her head on his shoulder.

“You’re incredible, you know that?” Lily asked. “Most people wouldn’t be as mature or forgiving as you.”

“Most people haven’t had to live through what I have,” Harry said, shrugging only one shoulder so he didn’t disturb Lily. “I learned the hard way life isn’t always black and white.”

“Can you tell me more about what your life was like?” Lily asked.

Harry turned thoughtful for a moment. There really wasn't a good reason to hide it from her anymore, he decided. He hadn't told her before because he didn't want her to figure out who he was.

“It's a really long story, and most of it isn't pleasant,” he warned her.

“I don't care. I want to know more about you,” Lily said softly.

“Well, you know what my life was like growing up,” Harry began. “When I first got my Hogwarts letter, my uncle tried to hide it from me. He went a bit nutters when letters started showing up in the eggs aunt Petunia bought and came shooting out of the fireplace...”

For the next few hours, Harry told Lily about his life, prompting a rollercoaster of emotions. The only thing he left out was telling her about the Horcruxes. Cynthia came by at one point, bidding them goodnight and telling them not to stay up much longer. They didn't listen very well, considering it was nearly midnight when he finally finished his story.

Harry felt emotionally drained by the end of his tale, but it was a relief to have such a weight lifted from his shoulders.

“I can't believe you went through all of that,” Lily said, clinging to his arm with her fingers still threaded through his. “It sounds like something out of a movie.”

Harry chuckled, “Honestly, there are still times when I expect to wake up back in my cupboard, and this will have all been a dream.”

Lily leaned forward and hugged him tightly before leaning back just far enough for their green eyes to lock.

“For what it’s worth, I’m really proud of you,” she said softly.

Harry smiled, his eyes burning slightly as he fought back tears.

“Thank you,” he said thickly. “That means a lot.”

Lily smiled prettily and ran the fingers of her free hand through his hair. Suddenly, she leaned forward and pressed her lips to his softly. Harry stiffened for a moment in surprise, but even as he thought about pulling back, his body reacted on its own and kissed her back. It took a few seconds for him to get control of himself enough to break the kiss. Again, their green eyes locked, their faces just an inch apart.

“Lily, you’re –”

“I don’t care,” Lily interrupted. “I don’t care who I was in your time. I don’t care who else you’re seeing. I – I love you, Harry.”

Harry swallowed thickly as he stared at her. He couldn’t deny he was attracted to Lily, that he cared about her, but there was still a worry niggling at the back of his mind.

“Lily, when I broke the Elder Wand, and it sent me back, it affected me,” Harry said, licking his lips nervously. “Dumbledore thinks the magic of the Hallows bonded with mine and essentially made me a Hallow. I – I think it might be having so kind of effect on the people around me. This might just be my magic making you –”

“No,” Lily said firmly. “Harry, if it was just your magic affecting me, then wouldn’t it stop when I’m not around you?”

“I-” Harry started, then stopped.

He blinked as he stared at Lily. He hadn't considered that before. With the way people, especially women, had been reacting to him since he arrived in the past, he was certain the Elder Wand had some sort of effect on him. Lily smiled at him and combed her fingers through his hair.

"You think too little of yourself," she said softly.

Leaning forward, Lily wrapped both of her arms around his neck and kissed him again. This time, Harry couldn't bring himself to try and stop her. His hands rested on her hips as he pulled her closer. With their lips still connected, Lily swung her leg over his and straddled his thighs. As her tongue slipped between his lips with a moan, his hands slid down her back to grasp her bum. Lily moaned again, louder this time, and pressed her body against his, her large breasts flattening against his chest.

Harry smiled against her lips and fell onto his back. Smiling, Lily pushed herself up on her arm and grinned down at him, her cheeks flushed, lips swollen and glistening, and her eyes sparkling with happiness.

"I've wanted to do that for weeks," Lily said.

"Is that why you invited me over for the holiday, to seduce me?" Harry asked teasingly.

"Maybe," Lily said, smiling.

Harry smiled back, his hands caressing her full, round bum lightly before it slowly faded.

"It really doesn't bother you if I'm still with Narcissa and Bellatrix?" Harry asked. "I know it's a lot to ask, but I really don't want to see what happened in my time happen to them again."

Lily bit her lip, "I have a bit of a confession to make. You remember when I said I saw you kissing them in the library?"

Harry nodded.

“Well, that’s true, but I knew about it before that,” Lily admitted sheepishly. “I saw you with Bellatrix a couple of weeks before that, and I was curious, so I followed you to that room on the seventh floor. Then Narcissa showed up, and I didn’t have anywhere to go, so I hid in the room with you, and I saw you, well...”

“Oh,” Harry said, realizing what she would have seen.

“I’m really sorry,” she said. “I didn’t mean to spy on you. I was just curious and –”

“It alright,” Harry said, smiling softly. “My curiosity has gotten the better of me more than once.”

Lily smiled and then looked down with a blush, her fingers drawing abstract lines over his chest.

“Anyways, when I saw the tree of you together, I – well, it was a lot more exciting than I thought it would be,” Lily admitted.

Harry raised an eyebrow, his shaft hardening as thoughts of Lily, Narcissa, and Bellatrix all together danced behind his eyes.

“Well, that certainly sounds interesting,” Harry said.

Lily blushed brightly and smacked his chest lightly.

“Perv,” she murmured.

“You’re the one that brought it up,” Harry said with a grin. “And you’re the one that spied on us. I think that makes you the perv.”

Lily smacked his chest again while the corners of her lips twitched into a smile.

“Prat,” she said.

“I can’t argue against that one,” Harry said.

Both of them laughed lightly before Lily leaned down and kissed him again. As their lips moved languidly, Harry caressed her bum before sliding his hands up her sides. She moaned against his lips when his thumbs brushed the sides of her breasts over her crimson jumper. Lily kissed him harder as his hands slid down to cup her breasts. Even though her thin jumper and bra, he could feel her nipples under his thumbs.

Lily rolled her hips, grinding her jean-clad ass down on his groin while his hands moved down to the hem of her jumper. Harry slipped his hands underneath and pressed them against her smooth, bare skin. She nibbled on his bottom and moaned as his hands drifted slowly upwards over her stomach and ribs.

Just as his fingertips brushed the bottom of her bra, tracing over the swell of her breasts, they heard the sound of a door opening and closing down the hall. With a muttered curse, Lily jumped off of Harry, and both of them frantically fixed their twisted clothes. Harry just had time to cancel the Muffliato Charm on the door as Cynthia poked her head around the corner with a smile.

“Come on, you two, time for bed. We’ve got a busy day planned for tomorrow,” she said.

“Alright, mum,” Lily said, climbing off the bed.

“Goodnight,” Cynthia said.

“Night,” Harry and Lily replied.

As Lily’s mother disappeared down the hall, Lily turned and kissed Harry on the lips.

“Night, Harry,” she said.

“Night,” Harry replied.

They smiled at each other and kissed one last time before Lily turned to leave the room. His eyes followed her swaying hips and backside as she walked across the room. Pausing at the door, she looked over her shoulder at him with a knowing smile before she left the room and closed the door behind her.

Sighing, Harry fell back onto the mattress with a smile on his face.