

Disclaimer for the story: I do not own Charmed or the Harry Potter Series

Summary: The Elders thought Chris was a threat and Leo and The Charmed Ones had to hide him with a former charge of Leo. Fourteen years later Wizards invite Magic School to a Tournament and they find out their plan backfired.

A/N: Crossover Charmed/ Harry Potter where Chris Halliwell and Harry Potter are one and the same.

For this I had to make some alterations to both Canons. They are as follows:

**Charmed:** I'm keeping Harry's date of birth so Chris was born the 31<sup>st</sup> of July of 2004.

In the series' finale only Wyatt came to the past. That will be explained later.

**Harry Potter:** After long debate I decided that Harry Potter Canon was the one shifting years to fit for the simple reason that the Harry Potter books do not make any direct reference to events of the Muggle World while Charmed does. So I'm moving Harry Potter up, Harry was born in 2004 and Voldemort's first defeat was in 2005.

Again after long debate on which name to keep I decided that James and Lily named him Harry Christopher Potter so they could keep calling him Chris. I did this, because after long reflection on both characters I realized that Harry would be the kind of person that would have easily adopted a name he found his parents used to call him by. So when he finds out Lily and James called him by his second name he adopts that name in first year. Because in my opinion Harry is so starved for love that he would easily do something like that to feel more connected to his parents.

I also decided to do this because this was a great way to show who really saw him and not the Boy-Who-Lived, which in my opinion is an issue that arises a lot of debate in Fanfiction.

And one of the two had to change their name anyway.

**This was inspired by my friends at the SiriuslySirius yahoo group and is therefore dedicated to them!**

Have fun!

## **A Charmed Wizard**

### **Chapter 1- Prologue**

“But he saved the world,” Zola, one of the Elders of the Council argued. “He is a force of good.”

“Yes, he did. But that does not change the fact that he broke the rules,” another Elder argued back “The rules are there for a reason. We cannot risk him travelling back in time to change the world every time he doesn’t like the outcome. No Christopher Halliwell must be erased, for the greater good.”

“Isn’t that the same thing Gideon was trying to do?” a female Elder asked.

“No, because unlike Gideon I will abide with the council’s decision,” the Elder who had brought the subject up answered. “And we will have the Cleaners completely erase him; the Halliwells won’t even remember Christopher ever was part of their family. Those in favor?”

The voting started but the Elder who had come to talk to his colleagues, to ask them to show him he could still trust them, and had accidentally heard this hearing, which he obviously hadn’t been invited to, didn’t wait for their verdict. He needed to act fast. He needed to save his son. And as the voting started to take place Zola, who had seen him but had made a point of not

alerting his colleagues, couldn't help but hope Leo acted fast, because he and the female Elder who spoke were the only ones to vote against erasing Christopher.

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"It's the only way Piper. If they think he died they won't bother with erasing him. We'll lose him otherwise," he pleaded with his wife. He didn't know how much time they had before the Elders and Cleaners came to a decision and didn't want to waste any time. He didn't trust them. He knew Gideon had taken the matter of Wyatt to the Council and when outvoted he took matters into his own hand. What was stopping the other Elder of doing the same? And worse, what if they all agreed that his sweet baby boy was a threat. How could they think him a threat when he risked everything to save everyone? When he gave his life for that? If someone had proven he was on the side of good it was Chris and Leo's rage and hurt at the Elders was just getting stronger and stronger with each attitude they took. But this time he wouldn't let them do anything. He wouldn't trust them blindly again, and he would be the one deceiving them.

"I can't lose my baby," Piper begged sobbing. She couldn't, not again. Not in any way. She couldn't lose him to death, to the Cleaners nor could she stand the thought of someone else raising him.

"We won't. We'll just take him somewhere safe. I know these people. They'll take good care of him. Trust me Piper. It's just until he is old enough to defend himself," Leo argued. He wanted his boy safe.

"No, the Cleaners know not to mess with us-they-" Piper tried to argue back and held Chris closer to her chest, not wanting to relinquish him.

Leo sighed, he had gone through this with Piper and with her sisters and she had agreed. They had bound Chris's Elder powers so no one would realize what he was. But now, faced with the

goodbye moment Piper was once again hesitating, "Are not alone this time. The Elders are with them. Piper, please. I failed to protect him once. Don't let us fail again. Please!" he begged.

Piper knew rationally that this was the only way. They were powerful, but there was just so much they could do against the Elders and Cleaners together. They had managed the Cleaners once, but that had been based on the fact that they knew the Elders would not want to lose the Charmed Ones and therefore would not let anything happen to them, so when blackmailed the Cleaners had to bend to their will and return Wyatt. But if they both united against the Charmed Ones, then they had no one to back them up and had no chance. And she couldn't risk her baby's life for her selfish desire of keeping him close. She was a mother, and as a mother her baby's needs came first. And if what he needed was someone else to take care of him, then she knew she would fold.

She nodded reluctantly burying her face in the bundle in her arms. Her tears fell on his little face and aware of his mother's distress little Chris started wailing. Leo gently took him from his mother's arms who fell to the floor in despair. He looked at his sisters-in-law and said firmly.

"It has to be believable."

"It will," Paige nodded holding back her tears. She kissed the baby's head and Phoebe did the same. They crouched next to Piper as Leo and Chris disappeared in a shower of orbs.

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"I know you've recently found out you couldn't have any children, and I'm desperate. He could easily pass as yours. You just have to darken his hair a little. I- I need to protect my son- they'll-"

“Leo,” the woman interrupted. “You had us at I need a favor. Of course we will. After all you’ve done for us,” she smiled down at the baby. She had instantly fallen in love with him even before Leo had spoken. Something in that baby screamed to her instincts to protect him.

“We’ll care for him as if he was our own,” the man said firmly putting a hand on Leo’s shoulder.

Leo nodded, and with tears in his eyes he kissed his son, “I love you so much. I’m so sorry,” he handed the baby to the woman and orbed away before he gave into his parental instincts to take his son and run. That was the last time he saw them for the next fourteen years.

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**A/N- This is a work in progress, unlike my other Charmed stories which were mostly written when I started posting, so updates will depend on inspiration and time.**

**I hope you enjoy!**

## Chapter 2- The invitation

“But the Wizarding world doesn’t mix with ours. They separated themselves thousands of years ago.”

“Yes, well, they both come from the same magic. They just developed it differently,” the Elder argued with Leo. “This is a good opportunity for magical beings to cooperate Leo. And we want you to. So select the students you want to take. Select a substitute for you here, and if you could please take your wife with you so you can protect the children better I’d appreciate that.”

“That would be separating the power of three.”

“We haven’t needed the power of three since the Charmed Ones vanquished the Triad but if our predictions are right, something worse than the Triad is returning and both Wizarding and Wiccan worlds will need to unite to vanquish this evil.”

“Returning?” Leo asked frowning.

“Yes, Voldemort.”

“We didn’t interfere with Voldemort the first time and they got rid of him.” Well, that wasn’t exactly true. The Charmed Ones had accidentally gotten in Voldemort’s way a few times when tracking other demons, but Voldemort had been smart enough not to pursue them and they had left the Wizarding world deal with their own problems themselves. After all, Voldemort was a Wizard, an evil one, but a Wizard nonetheless. A human, and their laws didn’t condone murder. And so Voldemort had to be dealt the same way as criminals in the mortal world were dealt with, by the authorities of his world. But the destruction he had caused had brought the issue to the Elders more than once if an exception shouldn’t be made. Voldemort wasn’t just creating death and destruction; he was also risking exposing magic with his destruction.

“That was just a respite, and our predictions say he may come back even more powerful.”

Leo nodded, he understood. If Voldemort came back even worse than before than there might be no alternative than to interfere. That they hadn’t interfered didn’t mean they hadn’t known the destruction Voldemort caused. That had been one of his doubts when choosing James and Lily, but he had had no other choice.

“I assume you want one of the students to be Wyatt, since you plan on me taking Piper?”

“Yes, he won’t be old enough to participate but being your son will be excuse enough for him to be there with you. We especially would like you to help protect The-Boy-Who-Lived. There is a prophecy surrounding him and the destruction of Voldemort. He might be vital in this battle and therefore he will be a target for Voldemort and his men.”

Leo nodded; they didn’t know much about the Boy-Who-Lived except that he had defeated Voldemort when he was a baby. They didn’t even know his name. But he was famous in the Wizarding World, so finding out who he was wouldn’t be hard.

“I’ll ask Paige to cover for me.”

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“Doesn’t Tri-Wizard imply three schools not four?” Piper asked and Leo smiled.

“Yes, but they are making an exception this time. The invitation came from their side. The Headmaster of Hogwarts thought that a better understanding of different magical ways of life would bring more tolerance and he managed to convince the other Heads.”

“I understand Leo. But I don’t know,” Piper sighed. Magic School had been mostly on their hands ever since Paige took over and then Leo. Well, except for the time when the demons had taken over, but since they reclaimed it the Elders had very little to do with it. And they liked it that way. They wanted to not only teach the younger generations their magic but

protect them from the Elders' manipulations. And doing something they asked was just grating on her nerves. The Charmed Ones still worked with them more for the "keep your enemies closer" sake than because they trusted him. The whole business with Chris being the final nail that made them all give up on them. Especially Leo, who had done it in quite a spectacular way. "I can't see them accepting us easily and our kids could be in danger. Most of them rely on one power only and casting spells, spells that need a rhyme. Not just a word and a swish of a wand."

"Actually they could learn to focus their magic that way. We all originate from the same magic, but along the way some witches weren't satisfied with not being able to use their magic freely and broke with the Elders creating the Wizarding community and training their magic differently. That's why I chose one of them to take care of him. Because I knew he'd be able to focus his magic that way." Even though they had wards inside the manor preventing any magical eavesdropping, or unauthorized orb-ing (Odin was not a happy Elder when he tried to orb in unannounced and landed with his butt on the front porch), they were always careful when referring to Chris.

Piper nodded and smiled, "And he'd be at Hogwarts wouldn't he?"

"Fourth year," he smiled back. "And no one could question if we got close to one of their students. Especially him being the son of a former charge? Especially since they specifically asked us to keep an eye on the Boy-Who-Lived, who's the same age. What better way than asking help from people we've known?" Leo asked innocently.

Piper's smile widened, "Call Paige. I'll ask Phoebe and Coop to take over for me at P3"

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"Wow, the famous Twice-Blessed and Victor Krum!" the blond said again and Wyatt was starting to get annoyed. He wasn't even seated at the table with him but unfortunately he was

at the next one and the blond seemed to think speaking loud enough to get his attention would be enough. Wyatt ignored him, he had gotten bad vibes from him anyway. He turned around to answer a question from the boy next to him, Cedric Diggory he said his name was.

“So, are you entering?”

“Not old enough, I just came because my dad’s the Headmaster at Magic School and my mom was coming with him. Apparently they don’t trust me alone with the house, no idea why,” he grinned cheekily and the other boy chuckled. The schools had arrived earlier that night.

Durmstrang and Beauxbatons with a flashy show each. The Magic School students just being orbed to the front gates by Wyatt, Paige and a few Elders who, all except Wyatt, had left. It had been rather funny to inconspicuously walk to the group of students and teachers. All set up in organized lines, speculating how they would arrive. Wyatt had approached a couple of red haired twins who were trying to convince a few first years that they would all fly dragons here and the dragons would torch them all, when he had just said:

“But mum forbade me of conjuring them ages ago!”

One of the twins turned around, “Bloke don’t ruin the taunting,” when he just stopped. Took a look at Wyatt’s outfit (the students had forgone the robes they usually wore over their clothes for the trip) and asked: “Where did you come from?”

“The front gate,” Wyatt shrugged. “We walked.”

“You walked?” the little first year said disappointed. “But what about the dragons?”

“We orbed before walking if that helps. Besides, mom has expressly forbidden me of conjuring dragons. Such a nag!”

By then they had missed his father approaching Dumbledore and shaking the man’s hand. He did not miss the bellow of “WYATT MATHEW where the hell are you!” from his mother that

made him want to just be swallowed by the earth. Woman! They just got here and she had to go and embarrass him like that! The twins had snickered but had patted him sympathetically saying something about:

“Makes us miss home doesn’t it George?”

Upon entering Leo had told his students to spread through the house tables however they pleased. Wyatt had been a little lost, after all he was the only one in his age group. All the other students had their friends as buffers. One of the Hogwarts’ students saw him looking lost and invited him to seat at the Hufflepuff table. The student had been Cedric Diggory.

“I bet scar face is green with envy. No one will care about him now,” the blond said out loud and Diggory turned back angrily.

“Shut up Malfoy! Potter never gave a damn about his celebrity. I bet he’s relieved,” turning back to face the table he murmured, “Git.”

“Potter?” Wyatt asked his interest picking up. He had felt his brother in the room but for the life of him he couldn’t find him. And he had memorized that only picture they had of him at 22. So yes, he’d be younger, but he wouldn’t change that much. Would he?

“Yes, Harry Potter, you know The-Boy-Who-Lived. Malfoy’s jealous of him. Word is Potter was smart enough to turn down an offer of friendship from Malfoy and ever since Malfoy doesn’t waste a chance to dig at him. But Harry is very shy, keeps to himself. Great Quidditch player.”

“Boy-Who-Lived, you mean the kid who vanquished that Voldemort guy?”

Cedric jumped in fright, “What did you go and say his name for?”

“You mean Voldemort?”

“Stop that!”

“Isn’t it his name?”

“Yes, but we don’t say it. Sheesh, just don’t,” Cedric fanned himself. “Anyway. Yes. Didn’t you know?”

“Not the kid’s name, no. We just got the condensed version. That V- the bad guy,” he rolled his eyes clearly stating what he thought when Cedric was about to flinch again. “killed a couple and when he tried to kill their son the curse rebounded on him for unknown reasons,” which Wyatt was now starting to think might be because Chris might have had a shield like him. Though his parents didn’t know what powers Chris had for sure. They did admit future Chris never said anything about his powers. Just that he didn’t have them in the womb. But Potter was a common name, as was Harry. And deep down Wyatt didn’t want his brother to be the Boy-Who-Lived because that would mean two things: 1- Voldemort would be after him. 2-His adoptive parents had died, and that not only complicated things because they were supposed to explain everything to him, but that meant they didn’t know if he was being taken proper care of. “So his name is Harry Potter, what were his parents’ names?”

“James and Lily.” Oh, shit.

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“Your boy seems to be making friends,” Dumbledore said nodding towards Wyatt and Cedric. Piper and Leo smiled at him and she said, “He was always outgoing.” Her eyes started scanning the room again, but there were so many students that it was impossible to find Chris in the sea of bent heads, all wearing the same uniform. Right now, Piper wanted nothing more than to forbid uniforms in the whole world.

“Yes, the Twice-Blessed,” the man that was introduced as the Head of Slytherin sneered and Piper glared at him. “Just what we needed. Another hyphenated hero that has done nothing to be hailed yet.”

"That's my son you're talking about," Piper hissed at him and Leo was glaring daggers.

"Don't mind Severus. That is just his way," Dumbledore tried to placate the tempers. He wanted the Charmed Ones as allies not enemies.

"I bet he is just as arrogant as Potter," Snape continued despite Dumbledore's warning glare.

"Strutting around the castle as if he owned the place. Just as arrogant as his father."

But by now Leo and Piper's attention had gone from being offended to curious.

"Potter?" Leo asked. "As in Lily Potter's son?"

"Yes, little prince that he is, thinking himself better than everyone just because he is the Boy Who Lived--"

"Oh, Severus, do shut up," McGonagall snapped. "You never bothered to actually see the boy and not his father. Harry is a sweet boy. He doesn't even like the attention."

"Oh, no. Then why does he have his little friends call him by another name?"

"Christopher is his second name!" Hagrid defended. "Lily and James always called him Chris. I told him that meself. He didn't even know it before he came to Hogwarts."

"So he is Lily Evans Potter's son?" Leo asked again. "You said he is the Boy Who Lived?" Please say no, please say no, Leo begged.

"What's it to you?" Snape sneered.

"She was my charge, before I became an Elder. I haven't had news from her since she had her son. I knew he'd be attending Hogwarts and thought I'd ask for her."

"Well, she's dead." Snape said drily and got up leaving the table and two open mouthed Leo and Piper. Piper stared at Leo and he knew she was thinking the same as him. If the Potter's were dead and Chris was the Boy-Who-Lived, their plan had failed spectacularly.



**A/N: I forgot the warning in the other two chapters, so this is the warning you get for the story. There will be at least one Slash couple Remus/Sirius. Don't like, don't read. Nothing graphic, just the fact that they are a couple in this story.**

### ***Chapter 2-The invitation***

*"Well, she's dead." Snape said drily and got up leaving the table and two open mouthed Leo and Piper. Piper stared at Leo and he knew she was thinking the same as him. If the Potter's were dead and Chris was the Boy-Who-Lived, their plan had failed spectacularly.*

### **Chapter 3- Chris**

"I haven't seen him. But now I know which house he's in," Wyatt whispered to his parents as they made their way towards the Great Halls' doors. "We're supposed to go share the dorms with them right?"

"Yes," Leo nodded. "The only Head of House who refused was Snape, and frankly I don't want any of you kids with him." Leo had not liked Snape, he had nothing against the Slytherins but he had agreed with the Headmaster that by assigning his students to one of the Houses he was also agreeing to them having to answer to that Head of House, just as the Hogwarts students, and the last thing Leo wanted was Snape having any power over his students.

"Then assign me to Gryffindor. I made friends with a pair of twins who might help me, and he's a Gryffindor."

"Then, you're assigned," Piper smiled. "Go find them."

He nodded, and gave his mother a quick peck on the cheek. They walked behind the Durmstrang delegation and Wyatt was resisting the urge to vomit at the Headmaster's simpering over Victor Krum, who apparently was famous for playing something called Quidditch. He groaned and just hoped they'd walk fast but he bumped into one of the Durmstrang kids when the delegation suddenly stopped. Craning his neck to see what was going on he could only see Karkaroff staring open mouthed at three Hogwarts' students. He was about to ask what the hell was going on when a gruff growling voice said:

"Yeah, that's Harry Potter," Wyatt's, Piper's and Leo's head snapped at once to look at the Hogwarts' students and their eyes zeroed on the middle one. A boy with black hair and glasses, who was looking definitely uncomfortable. A boy who looked a lot like his mother. Even more than in the picture Wyatt had seen where his hair had been a lighter brown. With the black hair their resemblance was exacerbated.

"Chris," he heard his mother's whisper.

They missed Karkaroff's reaction and the other guy's, a man full of scars holding a staff, glaring contest as they only had eyes for Chris.

He looked so much like the Chris Piper and Leo had known and yet so different. Where Chris had been overconfident, always sure of himself, this boy was looked anything but.

Uncomfortable with people staring at him while the Chris they had known would have just raised an eyebrow not letting it bother him.

Piper was struck by the fact that this Chris was younger, much younger than the one they were used to. She had been left to imagine her son growing up, imagine how his first steps would have been, imagine his first day of school. And all she had to go by was her twenty-two year old jaded, somewhat neurotic and completely mission-holic son from a future they had prevented. For the first time she was presented with the thought that maybe a big part of

what made that Chris that way was the future they had prevented. A hard future, full of war and death, and that maybe she didn't know anything about this Chris.

This Chris was on the short side, while theirs had been tall, but maybe he just hadn't hit a growth spurt yet. Her experience with Wyatt, who had suddenly grown taller than his father last year, told her that. His hair was darker, probably a glamour, and it stood in every direction, instead of the elegant straight hair he had often left fall over his face. Reminiscent of the hair style he had sported that first day he had entered their lives. He wore round glasses and there was a scar marring his forehead that had never been there before, but that Piper knew had cursed her son to be Voldemort's main target. But she wouldn't let him have Chris. She wouldn't let anyone prevent Chris from living a long happy life. The life he had more than earned fourteen years ago. No, there would be no Elders or Voldemort who would stand on her way.

Leo was mesmerized, his son, how he had longed to see him again. It was taking all his will not to grab the boy and hug him like he'd wanted for so long. Only the thought that he'd probably scare the boy to death stopped him. He was here, breathing, living in front of him. Years of nightmares, of feeling his son's body slip from his fingers as he vanished into thin air came crashing into Leo leaving him breathless. He gulped and shook himself mentally. No Chris was safe, and he would do everything in his power to make sure he stayed that way. His family would be united again.

"You!" Karkaroff said and the other guy answered:

"Me," and Wyatt was actually relieved when the guy told Karkaroff "And unless you've got anything to say to Potter, Karkaroff, you might want to move. You're blocking the doorway."

Because Wyatt had not liked the way Karkaroff had looked at his brother and wanted him far away from Chris. To be honest he didn't like the gruff man either but at least he was helping.

Karkaroff swept away with his students and the other guy stared at him as if Karkaroff was the scum of the earth. Then he turned to Chris and said:

“Watch out for that one Potter.”

“Yes sir,” Chris nodded warily.

As the Durmstrang delegation left the Halliwells reached Chris and his two friends and walked out the doorway with them just in time to hear the boy next to Chris sigh:

“And here I was thinking we’d have a calm year with no death threats.”

“Not a chance Ron,” the girl snorted and Chris chuckled and he must have heard Piper’s sharp intake of breath because his head turned around and he caught the three Halliwells shamelessly staring at them.

“Are you lost?” Chris asked politely, even though Wyatt felt an irritation coming through their bond. Chris must have thought they were ogling the Boy Who Lived, but he still gave them the benefit of the doubt. “Do you need help finding the house you’re in? I heard one of the kids say that the student’s from Magic School would spread through the houses.”

“Are you three okay,” the girl asked. “You look pale.”

Wyatt was the first to recover and shook his head, “No sorry. Just, hum, a little overwhelmed. Magic School isn’t this big. Right dad? Dad? Mom?” he said firmly.

“Yes, right, sorry,” Piper said. “A little overwhelmed. Yes,” she nodded and then forced a chuckle, “I’m always trying to get a normal life and it doesn’t get farther from normal than this.”

“No,” Chris chuckled. He could relate, though he loved the Magical world he’d give anything to be normal in it, without being singled out because of things beyond his control. Being a freak,

no matter where he was. "Which House are you staying in?" he asked Wyatt again. "I suppose you two must be in the teacher's wing or something. Er- is there a teacher's wing?" he turned to Hermione who rolled her eyes.

"Yes. Of course there is, it's in-

*"Hogwarts a History,"* both boys said together. *"When will you ever read it?"*

"Unfortunately, I haven't so I can't help you there. But maybe we can ask the twins. I bet they know," Chris said turning to Ron who nodded.

"Gryffindor," Wyatt finally answered. "I'll be in Gryffindor."

"Oh, so are we," Ron said. "If you don't mind being seen with lowly fourth years. We'll show you the way."

"No, I don't. Wyatt Halliwell. These are my mom and dad. Headmaster Leo Wyatt and Piper Halliwell."

"Wow, you're one of the Charmed Ones," Hermione said reverently. "I read all about-humh."

"Don't mind her," Chris smiled putting his hand over her mouth. "We have a bet going on that she managed to smuggle a book in her mother's womb." Hermione glared at him. "Let's go find the twins and then we'll take you to the tower. I'm Chris by the way. Harry Christopher Potter, but my friends call me Chris and these are Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger." he finished nodding towards the Entrance Hall and walking ahead.

"I don't know why I am friends with you two hooligans," Hermione muttered.

"Because if you weren't you wouldn't be able to boss us around," Ron said and Chris chuckled.

"So, how is Magic School? I heard your magic is different from ours," Chris asked.

“It’s not different per say. It’s used in a different way and therefore develops differently,” Leo explained in what Wyatt liked to call his lecture mode. “But the core is the same. Actually-“

“Chris!” a voice called from the entrance doors and Chris’s face lit up in a bright smile. Piper’s heart squeezed, she wanted to see that smile directed at her.

“Remus!” Chris cried and all three children ran toward a haggard looking young man and Chris embrace him warmly. “What are you doing here?”

“Professor Dumbledore needed to talk to me and I decided to take the chance to deliver this personally,” he took an envelope from his robes. “My dog has been very restless and I was afraid what he might do to it if I left it at home.”

Chris took the envelope with a huge smile and reverently stored it away in his pocket. Piper was sure there was a hidden message in that whole dog thing and she was dying to know what was in that envelope.

“I’ll be staying the night. So, why don’t you look me up in the morning? Don’t want to make you kids miss curfew and Albus is waiting for me,” Chris nodded eagerly and Piper’s curiosity went up. This man was obviously important in Chris’s life and she wanted to know more about him.

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“Why does he wear glasses? He didn’t before, not even lenses,” Piper asked as they were in bed.

“Sometimes the need for glasses comes from something external. An accident, forcing your eyesight. And we don’t know if Chris didn’t need glasses before. For all we know he might have needed them and didn’t have access in the world he came from. My dad used glasses. It’s a recessive trait.”

“Still, there’s something there. And he’s too thin. And I didn’t like that Karkaroff. He looked as if he wanted to do something bad to Chris. And that Snape character,” she huffed resting her head on his chest.

“Is jealous of James and takes it out on Chris,” Leo said calmly running his fingers through her long hair.

“Uh?”

“Lily was my charge since adolescence,” Leo smiled. “I knew her whole life. She and Snape had been best friends until he started hanging out with the wrong crowd and they had a falling out. And right after that she fell for James Potter’s charms. To Snape, Chris is the consummation of his defeat. I’m not saying he is a nice man, he isn’t. Two seconds with him and I could see how bitter he is. But I don’t think he’ll harm Chris.”

“Humph, then he’s childish. Taking it out on an innocent boy.”

Leo nodded, even though he understood the emotion behind Snape’s actions it didn’t mean he approved of them. He especially didn’t like his boy being the target.

“And who’s that Remus guy?”

“If I remember correctly he was one of James’s best friend, together with Sirius Black and another boy named Peter Pettigrew. Remus though had been a friend of Lily’s even before she mellowed towards James. I remember because she used to say she didn’t understand such a sensible boy being around Potter and Black,” he tried to imitate a girl’s irritated voice. “Lily wasn’t very fair towards James and Sirius before she finally gave them a chance. From what she said he’s a good man. He or Sirius are probably who raised him. Or, maybe both of them together if I remember Lily’s comments correctly.”

Piper looked up at her husband who for all his level headed had been raised in the twenties,  
“Would you mind?”

“What?”

“If he was raised by a gay couple?”

Leo looked thoughtful, “Nowadays, no I wouldn’t. But I won’t lie to you. A few decades ago I would. But I’ve seen love in many different shapes in my life as a Whitelighter and I’ve learned that they are all genuine. If they loved him and raised him well, it’s all I care.” Piper smiled at him.

“When will we approach him?” he asked Piper.

“I don’t know,” she bit her lip. “In one hand I think it would be easier if he got to know us first, but then he might feel betrayed.”

“I thought so too. I think we shouldn’t wait long, but I don’t think we can just barge in and say “Hi, we’re your parents, wanna a hug?”

“We also need to find out who raised him? If it was Remus and Sirius or someone else. I mean, he was supposed to know about us, be expecting us. I don’t think he did. So maybe James and Lily never told anyone and then we’ll have to explain everything to his guardians too,” Piper added.

“Tomorrow everyone will be completely focused on the Goblet’s decision. It’s the best time to ask questions. People will be distracted and won’t pay much mind to us asking. They might figure we’re just curious about the Boy-Who-Lived,” Leo said. “And we should approach Remus. I think he and Sirius are the ones with the most chance of actually knowing the truth about Chris.”

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Wyatt looked at the canvas top of his four poster bed as he listened to the sounds of the dorm. He had never shared a room. He supposed he would have shared a room with his brother if they had been allowed to grow up together. He wasn't used to sleeping with people around him. He had been put in the sixth year's dorm as that was his age group. The whole idea of coming here was to share their lifestyles between both worlds and because of that Wyatt would be attending a few classes with the sixth year as an observer and any Hogwarts, Beauxbatons, and Durmstrang students interested would be able to do the same with the classes his father and mother would still be teaching to the Magic School children. On top of that they had study group times where they'd have to study for regular school. His mom wasn't about to let them slack on that and though they couldn't bring the teachers for the basic courses, she made sure that every student got a study plan for all of their classes and essays assignments, which Paige would orb to get back to the teacher's once a week. One student tried complaining and his mom just looked at him and said: SATs. The student quivered.

His dad had incorporated regular curriculum to Magic School years ago after hearing the complaints of the heavy work load the students had having to attend two schools at once, and the trouble they had hiding their magic when it was still uncontrolled. So through a little magic and bureaucracy, Magic School had managed to become a School of the American System, for all ages and now there were teachers there that weren't necessarily magical, but had some connection to the magical world, and therefore knew of it and taught regular curriculum. There were a few witches who taught regular curriculum too. All in all this would be a heavy load year, but that was not what was keeping Wyatt awake.

Chris was. He hadn't managed to talk much to his brother once the Weasley twins were found, and somehow yes, they did know where the staff wing was. After escorting his parents to the staff wing the twins had hauled Wyatt off telling him it was bad for his image to hang around

fourth years, even if one of them was The Boy Who Lived and youngest seeker in a century, whatever that meant.

So he was relegated to watch his brother from the huddle of sixth years trying to figure out a way to get over Dumbledore's age line. He did manage to get some information on him though. Fred and George apparently where Ron's brother and Chris often spent time at their house, or as they put it "they tried to rescue him from the muggles often". Wyatt asked what that meant but Fred and George put a serious and closed face for the first time since he met them and told him it was none of his business. They did tell him though that Chris preferred to be called Chris ever since Hagrid told him that his parents favored his second name over his first. So it was easy to know who really knew him, because it was the people who called him Chris. Not that Wyatt minded, to him calling his brother something else would be weird. But most people went by their first name, not second. No one called him Matthew. So when Wyatt asked why the short answer was, the muggles call him Harry, and with a cheeky grin Fred, or was it George changed the subject completely.

Wyatt sighed; he had waited fourteen years to be reunited with his brother. He knew most people would think it weird, after all, Chris was with them for less than two months and Wyatt didn't remember future Chris. But Wyatt always felt their brotherly bond. He always felt a presence there, faint emotions he couldn't decipher. He wondered if Chris recognized the bond. Of course Wyatt knew what it was because he had trained his Whitelighter side and it didn't take much to realize that was because of their half-Elder half-Whitelighter side. His cousins, Paige's children, shared the same bond between each other and her. But would Chris be able to recognize it. His parents had bound Chris's Elder powers before they gave him to the Potters so no one would realize what he was. That was the reason the bond was so muted in Wyatt. He shouldn't be able to feel it at all. But he chalked it up that he and Chris never were your regular witches anyway. But did Chris know what he was feeling?

And what about those muggles he lived with? And the whole dog comment that ex-Professor had made. Chris had ran to his dorm as soon as they got to the tower and when he came back down, he Hermione and Ron had been furiously whispering and Wyatt had a feeling it had nothing to do with the age line.

--

Chris couldn't sleep. Sirius was back in England. Apparently he was hiding at Lupin's. That just made him more worried because now not only Sirius was at risk but so was Remus. Why the hell did he complain about his scar hurting? Why couldn't he keep his mouth shut?

He turned around and buried his head in his pillow. His letter to Sirius saying he had imagined it had no effect whatsoever instead he got a scolding about Sirius being the adult, yada, yada, yada and don't worry about him. How could Chris not? Sirius and Remus where the only family he had.

Chris turned his head a little and watched Neville's breathing patterns. Then there were the new schools. Why did Moody tell him to watch out for Karkaroff? And that Wyatt kid? He was strange. Chris caught him staring at him many times. And yet, it didn't annoy him as it usually did. There was something about Wyatt and his parents. Something familiar, something safe, but what?

**A/N- As you've seen I've changed the timeline a little to suit my story. This may happen again.**

**Thanks for reviewing!**

#### **Chapter 4- Sorting out what happened**

Chris woke up early, left a note for Ron and Hermione saying he'd meet them at breakfast and Marauders' Map in hand went to look for Remus. He found him in one of the guest quarters of the staff wing and knocked, worried that maybe Remus was still asleep, but that was not the case.

Remus invited him in and asked a house-elf for some breakfast, Chris thought of refusing, after all he was going to meet Ron and Hermione for breakfast but then he changed his mind, he was after all a growing boy, so what was the harm of having breakfast twice? Besides, years with the Dursleys taught him never to refuse food.

"Excited about the Tournament?" Remus asked over the table.

Chris nodded through a mouthful, swallowed and answered, "It will be interesting to watch the tasks," and then he gave Remus a roguish grin, "and not be part of the action for once."

"That sure will be good," Remus chuckled. "Made any new friends with the visiting students?"

Chris shook his head, "They're all older. What would they want with me?" he snorted.

"You never know," Remus said vaguely.

"We helped one of the Magic School students and his parents yesterday. But that was all. He was weird anyway," Chris said absentmindedly while spreading more jam on his toast and missing the look that crossed Remus face.

"Weird how?"

Chris just shrugged, "Dunno, he kept staring. Lots of people do anyway, so I should be used to it but- I dunno- There was something strange about him...and his parents too. How they felt."

"How they felt?" Remus asked carefully picking a scone and studying Chris closely.

"Yeah," Chris munched on his toast pensively. "They felt familiar."

"Has anyone felt like that before," Remus asked cautiously.

Chris studied Remus and nodded, "You and Sirius," then he smiled. "Well, if they're like you I don't have to worry."

"No, you don't," Remus smiled. "I have a feeling you really won't."

Chris nodded and then his face became serious and he took a letter from his pocket, "I wrote Sirius a letter. He shouldn't have come back."

"Sirius thinks he should and I agree," Remus said calmly.

Chris shook his head, "No, it's dangerous. And it was just a stupid dream...doesn't mean anything-"

"It's not just your dream Chris," Remus said firmly putting his teacup down. He looked Chris squarely in the eyes. "That's just one of the many signs we've been seeing. And with the Tri-Wizard Tournament here we can't help but worry that it would be very easy for Voldemort to get to you."

"But wouldn't Dumbledore take precautions?"

"He has, but he isn't perfect," Remus said. "We believe he hired Moody to have some extra security. Especially with Karkaroff here."

Chris's interest picked up, "Karkaroff? Moody told me to watch out for him."

"He would. Moody was the one to arrest Karkaroff. He was a Death Eater. He got away by making a deal with the Wizengamot. He basically named people who were Death Eaters. Got a lot of people arrested."

Chris nodded, "But then, wouldn't the Death Eaters be angry at him."

Remus nodded, "Yes, but that also means that he might be desperate to prove himself loyal to Voldemort. And what better way than to get The Boy Who Lived to him? Don't ever be alone with him."

Chris nodded seriously. He swallowed and asked fidgeting with a napkin.

"You'll be careful right? You and Sirius? I- I can't have anything happen--"

Remus leaned forward on the table and took Chris's fidgeting hand, "Don't worry. We know how to take care of ourselves. No one will find where Sirius is."

Chris nodded but he couldn't help the lump that formed in his throat. He tried to smile but failed miserably.

--

"So, so, tell me everything, leave nothing behind," Phoebe's voice came from the phone. When Piper realized that her cell phone would not work at Hogwarts she and her sisters had worked a way to make it work. Especially since Hogwarts wards wouldn't allow orb-ing. There was no way she was going to stay without immediate communication. So before coming here they had worked ways to ensure hers, Leo's and the students' cells worked with the school's magic rather than their batteries, which she didn't mind conceding was quite handy, since they didn't have to recharge them.

"I don't know everything," Piper said as she surreptitiously observed Chris and his friends in a non-stalking way, or so she told herself. Seeing one of them looking towards her direction she quickly ducked behind a bush. "He looks shy. I heard he played Quidditch, what's that?"

"No idea. So is he completely neurotic like we were used to or is he just a normal teenager? I often wondered if Chris was that way because of the world he came from or if it was your genes."

“Hey! What’s that supposed to mean?” Piper demanded.

“Nothing,” Phoebe slowly drawled.

“Oh, wait. Where are they going? Is that safe?” Piper asked as she saw Chris and his two friends knock at the door of a small hut not too far from where the Beuaxbatons carriages were parked and the enormous form of the giant man who had been introduced as the Care of Magical Creatures Professor opened the door. Piper had hardly talked to the man yesterday, he didn’t seem a bad person, but he was intimidating and she had heard rumors that he was into some dangerous animals, something about Blast Ended something. What if one of them ate Chris?

“What? What? What’s going on?” Phoebe asked.

“He entered Hagrid’s hut? I think it’s his hut?”

“Uh, that sounds dangerous, is Hagrid a demon?”

“No.”

“A warlock?”

“No, I don’t think he can do magic, from what I heard. He’s a teacher here.”

“Hum,” Phoebe murmured and Piper could imagine her sister’s mocking face from the sound of her voice. “A teacher, who can do no magic, against three students who can. Yes, horribly dangerous.”

“I’m serious. The man is huge!”

“Yes, but didn’t they walk there of their own free will? And I hardly think Dumbledore would hire a teacher if he was dangerous to the children.”

“You haven’t met Snape yet. I wish I hadn’t.”

"I unfortunately have," came a voice from behind Piper who had moved to stalking Chris from behind the Beauxbatons carriage.

"AH!" Piper cried and turned around dropping her phone. "WYATT! Don't do that!"

Wyatt was sniggering at his mother as Piper hastily picked up the phone and said her goodbyes to Phoebe. "What are you doing mom?"

"Nothing," Piper smoothed her hair slightly and tried to look innocent.

"Yeah, right," Wyatt drawled. "Don't worry. From what everyone I've met so far has said, Hagrid is a very nice person, completely harmless."

"He's huge!" Piper whispered.

"So is Madam Maxime and you're right next to her carriage," Wyatt pointed out.

Piper nodded, he had a point, but Madam Maxime had a finesse about her that made you forget her size, Hagrid on the other hand looked wild.

"Look mom," Wyatt said putting his arm around Piper's shoulder and stirring her away. "Think of Hagrid as Uncle Henry, he likes to look tough, but everyone knows that deep inside he is a softy." Piper chuckled at the thought of the scowl Henry would sport if he heard Wyatt, and worse, the fact that Wyatt was so right. Her phone rang again and she quickly took it looking at the display and seeing Leo's name.

--

Turns out they didn't need to go looking for Remus because after his chat with Chris Remus came looking for them.

"Headmaster Wyatt, may I have a word with you and your wife?" he asked when he had found Leo in the library. He had come here to find one of his students who had become stage

frightened and had fled when seen the amount of people watching who was putting their names in the goblet. Knowing this student in particular Leo knew where he'd hide. After a good heart to heart he was confident the young boy had calmed down enough and had watched pleased when the boy said he had to go put his name in the goblet.

"Sure, er--"

"Lupin, Remus Lupin," he said extending his hand. "I don't believe we were ever formally introduced but I was a very good friend of Lily's, and I need to talk to you about a favor you asked her for."

Leo nodded, his suspicions that Lupin new immediately confirmed. "Let me call my wife to our rooms. We can talk there." They had warded the room and had made sure there were no portraits that could gossip. He took his phone out and started dialing. He and Piper had come to the conclusion Chris didn't know about them from the little interaction they had with him. So if Lupin knew, and raised him, why didn't he prepare him? Somehow, he had a feeling he would not like the answer.

--

"We knew, Lily and James asked for our help for the cover story. It was easy actually. Lily pretended she had hid the pregnancy with glamours. Many did back then, not wanting to become even more of a target for Death Eaters who knew they'd be hitting two birds with one stone," Remus explained. "Besides, she was very good at charms so no one would wonder. Chris's messy hair is proof of that. The charm to make it messy has resisted four years of Finite Incantatem. It can only be taken out by one of us four who were keyed into her charm or the Power of Three," Remus bit his lips here. "They really wanted to consult you but they knew it would be dangerous, and the blood adoption did give Chris the protection of the Potter name if anything happened to them. Without it Chris wouldn't be able to claim he was the Potter

hair. And since they did modify the potion just to add them as parents and not erase the original, there wasn't much change in Chris. His hair darkened a bit, and his green eyes got... brighter.... I don't know if that's the word. I can still see your eyes in him Leo, but Lily's were brighter and I can see them too. And I guess there is a chance his need for glasses came from James."

Piper nodded. She understood why they had performed a blood adoption. It made sense, and it had also meant that Chris had benefitted from whatever blood wards Dumbledore put on his Aunt's house, which he wouldn't have had if he hadn't had Lily's blood too. Somehow she thought fitting that Chris had also a bit of James and Lily in him.

She was still reeling from all the information she had gotten. Her baby hadn't been raised by them, and from what Remus said, he suspected that Chris hadn't been raised in a happy home at all.

"Why didn't you tell him? You or Sirius?" she asked.

"Sirius barely had an hour of time with him. Every other communication has been through letters, and I think you agree this is not a matter to be discussed by letters. I- I confess I kept Chris at arm's length last year. I feared his rejection when he found out what I was," Remus snorted self depreciatively. "I should have known better than that. We have gotten closer since the end of the year through letters than during the whole year I taught here."

"Did you say anything today?" Leo asked.

"No," he shook his head. "I think that you two should talk to him. Actually I think the four of us should talk to him. He's bound to have questions. But that may be hard to arrange seeing as Sirius is a wanted man and right now the man who sent him to prison without a trial is currently at Hogwarts."

“But after he leaves,” Piper asked. “You said the Headmaster knows Sirius is innocent. Couldn’t something be arranged?”

Remus looked at her thoughtfully and answered, “I can ask the Headmaster to arrange a meeting with Chris and Sirius, but for now I believe the Headmaster should not know about this.”

“Don’t you trust him?” Leo asked.

“I do. He is a good man. But he is also a leader, and like it or not, Chris is his best weapon against Voldemort. I often wondered why he sent Chris to the Dursleys. I know the Ministry would never give him to me. I tried. The result was me being barred from seeing him before he came to Hogwarts. But there were many families that would have loved him. I know Molly has wanted to take him to her home permanently ever since she first saw him. So, why the Dursleys? Albus Dumbledore has enough power to ensure that the family he wanted adopted Chris. His blood wards are just not that good an excuse in my opinion.”

“You think he wanted Chris to know hardship,” Leo asked shrewdly thinking of all the times the Elders manipulated them. Remembering when the Angel of Destiny almost killed him so Piper would be motivated by grief.

“A pampered boy might think twice before joining the battle,” Remus said flatly. “I’m not saying Dumbledore’s goals aren’t noble, I’m just saying he neglects the individual’s needs for the collective’s.”

Leo and Piper nodded realizing that Dumbledore, much like the Elders, might be one of those allies you have to keep an eye on.

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**A/N- Thanks for reviewing!**



## Chapter 5- The Goblet's decision

He must have heard wrong. There is no possible way. He had just applauded Diggory and clapped him on the back as he passed the Gryffindor table, when that stupid, stupid goblet spit out a fifth name, and it was his brother's name! He looked at his parents who were just as stunned as he was and tried to fight the horrifying feeling that was coming through his bond with his brother.

Ever since they had met yesterday the bond had grown stronger and that faint presence was making itself more and more present, even though they hadn't much chance to interact today since the twins had monopolized Wyatt and Chris had spent most of the day away with Hagrid and his friends. And right now he knew Chris was terrified, and incredulous. That Chris, just like him was waiting for Dumbledore to say it was all a joke. But he never did, instead he insisted Chris join the other Champions and then he had a rushed conversation with the other Heads who were furious. His father looked as if he was going to burst a vein and his mother was snapping at Dumbledore while the others were calling him a cheater. He watched in a daze as Dumbledore dismissed the students and the other Heads and him left through the same door as Chris had and he was left behind not knowing what was happening and imagining the worst as he felt everything his brother was feeling and the buzzing of whispering grew through the students.

He never really understood how he ended up punching one of the guys who was calling Chris a cheater. He just felt himself being steered away by some of the students from Magic School and the Weasley twins before a teacher caught on to what he had done.

--

Leo followed the other professors into the room Dumbledore led them into and had to restrain himself from going straight towards Chris and taking him away. He had to remember; to

everyone here Chris had nothing to do with him. To Chris, Leo had nothing to do with him. So he focused first on his student who came barreling with questions.

“He can’t be serious? The kid will get killed, he’s terrified” the girl said. And Leo knew why instead of complaining like the Beauxbatons student was doing to Madam Maxime his student, Olivia, was actually trying to get Chris out. She had a few powers, one of the few witches who had more than one active power aside from the Charmed Ones and their offspring, and one of those powers was empathy. She knew what Chris was feeling.

Chris on the other hand glared at her, “I’m not terrified,” he mumbled indignantly, “or little.” Leo couldn’t help it, his lips twitched into a smile even in this dire situation.

“What is ze meaning of zis, Dumbly-door?” Madame Maxime asked imperiously.

“I’d rather like to know that myself Dumbledore!” Karkaroff spat, “Two Hogwarts champions? I don’t remember anyone telling me that the hosting school is allowed two champions- or have I not read the rules carefully enough?”

“Ogwarts cannot ‘ave two champions. It is most unjust,” Maxime said.

“We were under the impression your Age Line would keep out younger contestants Dumbledore. Otherwise we, of course, would have brought along a wider selection of candidates, from our own schools,” Karkaroff said with a steely smile in place and his gaze colder than ever.

“It’s no one’s fault but Potter’s, Karkaroff.” Snape said softly his black eyes alight with malice and Leo noticed Olivia looking at him intrigued. “Don’t go blaming Dumbledore for Potter’s determination to break rules. He has been crossing lines ever since he arrived here-“ and Leo saw Dumbledore was about to cut him but a furious Piper was faster.

“HEY MISTER!” she snapped. “Ever heard of innocent *before* being proved guilty? He hasn’t had a chance to explain himself!”

“Well put Mrs. Halliwell,” Dumbledore smiled calmly at her and turned to Chris before tempers could cause explosions.

“Did you put your name in the goblet Harry?”

“No sir,” Chris shook his head vehemently and Leo had to silently restrain Piper with his hands on her arms when Snape snorted.

“Did you ask an older student to put it into the Goblet for you?”

“No,” Chris said vehemently.

“Ah, but of course ‘e is lying!” Madam Maxime cried and Olivia rebutted.

“He isn’t!”

“How would you know?”

“I’m an Empath,” Olivia snapped back. “And I can’t feel any deceit from him. Just confusion, terror and a little disgruntlement.” Leo silently thanked his student for her help and he saw Chris looking at her appraisingly.

“How do you know he isn’t faking those emotions?” Karkaroff spat and the girl rolled her eyes.

“You can’t fake emotions! You can hide them! Like they are,” and she pointed at Snape, Moody and Dumbledore in turns and Leo understood why she had frowned at Snape. Though you didn’t need to be an Empath to know the dislike Snape was exuding. “Block them out. But not fake them.”

“Zat does not mean he didn’t put ‘is name in. Maybe he zust didn’t expect to be called!” Fleur Delacour cried.

"She said-" Leo started gritting his teeth but was interrupted by McGonagall:

"He could have not crossed the Age Line. I am sure we all agree on that-"

"Dumbly-dorr must 'ave made a mistake wiz ze line," Maxime shrugged.

"Are you listening to yourself?" Piper snapped. "Albus Dumbledore make a mistake with a basic thing as an Age Line my five-year-old niece would conjure without any problem. What are you on?"

"It is possible, of course," Dumbledore tried to appease the two hot headed woman. "I am but huma-"

"Dumbledore!" McGonagall snapped. "You know perfectly well you did not make a mistake! Really what nonsense, Harry could not have crossed the line himself, and as Professor Dumbledore believes him and is backed up by an Empath, who has every reason NOT to support Harry, that he did not persuade an older student to do it for him, I'm sure that should be good enough for everybody else!" and she shot a very angry look at Snape that had Piper and Leo smirking at him. Jerk!

Cautiously Olivia leaned forward and said, "Er- he doesn't appreciate being called Harry either," but she backed off at the glare McGonagall sent her way.

"Mr. Crouch...Mr. Bagman," said Karkaroff with a tone to his voice that greatly disgusted Leo, "you are our- er- objective judges," and after what Remus had told them about Crouch sending Sirius to Azkaban without a trial Leo was a little doubtful about his objectiveness, "Surely you will agree that this is most irregular?"

Bagman, who had up until now been acting as if this was the greatest thing that could happen, and it was all Leo could do not to snap at the man to shut it, that this was his son that was in danger here, turned to Mr. Crouch, who up until now had been completely quiet, standing

outside the circle, his face half hidden in the shadows, and Leo's doctor and Whitelighter eyes immediately detected that this man was suffering from something because he did not look well at all. When he spoke however he did it in a curt voice that held no hint of weakness or emotion, "We must follow the rules, and the rules state clearly that those people whose names came out of the Goblet of Fire must compete in the Tournament."

"WHAT?" Piper shrieked. "Are you crazy? He's just a boy!"

"Piper," Leo tried to calm her down.

"No, I won't calm down! You people are nuts! He is a minor! He did not enter his name! He does not have to--"

"It is a magical binding contract madam," Mr. Crouch said simply. "Either Potter competes or he faces the consequences of breaking the contract and they are not pretty."

"What does he mean by that?" Piper hissed towards Leo and he saw that Chris had turned towards him with a hopeful look, a look he would have to crush.

"Depends of the type of contract, it can range from loss of his magic in a mild contract to death in Unbreakable Vows," Piper's and Chris's faces went ashen and Leo was astounded by the fact that no one here saw the resemblance between them. But then again, with tempers running so high anyone was hard pressed to notice anything. Piper's behavior alone should have been a huge hint that something was amiss, but he couldn't blame her. He was just as scared at what was happening as she was.

"You mean I either die on the tasks or from breaking the contract?" Chris asked shocked.

"We don't know--" Leo started trying to explain. Trying to give his son some hope.

"The Goblet of Fire constitutes an Unbreakable Vow," Mr. Crouch solved the problem for them.

“Well, if Barty says so,” Bagman said. “Then it is. He knows the rule book back to front.”

Karkaroff insisted on submitting other names for the Goblet but Bagman shot that idea down. Leo could only focus on his wife and son who looked as if the world had ended and was actually glad everyone else was busy crying injustice about Hogwarts having two champions and throwing accusations here and there about who would have done this and did not notice the very weird actions of his wife, or at least weird for those who didn't know the truth. She turned towards Chris and said firmly, “Don't worry. You won't have to. We'll find a way out of this.”

Chris looked at her with a mixture of fear for his fate and resignation. He shook his head, “Yes I will. You heard him.” And he knew that the only reason Chris wasn't over thinking Piper's action was because he must be numb.

“You're a minor.”

“And who's going to complain? My parents? They're dead and my relatives will jump at the chance of me getting killed by one of the tasks,” and Leo's heart sank at the pure certainty in Chris's voice that he had absolutely no one to fight for him. “Thanks Mrs. Halliwell. I know you mean well. But I'm used to it.”

And that moment Leo and Piper felt the exact same, their hearts breaking in tiny pieces as they heard his declaration. No he was suppose to be safe, to be cared for, happy and loved. That's why they chose the Potters. Why did it have to go so wrong?

Their attention was pulled to the others as Dumbledore rebuked Moody for something he said to Karkaroff about fighting Dark Wizards, or thinking like Dark Wizards.

“How this situation arose we do not know but it seems as we have no choice but to accept it.

Both Harry and Cedric have been chosen to compete in the Tournament, therefore they will do it-“

“Ah, but Dumbly-dorr-“

“My dear Madam Maxime, if you have an alternative, I would be delighted to hear it-“

But Maxime didn't and Crouch came forward with Bagman and explained the First Task to the champions, how they had to face the unknown with only their wands, or in Olivia's case, her active powers and spell casting. Dumbledore tried diplomacy and invited them for a night cap but was refused by all. Going against all his instincts that were screaming for him to go with Chris, to comfort him, he instead accompanied his student out.

Once outside in the empty Great Hall he watched as Chris and Cedric talked and left.

“You should go celebrate with your friends,” Leo said to Olivia. “The Headmaster extended the curfew for our students and lent one of the classrooms. They'll be there waiting for you. I can accompany you if you want.”

Olivia looked at Chris's retreating back and then at Piper who had not taken her eyes off of him. She bit her lip, “Are you sure there's nothing to be done? The kid did not put the name in. He's an innocent. Aren't we supposed to protect the innocents?”

Leo felt proud, Olivia had every right to be as indignant as the others but here she was putting her duty as a good witch first. Of course, he knew that the biggest reason she believed Chris was because she knew his feelings.

“We'll find a way to help.”

She looked at Piper once again, and Leo feared she could sense her emotion even through the blocking potion she still took, but apparently she couldn't. She was just intuitive, "He's the same age your boy would be isn't he?"

Leo nodded a lump forming in his throat. She was thinking they were relating to him because he reminded them of Chris, not because he was Chris.

"He is also the son of a former charge of mine, and the boy the Elders asked us to help protect," he explained.

"Then I'll talk to the others sir. Don't worry. He won't get grief from us and we will perform our duty. He's our innocent after all."

Leo smiled at her, "Thank you," he said even though he had his doubts that she would manage. The other Magic School students might not be so easy to convince.

"You are a great witch," Piper's voice came towards them and Leo hadn't noticed she heard them. "You'll be a great force of good," she smiled. "But you're a kid too, and you deserve to compete and win. Don't hold back on his account and know you can come for us for help."

Olivia nodded and walked ahead. Leo pulled Piper into a hug, "I'm proud of you," he whispered and walked after Olivia.

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A/N- Some of the dialog comes from "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire"

Thanks for reviewing!

## Chapter 6- Telling Chris

“They seemed nice enough. Of course we knew that already. James and Lily told us.”

“Humph, nice,” came the snort from the bed.

Remus turned around and eyed his partner who was sulking, because there was no better way to put it, with his arms crossed over his chest, his legs firmly and straightly planted in front of him, his back resting rigidly on the backboard and a scowl on his face that reminded him of a toddler who was told to share his favorite toy. He finished straightening his pajama top and closed the closet’s door. He walked towards the bed and got on it slowly laying down next to Sirius. Turned on his side, elbow resting on the mattress and head on his hand and smiled cheekily at Sirius.

“Problems Padfoot?”

“None whatsoever. I’m very thrilled to meet Chris’s nice and not on the run parents. Wohoo!”

“You’re jealous!” Remus smiled.

“Absolutely not!”

“Chris adores you.”

“Yeah, wait till he meets his World War Hero, former angel dad,” Sirius snorted.

“You’re a war hero too, besides. This isn’t a competition,” Remus said calmly.

Sirius shrugged uncomfortable, “I know, s’ just- we were going to be a family you know? Before Peter got away- and now they’re here, and they can be his family and there is nothing stopping them from, and what if he just leaves with them and we never hear from him again-“

Remus stopped Sirius rambling with a gentle hand on his arm. He gently tugged Sirius’s hand out of the deadlock it was in and squeezed it.

“He won’t Padfoot. He loves you, he adores you and he loves the Wizarding world. We’ll just have to share him. But believe me, Chris’s heart is more than big enough for all of us.”

Sirius looked morosely at his hand and hoped he wasn’t going to lose his godson just when he got him back.

--

“Oh, and we have problems. Olivia defended Chris but there are some of our students that don’t believe her at all and think he cheated,” Wyatt told his parents the next morning in their quarters. He had been pulled to the celebration with the rest of the Magic School students and by the time he had gone back to the tower Chris had already gone to his room. So all Wyatt had to go by was his feelings which had ranged from fear to annoyance.

Leo sighed and rubbed his temple from the couch he was sitting on, “We couldn’t expect all of them to believe. They are kids after all.”

“Hey! I take offense to that?” Wyatt cried and crossed his arm scowling down at his father.

“Really? If it had been any other Hogwarts’ student other than Chris, would you believe him?”

Wyatt fidgeted a little and tried to say yes but conceded in the end dropping down on an armchair that faced the couch his parents were on.

“The only reason Olivia believes him is because she is an Empath,” Leo stated simply. He knew Chris would have a tough time. This morning at breakfast the rumors were still running wild and even though Leo and Piper stalled all they could they did not see Chris coming down. They did see his friend Hermione coming and picking up some breakfast to go and shooting a dark look towards their other friend Ron.

“What was up with Hermione and Ron this morning?” he asked Wyatt.

Wyatt looked at them sadly, "I heard Ron and Chris fought last night. Ron doesn't believe him either." Leo sighed. Chris was going to need his friends more than ever now. This fight could not have come at a worse moment. "When are we telling him?" Wyatt asked.

"Remus contacted us," Piper explained skipping the part where she almost had a heart attack when Remus's head showed up in the fireplace. "He managed to contact Dumbledore and say Sirius wants to talk to Chris personally about this whole Goblet business and in private. They're coming later today and using something called the Room of Requirements. Remus gave us instructions, we're supposed to meet them there. But we have to be careful, make sure Dumbledore isn't there more than ever. I did not like how he didn't even try to consider getting Chris out of the tournament."

"But once he knows," Wyatt asked. "Then you can take over and get him out of the Tournament right?"

Leo and Piper looked at Wyatt's eager face sadly and Leo shook his head, "Not without killing him. He'll have to compete."

"What? But he is a minor! Mom!" Wyatt turned to his mother so she could just go and stop this nonsense but Piper had tears in her eyes when she shook her head and explained about the Unbreakable Vow. Wyatt looked astounded. Never in his life had his parents not managed to save them. Wyatt still had that firm belief that his parents were capable of anything, no matter what. But that wasn't true, was it? Back when Chris was born they hadn't been able to take on the Elders and the Cleaners together and now, all the power in the world couldn't prevent Chris from competing.

--

Chris had avoided the student population for most of the morning. First by getting up later than most and then by staying by the lake with Hermione. He had written Sirius the letter

Hermione had insisted on him writing and was about to go to the owlery to post it when the weirdest thing in the world happened. A Patronus, that looked an awful lot like Padfoot, intercepted his way to the owlery and said, yes, to Chris's utter amazement the Patronus spoke, with Remus voice, to meet him later that afternoon in a place called the Room of Requirements, giving him precise explanation of how to get there. Chris made a note to ask Remus to teach him that Patronus trick. So, figuring Remus and Sirius must have already read the papers, Chris stored his letter away, hoping they'd believe him.

After getting over their shock over the talking Patronus, Hermione asked Chris if he wanted to go back to the Tower. Going back to the Tower and meeting people's elation over having a Gryffindor champion or disgruntlement over his alleged cheating had not been appealing to him. He especially did not want to be around Ron. He was pretty hurt by Ron's attitude. He thought Ron had known him well enough to know he'd never want to attract that kind of attention to himself, but apparently he didn't.

But, when Hermione brought up the Tower it did also remind Chris of something else. Something he'd been curious since last night. So instead he told Hermione he'd meet her at lunch and went looking for someone else, who he found in the library not much later. He approached the table she was sitting at cautiously. She had seemed nice, and she didn't seem to hate him, but better safe than sorry.

"Hi," Chris approached Olivia awkwardly. "Can I ask you something?"

"I'm not mad at you," she assured him looking up from the book she was reading.

"No, it's not that. You said you're an Empath, that you can feel what we feel."

"Yes."

Chris nodded and bit his lip. He looked around. "I think I can too. But I didn't know before, you know, what that meant. I just thought everyone could do that."

Olivia frowned, "Not everyone. But I thought that after centuries of focusing your magic in other ways Wizards didn't develop active powers that way anymore. That you needed spell casting and wands to focus."

"Well, sometimes we do accidental magic," Chris shrugged.

"Yeah, but that's before you learn to control your magic," she bit her lip. "You know what. We better ask Leo."

"Uh?"

"The Headmaster."

"You call him by his first name?" Chris looked properly scandalized, "That's disrespectful!"

Olivia shrugged, "Each culture has their own way to measure respect. Leo doesn't mind."

"I couldn't call Professor Dumbledore by his first name to his face," Chris said aghast as Olivia took his hand and steered him away.

--

Leo stared at Olivia and Chris and didn't know what to say. For one he really didn't want to lie to his son when he knew that later today he could explain exactly why Chris had active powers and two, he couldn't stop the guilty feeling ripping his gut. Chris was an Empath, he had been an Empath all along and now Future Chris's insistence on the sisters taking the empathy blocking potion made enormous sense, but Leo never took it. All along his son had known exactly how he felt. But that's the problem, he hadn't felt that way towards his son, he had felt that way towards a mysterious stranger's whose motives he didn't know and who was such an

easy target for the anger he was feeling at himself for ruining his own marriage. And it had taken finding out he was his son, and seeing rage in his own son's eyes directed at him for him to do the required soul searching he needed to understand his own feelings.

He could only hope his son had also felt the love and pride he had for him.

Chris squirmed in his seat and Leo realized he was obviously confused at what he was feeling from Leo. Could he recognize the feeling? From what Remus said he hadn't had much love in his life. Was he capable of knowing that what Piper and Leo felt for him was love?

"You are sure you can feel what everyone else is feeling?" he asked.

"Not everyone. I never got anything from Dumbledore or Snape, and now that I think about it from Moody either. Oh, and your wife too. She's weird...er no offense...I mean, I get a feeling of familiarity, a presence that I've felt before but I don't know what she is feeling."

That made sense, the presence would be Chris half-Elder's sensing powers, "Piper takes an empathy blocking potion regularly. One of her sisters is an Empath, and a butty one at that. So to avoid murder and massacre between the sisters they've taken the potion ever since she developed her powers."

Chris nodded but continued staring at him as if he had all the answers in the world.

"Have you had many problems with it?" Leo asked.

Chris shook his head, "No, I guess I learned to not let them overwhelm me when I was smaller," and he had to, because there would be no back talking at the Dursleys, which happened a few times when Chris didn't have control of it and he channeled his Uncle's anger and hate. That's two feelings he learned to distinguish early on. "I just wanted to understand why I have it if no one else in the Wizarding world does. I thought it was common, but then again I thought being a parselmouth was too," he finished in a mutter.

Leo was stumped, he couldn't explain to Chris that there was nothing different with him, after all it was normal for him to develop active powers since he was the child of a Wiccan witch, but he couldn't do that exactly now.

"Oh, and if there was a way to block it out completely, I'd love that," Chris added and Leo smiled, finally an answer he could give.

"There is," and he saw Olivia nod. "Olivia has developed her power recently so she hasn't learned how to yet but my sister-in-law, who actually was the one coaching Olivia can help you. I'll talk to her."

Chris nodded happily and thanked Leo profusely. Leo couldn't help the nice feeling of being able to help his son. He just hoped that in a few hours that gratefulness didn't turn into hate.

--

"I heard Mrs. Halliwell had to defend Potter," Malfoy sneered loudly as Chris and Hermione were crossing the doors of the Great Hall after lunch, not even caring that Wyatt was in hearing distance, just a little way behind Chris. Wyatt had managed to sit next to Chris and Hermione and had struck a random conversation with them. He hadn't wanted to seem like a stalker so he just asked a random question. What's Quidditch? That had Chris talking his ear off and Hermione tuning out and tutting every now and then. That also had Chris stealing melancholic glances towards the other end of the table where Ron was seated. Wyatt just let Chris talk, and after hearing what Quidditch was made a note to keep that knowledge from Piper as long as possible, especially since Chris offered to take Wyatt out flying if he wanted to. No, his mom better stay out of the loop or Wyatt would never see the sky up close. He could just imagine it and was practically drooling in anticipation.

He heard Hermione mutter to Chris, "Ignore it," and force him to keep going.

"I do feel sorry for people who have absolutely no one in the world who cares for them that they have to resort to werewolves and blood-traitor--"

This was just too much apparently because Chris abruptly turned around and if not for Wyatt's fast reflexes and him and Hermione holding him back Malfoy would be sporting a black eye now.

"Remus is worth a hundred times what you are Malfoy!" he growled but Wyatt and Hermione pulled him backwards until they were outside the Great Hall and Chris walked at an enormous speed towards the stairs. Hermione and Wyatt ran after him.

"He just wanted to rile you up," Hermione tried to calm him down as they arrived on the first floor.

"Yeah, but he didn't lie did he?" Chris said bitterly. He looked at Wyatt and Wyatt thought he'd tell him to mind his own business when he suddenly asked, "What's it like to have parents? To have someone to take care of you when you need? I never knew. I never had someone."

Wyatt's heart constricted but he said softly, "Sometimes the people who love us can't be next to us but that doesn't mean they don't worry. That they don't care. I'm sure you have someone. They just can't be with you."

Wyatt was talking about his parents but Chris had nodded knowingly and Wyatt figured he must be thinking of Sirius.

--

"Will you stop pacing? You'll ruin my carpet and I don't have the money to buy another one," Remus grumbled rubbing his temple. It had been like that all morning, since that owl came with the Daily Prophet and its headline.

*"Hogwarts with two Champions!"*

Sirius had ranted at Dumbledore's inefficiency. At how he had promised he'd taken every measure to protect Chris and had failed and how he'd just yank Chris from school and be done with it. They were scheduled for a long talk with Dumbledore before they met Chris. That was in about half an hour. Remus would floo with his dog to Hogwarts.

That had been arranged that morning. It was now two o'clock and ever since that morning Sirius had paced and ranted. Remus had given up a while ago and had dropped on the armchair tiredly just watching Sirius. It wasn't that he wasn't just as terrified as Sirius. He wasn't stupid, this was obviously either Voldemort's doing or some Death Eater who wanted to prove themselves. But considering the dream Chris had at the beginning of the summer he was putting his money on Voldemort. He just didn't think getting worked up was of any use.

Sirius glared at Remus, he didn't want to be calm like Remus had been telling him to do. Didn't Remus see it? It would be extremely easy to kill Chris on one of the tasks and chalk it up as an accident. And if his worry wasn't enough he also had to tell Chris about being adopted! Now that was a conversation he didn't even know how to begin! It would have been completely different if Sirius had been allowed to raise Chris. Then he would have had time to prepare Chris. He would have told him from the beginning all about having had two sets of parents. But now, now Chris had been told his whole life that he was James and Lily's son and he had to go and tell him otherwise.

He rubbed his eyes with the palms of his hand, and sighed. It wouldn't help that they were going to have to explain why everyone said he looked so much like James. He didn't. Not more than Sirius did. But as a baby James and Lily had started saying that so no one would be suspicious. And then, with the passing of time, the absence of James and the certainty that his son looked just like him, people just probably started replacing James' features with Chris's in their mind. Never seeing past the messy black hair and the glasses.

“Is it time yet?” he asked for the hundredth time. Remus didn’t deign him with an answer this time. He just received a glare.

--

“But you didn’t hear him?” Piper said sadly and she looked down at her hands. She had seen the confrontation between Chris and Malfoy and had followed Chris, Hermione and Wyatt from a little distance, unseen. Leo looked at his wife who was dejectedly seated in the coffee table of the living room of their guest quarters. He kneeled down and took her hands.

“We didn’t know. We thought he was being taken care of.”

He understood what she felt, he’d give anything to erase whatever hardship Chris had gone through but at the same time he knew they hadn’t had another option. If they hadn’t acted the Cleaners would have erased Chris.

“Sirius and Remus will be here shortly and then we’ll talk to him. I thought- I thought maybe it would be best if they talked with him first.”

Piper looked up startled, “But we have to explain-“

“We will,” Leo tried to calm her. “But I thought better of it and, this won’t be easy for him. He needs to be free to express his fears, anger-yes Piper, there’s a chance he will be angry. He is a fourteen year old boy who has been neglected when he had a loving family and it might take a while for him to understand why we left him there-“

“We didn’t know,” she whispered.

“And we’ll tell him that, but it’s not fair to him to force this. We need to do this gently and like it or not Remus and Sirius are the ones who he will be most comfortable with.”

Piper bit her lip and nodded. Leo smiled sadly and kissed her forehead.

“I’ll go tell them.”

“Tell them we’ll be here, if Chris wants to talk to us. We’ll be here,” she said frantically.

“We will. I’ll tell them,” he squeezed her hand one more time before he left.

--

Chris hugged Sirius like his life depended on it and Sirius hugged him back.

“Look at you? Did you grow since the last time I saw you?” Sirius made a face getting on the tip of his toes and exaggerating the motion of measuring down, “Nope, still a midget.”

Chris chuckled and then bit his lips nervously. He had followed Remus instructions to the letter and found them in the Room of Requirements. The room looked oddly like the Gryffindor common room. He chanced a look at Remus. Chris couldn’t feel any anger from them but they were exuding nervousness and fear.

“I didn’t put my name in the Goblet,” Chris blurted out.

“We know Chris. We’ve already talked with Dumbledore,” Sirius said calmly even though he was feeling anything but. And talked might have been an understatement. He had yelled at Dumbledore. A lot. “Unfortunately there’s nothing we can do to get you out of the Tournament, but that doesn’t mean we won’t help you.”

Chris nodded nervously. At least they weren’t angry, and he already knew that, “Yeah, Mr. Wyatt said so. He didn’t seem to like it either.”

Remus sat next to Sirius and asked, “He didn’t?”

“No,” Chris shook his head, “It was weird, he and his wife, all the other Heads were accusing me and fighting with Dumbledore, but they were actually defending me,” he shrugged. “It was nice, different.”

Sirius and Remus exchanged looks. Sirius licked his lips and said, “Actually Chris, the Halliwells are the reason we’re here.”

“What? But they seemed nice,” Chris asked shocked. “Don’t tell me they’re out to get me too!”

“They are, I mean they aren’t,” Remus stumbled in his answer, “They are not out to get you and they are nice,” he took a deep breath and assured Chris. “It’s- it’s-“

“They’re your parents,” Sirius blurted out unable to take the tension anymore. “They asked Lily and James to adopt you to protect you from the Elders who wanted to erase you.”

Chris stood up abruptly and shrieked: “*WHAT?*”

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**A/N- Thanks for reviewing!**

## Chapter 7- I have a family

*"James and Lily loved you as their own."*

*"They adopted you with magic, you have their blood too."*

*"Piper and Leo didn't have a choice. They did it to protect you. They did it because they love you."*

Everything Sirius and Remus had told him was running through his mind a million miles a second. He couldn't stop thinking. *"I have a family! I have a family"* but then his elation would deflate, *"Where were they when I needed them?"*

He had run through the halls towards the guest quarters where they had dropped them that first night. He had lifted his hand, but he was unable to knock. And somehow, he didn't exactly know how, as he ran, as he got more and more confused, he ended up in the Gryffindor Tower and walking straight towards the bent blond head in the corner table.

"Can we talk?" he asked and Wyatt looked up from his homework and the second he saw Chris's face he knew.

"You know?"

Chris nodded jerkily and Wyatt closed his books and followed his brother silently out of the tower and through the castle until they were out in the grounds and Chris directed him to a secluded spot by the lake. He watched as Chris sat on the grass and crossed his legs, studying his entwined hands with fascination. He mimicked him sitting in front of him.

"Did you talk to mom and dad?"

Chris shook his head nervously.

"Why not?"

"I don't know," Chris whispered. "I don't know what to do, what to feel."

"What are you feeling?" Wyatt had a pretty good idea. He had already thought Chris might have been talking to Sirius and Remus because of the confused feelings he was getting from the bond. There was happiness, and anger, and rejection, and a bit of self-loath. But he needed Chris to elaborate on that, so Chris could understand how he was feeling.

"You're my brother," he stated more than asked.

"Yes."

Chris looked at him with lost eyes, "I never had a brother- just Dudley- and I don't think it counts- I hope not- Ron's brothers don't seem to act like Dudley--"

"I don't know what Dudley did," Wyatt stopped Chris's rambling with a hand on his fidgeting hand, "But I know what I am. I am your brother. I have always been. I have always waited for this day. Since I was little and mom and dad explained why they had to take you away. I've always waited for the day we'd be reunited; we'd be able to be friends again. To make mom and dad crazy together," he smiled. "For the day I could protect you, because in the past you've always protected me."

Wyatt had been told the whole story. When he was little all he knew was that he had a brother that had to be away from him but once Leo and Piper deemed him old enough to understand they explained everything. It had been hard for him to hear that in an alternate future he had gone so evil his brother had to travel back in time and risk his own existence to stop him. But the fact that he did, that he thought of saving Wyatt instead of just getting rid of Wyatt, and that he gave his life to ensure that is what made Wyatt make sure he never strayed. Make sure he never abused his powers, he never turned into the man that killed Chris's fiancé. Piper and Leo hadn't known exactly what happened but Wyatt could imagine that if she died and if he had been the one to send her to get Chris, he must have been the one to kill her.

"I don't remember that," Chris said distractedly.

"I know, but that doesn't change the fact that you did. You might never remember, or maybe you will one day. Mom and dad aren't sure what's going to happen since Future you never got a chance to go back to his time," and here Wyatt looked down at his hands. "Because he died before he had a chance."

Chris nodded. Sirius and Remus had explained all of that. And even having time traveled just before the summer to save Sirius Chris still had a hard time grasping the concept that an adult version of himself traveled to before he was born to save them all from a horrible future, to save his brother. A brother he never knew he had. A version of himself that came from a different world. A world where he never was Harry Christopher Potter and always was Christopher Perry Halliwell. A world that never had a Harry Potter and Chris idly wondered what happened to Voldemort in that world. Had there been another Boy-Who-Lived or did Voldemort rule the Wizarding world? They'd probably never know. But that was the whole reason why the Elders thought him a threat. Beings that according to Remus guided, but Chris thought it looked more like they ruled, witches in their path. These beings, which were supposed to be of pure good, thought him a threat and wanted to kill him.

"Why does everyone want me dead?" Chris asked not realizing he said it out loud. But why? Why did so many people hate him? Voldemort, Snape, the Elders, the Death Eaters, the Dursleys? Was Uncle Vernon right? Was he just unlovable? A freak people couldn't help but hate? Maybe even his birth parents were glad to have an excuse to get rid of him.

"I don't know," Wyatt answered softly. "What I do know is that all our parents did was out of love. I know that for the last fourteen years they have counted the seconds for the time that they could see you again. I know mom always keeps your room up to date to your age, because she wants it ready for when you move in. And I know everyone in the family has been waiting for the moment you're back with us, because even those who didn't know you, who

were either too young or weren't part of the family yet, love you. Want you," Wyatt didn't know why he said that, but he knew it was what Chris needed to hear.

Chris looked at him and Wyatt could not only see the disbelief in his eyes but feel it through the bonds. Chris didn't believe people could love him. He probably thought Sirius and Remus cared for him out of duty to the Potters. They'd have to change that. Chris once saved him, now it was his turn to save Chris.

--

There was a knock on the door and Piper ran to open it to see Chris, to be able to hug him for the first time in fourteen years, but instead of Chris she was faced with an apologetic looking Remus who politely asked:

"May we come in?" she nodded distractedly and her disappointment was such that she didn't even register the humongous dog that entered the small living room with him. "Hello Leo," Remus nodded towards Leo who had stood up from the couch and then pointed at the dog, "This is Sirius," and with the blink of an eye the dog transformed into a thin handsome man shocking Piper and Leo out of their stupor.

Sirius nodded towards them, "Nice to meet you," he said tightly.

"You haven't told him?" Piper asked hopefully and Sirius and Remus traded uncomfortable looks.

"We did," Sirius answered. "He was shocked...he kind of ran out of the room."

"Oh," Piper breathed quietly and sat down with a lost look.

"He just needs time to absorb it all," Sirius said calmly. "I mean. This is huge. We just told him his life was basically a lie."

Piper nodded sadly and Leo sat next to her squeezing her hand. She looked up and gave Sirius a watery smile.

“It’s nice to finally meet you.”

--

Sirius and Remus had left after talking a lot with them. Piper liked Sirius. She had already gotten a good impression of Remus the day before and meeting Sirius and learning of everything he did to protect Chris last year and hearing the obvious affection he had for him made him an instant friend. She had noticed that Leo wasn’t as enamored of Sirius as she was, actually, she thought he might be a bit jealous. Which was strange, because if you thought about it, Chris had known Sirius for a few months only. And they had barely interacted face to face.

They had discussed lots what happened at the feast the day before and Sirius and Remus shared their suspicions with them. Sirius also let them know that Snape had hanged around a crowd that had all turned out to be Death Eater including some that were blood related to Sirius. Remus, with a sigh and a glare at Sirius, confirmed that yes, Snape had been named as a Death Eater and had a trial but that Dumbledore had vouched for him as a spy for the Order of the Phoenix. They also explained what the Order was.

In turn Piper and Leo told them more details of what had happened when Chris had time-traveled and of what had happened with them after they had left Chris with the Potters. Which had led to Remus asking Leo how he could see Hogwarts if he wasn’t magical anymore.

“I’m a mortal now and I don’t have my Elder powers anymore, but the fact that I was once a magical being will always leave a trace of magic in me. I’d be the equivalent to a squib now,” Leo explained.

As they left hours later they gave Piper and Leo a small package wrapped in brown paper to hand to Chris. Sirius said Chris could use it if he needed to talk to them.

"I'll ask Wyatt to," she said and Sirius smiled.

"I have a feeling you won't need to."

Piper had wanted to believe him, but as the time passed and nothing happened, she was losing her hope. She and Leo were pondering the real need for them to eat dinner in the Great Hall when there was a knock on the door. Heart in her throat she cautiously opened it and was faced with Wyatt who smiled nervously.

"Hi mom."

"Hi honey," she said with a sad tone.

"Someone wanted to talk to you and dad," and Wyatt moved and revealed behind him the smaller and thinner form of his brother, who looked like a deer caught in the headlights.

"Hum, hi Mrs. Halliwell- er- hi. Yes," Chris nodded looking everywhere but at Piper.

"Come in," Leo's voice came from behind her and she gave a start. She had forgotten about him.

Chris nodded and entered awkwardly shooting glances at Wyatt almost as if making sure the older boy would not leave him alone with Piper and Leo. They slowly made their way to the couches and armchair. Piper and Leo sharing the couch and Chris and Wyatt taking an armchair facing them each. The silence was stifling.

--

A/N- I know this was short and another cliffy, but it just felt right ending here. Thanks for reviewing!

## **Chapter 7- I have a family**

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## **Chapter 8- Mom and dad**

Leo watched as Chris looked around, licked his lips several times, opened his mouth like he’d ask something and closed again without uttering a word and looked back at his hands. That movement was done several times before Leo decided to break the ice.

“Your godfather left you a package here. He intended to give it to you but- er- you left abruptly.”

“Oh,” Chris said awkwardly and Leo took the brown parcel from the coffee table and leaned forward to hand it to Chris. Chris nodded jerkily and took it quickly. He rested his hand, that now held the small parcel, on his lap and looked at the other three nervously again.

“Sirius and Remus seem to love you very much,” Piper said softly.

“I guess,” Chris shrugged fidgeting with the loose corner of the parcel’s brown paper.

“Do you know what it is?” Leo asked wanting to keep Chris talking. Chris shook his head and opened it carefully. He took a mirror out and frowned confused, until he looked at a note that was taped to the back of the mirror.

“Oh, it’s a two-way-mirror. Sirius said he has the other and we can talk with each other. I guess this works like a phone or something. So he can know how I am,” he explained nervously.

“That’s nice,” Piper smiled tightly.

“Yeah,” Chris whispered and looked at the mirror and then suddenly asked, “Didn’t you want to?”

“Talk to Sirius?” Leo asked bewildered.

“No, know how I was,” Chris said looking up. “All these years.”

“Yes,” Piper breathed out desperately. “But we were afraid the Elders were watching. And we thought James and Lily were with you. We didn’t know.”

“Aren’t you afraid of what the Elders will do when they find out?” Chris asked wanting to understand why he had lived with Durselys when he had a family. Wanting to believe Wyatt when he said that Leo and Piper wanted him.

“After 14 years there isn’t much they can do,” Leo answered. “You would have interacted with too many people for them to change all their memories. Too many details.”

Chris nodded but then he asked, “Then why didn’t you come earlier?”

Leo looked at him sadly, “I chose James and Lily because of their magic. Because they would be the best choice for you to be with. Where you would adapt the best. They had features that were similar to the ones we knew you’d have too. But that also meant you’d be raised as a Wizard, and a child of the Wizarding world has pretty much a secluded life before Hogwarts.

To make sure that the Cleaners wouldn't be able to erase you we needed for you to have interacted with as many people as possible, so that meant that we needed you to have at least a few years of Hogwarts. We never knew what happened. We never knew you were the Boy-Who-Lived and that you weren't with James and Lily or we would have come for you earlier."

Chris nodded fidgeting with the brown paper again.

"I don't know what to do. I- I don't know what to do. I always wanted parents but now- I don't know what I'm supposed to do."

"You're not supposed to do anything," Leo said firmly. "Just, just get to know us. Just like you did with Sirius and Remus. I know it's not the same. It's easier to accept a godfather you didn't know you had than to realize your parents are someone different than you thought. But for now. Let's just get to know each other."

Chris nodded tensely.

"So," Piper started. "What do you like to eat?" she asked, easing into her area of expertise and wanting to file away all she'd cook for him. She knew there would be times where there would be heart tearing talks, but for now she wanted to start something with her son. Even if it was just scraping the surface.

"Mom's a chef," Wyatt spoke for the first time. "Just let her know what you like and you're set for life," he smiled and was rewarded by a shy smile from Chris.

"I like treacle tart," he said softly.

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Hermione stared at Chris who looked uncomfortable at her staring.

"Wow."

Chris nodded.

“That’s- that’s... wow.”

“Yeah,” Chris shrugged his eyebrows in an awkward way.

“You have parents- I mean- of course you have parents, you always had parents, everyone has parents but now you actually *have* parents,” Hermione sighed and rubbed her temple. “I don’t know what I’m saying.”

“Never thought the day would come- ouch!” he rubbed his arm where Hermione just smacked him. Chris had taken her to the Room of Requirements to tell her everything. Normally he, Ron and Hermione would have just closed themselves in his dormitory when the other three had left. But now Ron wasn’t with them and Chris didn’t want to have to remind himself of that fact because he had wanted to tell Ron too that he had parents, and a brother and apparently cousins and the works. Because Ron had been his family first. But Ron wasn’t there, only Hermione was here and Chris decided that he wanted to tell her away from everybody. So he brought her to his new found Room for whenever one wanted privacy. And the room had turned into a replica of the lake, and Chris couldn’t help but notice that they were seated in the exact same position he and Wyatt had been.

“So, how are they?” she asked.

Chris shrugged, “Dunno, just met them.”

“Yes, but you’re excited right?”

Chris looked at her and opened his mouth. He closed it, thought a little and then said, “I don’t know. I mean, my parents, my adoptive parent. They died for me. I can’t just pretend they didn’t exist- but at the same time. Mrs. Halliwell, she said she *wanted* me- do you understand?”

"I think the Potters wanted you too, Chris. And you're not pretending they didn't exist just because you are acknowledging that the Halliwells or are they the Wyatts? Well doesn't matter- that Leo and Piper are your parents too."

"I guess," Chris shrugged tearing some of the grass from the ground. Not really knowing how to feel.

"Why don't you just get to know them first?"

"That's what Mr. Wyatt- Leo said. He told me to call them Leo and Piper."

Hermione nodded looking at her friend, her brain working on possible ways to help him adjust. She just needed to check something in the library.

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"Mrs. Halliwell!" Piper heard the call from behind her. She turned around and saw Hermione Granger run towards her with a bunch of books.

"Hi, er-" the girl bit her lip. "I read that your younger sister wasn't raised with you."

Piper frowned, what the hell did she bring that up for?

"Yes, my mother and Paige's father were afraid of the Elders reaction to a half-Whitelighter child and had to give her away for adoption."

"Yes, I read that. That she only met you later. I bet she had a hard time accepting her new parents without feeling like she was betraying her adoptive ones," Hermione mused.

"Oh, yes," Piper chuckled. "Sam would tell you the stories. Mom didn't have much trouble but I think it's because she was dead but Sam- oh my. Took a while for her to call him da- oh," realization dawned on Piper and she smiled at the girl. "Thank you," she said nodding and Hermione turned around satisfied walking to her next class.

Piper ran to her quarters pulling her cell phone out and dialing Paige's number. She should have thought of that. Who better than Paige to help Chris?

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Paige upturned every paper on her living room table not finding her phone; well the ringing was coming from here. After lifting another folder she finally found it.

"Ha! Gotcha! Hello!"

"Paige! I need you!" Piper's frantic voice came from the phone.

"There's a demon attack," Paige was suddenly alert. Even after all these years of relative peace the sisters still had those years of constant fight ingrained into them.

"What? No, I need you to bond with Chris. Help him."

"Okay," Paige said slowly. She was dying to see her nephew but this sudden request from Piper was at least weird. She, just as Phoebe, had thought that Piper and Leo would have wanted to be able to bond with Chris before the rest of the family came barging in, in their not very subtle way. "Why?"

"Because you can relate with him. He- he isn't fairing very well with the news. He keeps calling me Mrs. Halliwell," Paige smiled. She could hear the frown her sister was sporting from her in her voice, and not only that, she was also reminded of calling Grams Mrs. Halliwell when she first met her and refusing to call her differently because of her grandmother.

"I get it. What do you say I meet him this Friday when I orb there to get the students assignments?"

"Yes, please, please. Can't you come earlier?"

“Only if you want Magic School to blow up,” she said and then she frowned at her “baby-sitter” who was being climbed on like a mountain by her ten-year old-son and seven-year-old twin daughters. Up until now she had focused on her Whitelighter duties which truth be told had allowed her to be home for the kids a lot. But having to take over Leo she had to ask for help with the children, but the problem was, this baby-sitter had a lot of trouble being stern and not caving to the children. “Your dad is spoiling my children!” she whined and Piper laughed. “Hey! I’m serious here!”

“How’s Chris?” Victor asked as he submerged from under the kids.

“She hasn’t said yet,” Paige told him. “I’m passing the phone to your dad. Bye,” and she handed the phone before Piper could protest.

“How’s my grandson? How are you?”

That was all Piper needed to start telling her father everything that had happened since they arrived.

--

Chris decided that uncomfortable with his new parents or not he was going to talk to his new father about training to block his empathy. The first day of classes after the Goblet spit his name was a nightmare. If it wasn’t enough that three quarters of the school were being openly hostile with him he also had to endure reading their hostile feelings. He got a little mollified by the Gryffindors at least, who were either cheering him up or staying quiet. Even though Chris knew from their feelings that many suspected him, at least they didn’t attack him. Just ignored him. Like Ron, who was exuding jealousy and resentment. Unfortunately Hermione said he couldn’t give Ron a good kick in the butt.

So, that is why on his free period Chris decided to take the chance and attend one of the Magic School classes. After all, it was his heritage too. He quietly got into the classroom and listened as Leo explained the history behind Greek mythology. He sat at a desk in the back and was quickly enthralled by the whole tale. He wished Binns class was this interesting. He didn't understand why Dumbledore kept Binns, even Snape teaching that class would be better. Chris had to admit, that Snape might be horrible, but his lectures weren't dull.

And neither was Leo's. And to hear at the end of how his new mother and aunts defeated the Titans just fifteen years previously left him gobsmacked. Especially as Leo explained to the class his role in the matter, or better Future Chris's role. But unfortunately the class did end. And when the students started to get up to leave one of the Magic School students noticed him seated in the back.

"What do you think you're doing here?" the boy asked aggressively approaching Chris's desk.

"We were invited to watch your classes just like you were invited to watch ours," a blond girl Chris had seen a few times with Ginny Weasley answered with a dreamy expression from a seat in front of Chris.

"I wasn't speaking to you squirt," the boy sneered at the girl. "I was talking to the little cheater brat over the-"

"Is there a problem here?" Leo's voice asked sternly. "I trust you did not forget that the whole purpose of this Tournament is to promote better understanding between both worlds Mr. Smith. Which is why the Hogwarts students such as Ms.-" Leo nodded his head towards the girl.

"Lovegood," she answered as though she had no idea that tempers were rising.

“Ms. Lovegood and Mr. Potter are more than welcome to listen into our classes, as well as you theirs. I hope you will.”

“Of course Leo,” the boy said with a tight smile not wanting to get in trouble. He turned around and glared at Chris letting it clear that no matter what he was not welcome there.

“I really enjoyed this class Professor,” Ms. Lovegood said as she picked her bag. “Keeps the Nargles away,” and with that she left leaving a bewildered Leo and Chris behind.

“The what now?”

“I have no idea,” Chris said and as he noticed the last student leave he asked Leo. “Uhm, you know how you said you could teach me to block my empathy out. I really need that now.”

Leo looked at Chris and smiled, “Sure, I’ll talk to Phoebe. With all that’s happened I kind of forgot but I’ll see if she can pop by.”

“Isn’t she in San Francisco?” Chris asked frowning.

“Yes, but she does have a sister, a husband, nephews, nieces and daughters who can all orb in one way or another,” Leo smirked. “You’ll find out that distance isn’t much of an issue in our family.”

Chris nodded awkwardly and tried to smile but it came out more like a grimace. Leo didn’t mind. He knew Chris would need time to get used to them. Right now he’d just bask in the great feeling that his son came for him for help.

--

Chris licked his lips nervously. He had closed the dorm door just in case, even though he had checked that all the other boys were engrossed in the Common Room. He was sitting cross legged on his bed and looking nervously at the mirror in his hand.

“Sirius,” he whispered but at first nothing happened. Disappointed he was about to put the mirror away when Sirius’s voice came from the mirror.

“You know, you gotta speak up! Lucky for you that I’ve been waiting for you to call and had it out of my pocket or I’d never hear you.”

Chris smiled widely and looked at the mirror to see Sirius’s grinning face.

“Hi.”

“Hi pup. So, what’s up?”

“Er- I wanted to apologize for yesterday. To you and Remus, I mean. I shouldn’t have bolted like that. It was rude of me.”

“Don’t worry. We understand. I guess that if you have this than you talked to them. Say you did.”

“Yeah- I mean- at first I talked to Wyatt. He’s my brother you know?” Sirius nodded and Chris felt stupid. Of course he knew, “Yeah, well, then I went with him to talk to Mrs. Halliwell and Mr. Wyatt.”

“I’m glad you did,” Sirius said. “You deserve a family,” he said even though he had wanted to be that family to Chris.

“But, you’re my family right. I mean- you’re still my godfather and Remus- unless you don’t want to- of course I understand,” Chris nodded sadly.

“Hey, hey, hey! Stop that! Of course we are! Nothing changed, you just got more family! Don’t think you can get rid of us that easily! Moony is very clingy!” Sirius rushed to assure Chris admitting silently to himself that Chris’s words did wonders to appease his own doubts. The relieved smile Chris gave him just added to his own smile.

“So, how have things been going? Any clue at what the First Task might be?”

“No,” Chris shook his head. “And everything is horrible. Ron still hates me, he’s being a stupid prat, and everyone hates me, even Professor Sprout, and she was always nice to me, now she hates me. And the only thing that was good was that I found a way to block out the empathy thing-“

“Empathy?” Sirius asked.

“Oh, yeah, I didn’t tell you,” and Chris proceeded to explain how he had been able to tell what people were feeling ever since he was little and had thought that it was common for wizards to do that until he met Olivia, and how Olivia had taken him to Leo who promised to talk to Phoebe Halliwell and that after a whole day of dealing with the student population and Ron hating him and being a stupid prat, Chris went to talk to Leo again.

“It’s okay I asked him for help right? I didn’t ask you because I didn’t know it wasn’t normal before-“

“Chris, Chris, you did right. And it is normal. You’re birth mother was a Wiccan witch. After centuries of separation our magic has developed differently which is why we don’t develop active powers that don’t require a wand to focus. But your genes come from Piper and Leo. You’ll probably have more than one active power and they can help you in ways I can’t with that.” Truth be told it cost Sirius to admit that but he wouldn’t let Chris think he couldn’t go for any of them for help because he would hurt someone. “Anything else happened?”

“Yeah, Ron hates me- he’s being a stupid prat.”

“You’ve mentioned it one or two hundred times,” Sirius chuckled.

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**A/N-Thanks for reviewing!**

## Chapter 9- The Aunts

There was a knock on the door and before she could reply her sister happily hopped inside the office. Paige frowned at her happy bubbly face. So, yes, she might be the youngest sister, but she was acting Headmistress now, show a little respect people!

Phoebe either decided to ignore the glare or just didn't get the message and sat across from her leaning on her desk.

"I'm going with you on Friday! What do you think I should wear? They say it's cold up there, and I want Chris to like me, but I don't want him to think I'm too serious. I can be a cool aunt--"

"Phoebe!" Paige cried cutting Phoebe's babbling. "What are you rambling about?"

"Oh," Phoebe squirmed excited. "Leo just called. Apparently, Chris is an Empath and he asked me to help him."

"He's an Empath?" Paige mused. "Hum, explains a lot. How he knew the right thing to say to get us to do what he wanted."

"I know," Phoebe nodded. "Also why he wanted us to take the potion so badly. I mean, there must have been some feelings rolling around there that he mustn't have enjoyed at all," she sniggered remembering how horny they had been back then. All three of them having dating issues.

"And some that might have hurt him too," Paige grimaced. "Does Piper know?"

"Leo said he told her last night."

"Guess Piper will be needing some sister time then too."

"Probably."

“Then it’s good we’re both going, oh, and give up,” Paige looked at her seriously. “I am the cool aunt,” she preened.

“Says who?” Phoebe looked offended.

“Chris! He said I was his favorite!”

“No he didn’t!”

“He said he came to me for money!”

“So! That’s just prove you’re easy to get money from! Not that you were his favorite!”

“It so proves it!”

“Does not”

“Does so!”

And that very mature argument went on for quite a while only to be interrupted by a very amused student.

--

Chris had been trying to hide behind his homework in a corner of the Gryffindor common room. This week had been a nightmare and it wasn’t over yet. The only highlight had been Hagrid telling him he believed in him and of course, seeing Malfoy being dragged around by a Blast-Ended-Skrewt. But other than that, hostility was still running high. And to help his bright week he had been unable to master the Summoning Spell and Professor Trelawney kept predicting his death with even more certainty than usual. Which he didn’t need any help with, Sirius had talked to him at length through the mirror about how dangerous this Tasks would be and how careful he had to be. Sirius seemed to think Karkaroff was the best candidate for having put his name in the Goblet, but Remus, who had joined the conversation later, seemed

to think Karkaroff would have tried something more subtle, because he would know he'd be the first suspect. Which just meant that they didn't know who had put his name in and Remus still thought Karkaroff might try something else. Just peachy!

Then there was his new family, Chris had to be honest with himself and admit he had hid with Hermione for most of the week to try and avoid Leo and Piper. He just didn't know how to act around them. With Wyatt it had been easier. Or maybe it just had been harder to avoid him because Wyatt would just unceremoniously plop himself next to Chris. How Wyatt always knew where he was was a mystery Chris didn't know.

But also being honest with himself he didn't mind much. Wyatt didn't try to force things. Try to get mushy or look at him like all he wanted to do was hug him to death, which Piper did a lot. She hadn't yet, but she looked like she wanted it badly. Wyatt just acted like Chris was an old friend, just another one of the guys. And he had to admit that Wyatt and Hermione were making all the school's hostility much more bearable. He was almost like Ron, almost...but he wasn't Ron.

And speaking of the blond boy.

"I think Snape is a vampire," the boy in question said as he fell on a chair next to Chris. Chris just looked at him.

"Many students before you have tried to prove that and failed. He is just a mean, horrible teacher."

"But he is- He just- Argh! How can anyone learn with him? So okay, I've never been great at potions- not like mom is, but I'm pretty sure I'm passable. No teacher has called me an incompetent fool to the extent Snape has!"

Chris looked at Wyatt, "Then why did you decide to attend his class?"

Wyatt scowled, "Mom and dad are being stretched really thin having to teach everything by themselves. If you add that I am a year behind the students that came, that's two years worth of magical and regular curriculum for them to help us with. So dad made a deal with Dumbledore. The classes that are mostly similar for both worlds we'll attend with the Hogwarts students. Unfortunately, Potions is one of those. And mom is just left to teaching whatever potion wasn't covered in Snape's class, which she admitted, weren't many."

"No?" Chris asked curiously. "I thought there would be hundreds of them."

"No," Wyatt shook his head. "For Wiccan witches potions are mainly used to vanquish, and there is no way you can memorize every vanquishing potion out there. So we cover the basics so we can understand how ingredients work together, and we can follow the instruction easily when needed and know what we can and can't mix together whenever we have to create a new potion, we'll know what could possibly be used. By my grade, that has been mostly covered. The potions that are not vanquishing potions that we use are also used by your world. So actually, by attending Snape's class we're learning more than if we had our regular class, which would be mostly revision and going through the most important potions. We also have Herbology with the Hogwarts students, to learn more about the ingredients themselves. In Magic School Herbology is also something mostly theoretical. This hands on experience is new to us."

Chris nodded. It made sense and made the experience of travelling to Hogwarts more interesting, "Don't worry, I'm pants at potions too."

Wyatt looked at Chris and frowned. He had heard from his mother that Future Chris was quite good at potions, "Are you sure it's not the teacher?"

Chris shrugged, "It could be. Snape isn't very encouraging."

“You might need a new one,” Wyatt said already thinking of a way for Piper to bond with Chris, and speaking of Piper he reminded himself, “Oh, we’re supposed to have dinner at o-“ he stopped eyeing the other students in the room, “my parent’s quarters tomorrow. They wanted to invite you. They’ve liked you a lot,” he said brightly, and then leaning closer he whispered, “The Aunts are coming tomorrow and they want to meet you.”

“What?” Chris hissed.

“The Aunts, mom’s sisters. Don’t worry they’re nice,” Wyatt said frowning at Chris but Chris was worried nonetheless. He hadn’t had good experiences with aunts. Who knew how these would be?

“And mom said to dress nicely, you know? She wants to flaunt you around.”

Dress nicely! How was he supposed to dress nicely with Dudley’s hand me downs? Chris groaned, how was he going to survive this?

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“Your students seem to be fairing well with classes Professor Wyatt,” Dumbledore said pleasantly over the tea they were having in his office.

“Please call me Leo professor.”

“Only if you call me Albus,” Dumbledore said smiling and Leo nodded towards the man.

“Fair enough. Yes they are. I haven’t had much complaints and letting our students have classes with your students has helped a lot. Thank you.”

“I was very pleased when you asked. I hope many of my students take the chance to attend your classes.”

"I've had quite a few, from many different years. Mostly Ravenclaws," Leo smirked and Dumbledore chuckled.

"They are the most academic ones," Dumbledore nodded and rested his teacup on his desk. He looked up at Leo from across the desk. "Unfortunately Leo, I haven't called you here only for pleasantries. I've called you here to warn you. Tomorrow is the Weighing of the Wands and though your student has no wand to be weighed she will be required to attend," Leo nodded. He knew this. "The Daily Prophet is sending representative, which unfortunately happens to be Rita Skeeter and she is... how can I put this? She is known for her venomous quill," Dumbledore warned Leo. "And I hope whatever she might do does not reflect badly on the rest of the Wizarding World."

"Thank you Headmaster," Leo said pleasantly understanding Dumbledore's preventive measure by warning him to be careful around this woman. But then a thought struck him. All the Champions would have their Heads with them, would Dumbledore be there for Cedric and Chris? Would he stop Skeeter? "I hope you gave your champions the same warning."

"Oh, they know Rita Skeeter well enough to be careful," Dumbledore said pleasantly and Leo kept the smile while fuming inside. Cedric might, his father working in the Ministry and all but Leo was sure Chris didn't.

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"And that woman! The gall! I mean who does she think she is?"

"Okay honey! I know! But the boys will be here soon!" Piper tried to make Leo stop pacing and straighten his shirt. It had already been an ordeal to get him to get ready. The man had ranted all throughout his shower and dressing up. Phoebe and Paige, who had arrived a few minutes earlier, were watching him amused from the couch. Piper glared at them. She had managed to

calm Leo down, but then Paige asked how their day had been and got Leo to rant all over again.

They had planned to warn Chris about Rita Skeeter, but unfortunately they had not managed to talk to him before class and by the time Leo had left Dumbledore's office the previous night it had been past curfew. So they decided to be there extra early to be able to catch Chris before the wand weighing. As predicted the students had arrived before the Headmasters and Headmistress. Piper had waited for Chris outside and when she had seen him arriving with a younger blond boy she had smiled at them.

"Oh, there you are," she said brightly. "Everyone is waiting."

"Okay, er- thanks Colin."

"Good luck Harry," Colin smiled and had just looked at them. Chris had started to go inside but Piper touched his arm lightly and was very glad her son was quick on the intake and stopped.

"Don't you have classes to get back to Colin?" she asked gently.

Colin looked flustered and dropped his smile embarrassed, "Oh, yes. Sorry! Oh, McGonagall is going to kill me! I was just supposed to drop the message. Not bring you here!"

"I'm sure she won't. Here," Piper grabbed the bag she was holding and took out a little pad writing a quick note. "Give her this," she said giving Colin the note. "Tell her you were just helping C-Harry," she corrected at the last moment not wanting to seem intimate with Chris.

Colin smiled, "Thanks Mrs. Halliwell," and ran off.

"Problems?" Chris asked.

"Yes," Piper answered in a whisper. "There's a reporter in there that likes her scandal, and I bet she'd like nothing more than a piece of the Boy-Who-Lived. Dumbledore isn't there yet. So

stick with us and if anyone asks we just say you and Wyatt are becoming friends," which wasn't a secret since the blond witch had been seen with Chris and Hermione just as much as with the twins and Cedric throughout the week.

Chris had nodded and everything seemed to have been going smoothly until Rita Skeeter was more persistent than they expected and when she had tried to drag Chris away from the room Piper had stepped in and said.

"Mr. Potter is a minor, I'm sure his guardians wouldn't appreciate him being interviewed without their presence."

"Well, yes," the woman had given her a simpering smile. "But they're muggles. They don't understand our ways so I just thought I'd-"

"Break the law? I'm pretty sure that even in the Wizarding world interviewing a minor without parental consent must be illegal. Why don't we go check?"

"Well, I say," Skeeter had at first been flustered but then her eyes had turned interested. "You seem awfully concerned about young Mr. Potter. Maybe trying to fulfill a motherly role he so desperately yearns for? Trying to replace your lost son for Mr. Potter and diminishing the pain by-"

"Wiccan witches protect the innocent Ms. Skeeter, and I happen to think Harry Potter is an innocent, in much need of protection," Piper said through gritted teeth.

"Really, so you don't think young Mr. Potter put his name in the Goblet in a desperate plea for attention due to his lack of a parental figure? How do you feel Mr. Potter knowing that you are a mere child of twelve competing with Champions much more experienced than yourself?"

"I'm fourteen!" Chris had cried indignantly. But Skeeter had not relented. Twisting each word any of them said. Leo had joined in to try and help and she had the gall to ask him if his

defense of Chris wasn't spurred by his own known record of rule breaking by marrying one of his charges.

She had only shut up when Dumbledore arrived, and the fact that he was the last to arrive just let Leo even more certain that he had wanted to let Chris deal with her alone for a while before he swooped in to save him, he just wasn't sure what he gained with that. All in all the Wand Weighing was a very tense affair especially with Karkaroff and Maxime not liking Rita Skeeter practically ignoring their champions.

A knock came from the door and Paige and Phoebe practically bounced on their seats as Piper went to open it.

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A/N- Thanks for reviewing!

## **Chapter 10- Getting to know your son's schooling**

Chris listened more than talked during the first part of the dinner. Piper had opened the door enthusiastically and hugged Wyatt. She had made a move to hug Chris but Chris took a step back on reflex and she held herself back but Chris could see the hurt in her eye. He felt awful about causing it but to be honest he didn't remember anyone but Hermione hugging him and he had acted on instinct afraid of the unknown or how to act. Where you supposed to hug back? He'd watch Wyatt more attentively the next time so he'd know.

His Aunts had also proceeded to hugging Wyatt as if they hadn't seen him for years instead of just the week they'd been away but had contended to shaking Chris's hand, probably taking into account what happened with Piper. Though Chris could swear that the Aunt that was introduced as Paige had to hold Phoebe back.

There was a table in the small living room of their quarters that had been set up for them and Piper had quickly ushered everyone to seat. And the dinner started with very mild conversation about how classes were and what had happened in Magic School that week. Chris learned that Paige was half-Whitelighter and had taken over Leo at Magic School and that Phoebe was an advice columnist in a prominent newspaper. He heard stories about his six cousins and the two acting grandfathers, or as Paige joked, rivaling grandfathers. Which where Victor, who was Piper and Phoebe's father and Sam, who was Paige's.

"The kids are too close with each other, and they just decided to call them both grandpa. Since neither Coop nor Henry have living parents we never minded. But they're always competing," Phoebe snickered at some of the older men's antics when trying to prove which was the coolest grandfather.

“I was afraid of how I’d get the food,” Piper confided during desert. “But then I told Dumbledore that I wanted to have dinner with my sisters and he directed me to the kitchens. It’s amazing! I’d never seen house-elves before. I felt a little overwhelmed.”

Chris had never met the Hogwarts house-elves and these days he had learned to be very careful when mentioning them to Hermione but he figured he could relate to Piper if they were anything like Dobby.

“Well,” Paige said with an expression of bliss. “If they all cook like this, I’m not complaining.” Chris noticed that Piper glared at her and it was a second before she hastily added, “Nowhere near as good as you, but good.”

“Mom’s a little bit vain when it comes to her cooking,” Wyatt whispered to Chris who nodded. Aunt Petunia liked being praised for her food. And Chris had to admit that she did cook well. Cooking was one of the chores Aunt Petunia usually shared with Chris, she didn’t usually do it all by herself unless Chris had been occupied with another chore but she never really trusted Chris to cook the food alone. It was also one of the chores Chris actually enjoyed, even with Aunt Petunia hovering and tutting.

“By the way,” Leo chuckled. “You apparently have a fan there Chris.”

“I’ve never met the Hogwarts’ house-elves,” he said surprised.

“Oh, this one was new there, he said,” Leo explained trying to remember. “Piper wanted to know if they knew what you liked to eat. We told Dumbledore Wyatt had invited you. We didn’t want anyone making a fuss about you missing dinner. What did he say his name was?”

“Dobby,” Piper grinned. “He kept calling you the great Harry Potter.”

“Dobby? Dobby is working at Hogwarts?”

“You know him?” Phoebe asked him interested.

“Yes,” Chris nodded. “He was the Malfoy’s house-elf, I er-helped him get rid of them at the end of second year. He tried to save me from the Basilisk and Riddle’s diary.” He decided not to go into the details about house-elf slavery as to not turn this dinner into a recruitment center for SPEW. As a Muggle raised, and mainly the Dursley’s house-elf, he did agree with Hermione and had been appalled at the slavery. But he thought Hermione was going at it the wrong way. You can’t just come from another culture and start criticizing everything from the Wizarding world without a care in the world. And the way she was going about it was quite antagonistic. You had to be smooth. People don’t like change and their instinct reaction is to get defensive. That’s something he learned with Aunt Petunia too. Whenever she wanted changes she would go at Uncle Vernon quite smoothly. A comment here, another there and at the end make it look like it had been all his idea. His Aunt would have made a fine Slytherin in his opinion.

“What’s a Basilisk?” Wyatt asked curiously.

“Er- never mind. S’ nothing,” Chris shrugged.

“Leo doesn’t look like it’s nothing,” Paige pointed out at Leo who was gaping at Chris with his fork hovering mid way to his mouth.

“S’ just a snake,” Chris tried to change the subject.

“The largest snake in the world which can kill with its stare,” Leo blurted.

“WHAT?” Piper shrieked. “Why, why would you be involved with that?”

“Uhm, er- wasn’t exactly my fault,” Chris tried to shake the now shocked looks of all the people at the table. Why did he open his big mouth?

Leo slowly put down his fork and knife and crossed his arms on the table. “Why don’t you explain to us what happened?”

Chris sighed and bit his lips nervously. Really, why didn't Sirius or Remus explain it to them? He cautiously started the tale of his second year, which led to a lot of pacing, ranting and to both Chris's and Wyatt's, who had moved to the couch, amusement; swearing. Unfortunately he made the mistake of mentioning that that was the second time he had met Voldemort which led to him explaining his first year, deftly avoiding how he learned he was a Wizard, no need to bring the Dursleys up, and the Quidditch matches, Wyatt had begged him not to let Piper know about Quidditch before he had flown, and that led to even more pacing, ranting and to Chris's shock Piper hugging him without restraint. He had just stayed stiff and unmoving until she decided to let him go. When she did, he felt awkward, at the same time that he hadn't know how to react he felt as if something was missing after she let him go.

Wyatt, Chris was very thankful to him, had managed to calm everyone down, after all, what was done was done and if they didn't want Dumbledore to find out about Chris they couldn't very well barge in and explode him limb by limb as Piper had suggested.

So, in a somewhat tense mood Phoebe had turned to Chris asking about his empathy and Chris had explained how he knew what people were feeling since he was little and asked if he could block it out.

"You can. I learned with my husband's help. He is a cupid and Empathic too. Since he had dealt with his powers longer than I he helped me when I was pregnant with my first child. I think that because Prue had it from both sides she must have had some empathy even in the womb and I was channeling it and having my empathy being boosted. I was going nuts. Before that I could only feel what people close to me were feeling, but then. I could sense the whole floor at work. So he taught me to shut everyone out. I can teach you too. It's nice to be alone with ones feelings every now and then," she winked at him and he smiled. "But it's something you have to be doing actively so it's tiring to keep it up all the time. I just use it when tempers are flying high."

Chris nodded seriously, "But I can learn right? It would be really useful when the school is hating me. Gets annoying to feel that everywhere I go."

Phoebe smiled sadly at him, "Tell you what. I brought some books from Magic School on meditation. You have to learn that first. So I'll tell you what to read and next Friday I'll come with Paige again and we can practice some meditation. When you can get in a state to calm your own emotions we can start with you blocking everyone else's. It's hard to do that.

Especially with someone so young. But I'm sure you'll manage," and she knew he would because even before they took the potion Future Chris had an iron grip on his emotions and she could very rarely get a wisp from him.

Chris smiled excited and Phoebe smiled pleased and turned to give Paige a smug look when she noticed Paige frowning at Chris.

"I didn't imagine the dress code here being so rigid," Paige commented sizing Chris's school uniform up. Wyatt had dressed casually, too casually for Piper's taste for what she had wanted to be a flaunting dinner. His t-shirt had been an old one he loved and that Piper had tried to get rid of many times. Chris on the other hand had showed up in his school uniform, tie and all, minus the robe. Paige had always been against uniforms in Magic School, too stifling she said. So even though no one had commented, trust her to decide to.

Chris bit his lips nervously but didn't answer. Piper on the other hand frowned, "I've seen the other students dressing casually after class. But now that you mention I've never seen you dressing casually Chris."

Well duh, like he needed to give Malfoy more ammo! He never used his clothes in school, unless he was sure his robes were completely covering them.

"Chris?" Piper prodded. "Why didn't you put on something casual?"

“You said to dress nicely,” there, he refused to give any more explanation than that.

Piper chuckled, “Yes, nicely. But I didn’t mean a tie. I was thinking more on the lines of a newer t-shirt and jeans,” she shot Wyatt an annoyed look and Wyatt just smiled back at her innocently.

“If Chris likes wearing his uniform let him,” Wyatt tried to save his brother. He was getting some vibes of embarrassment and nervousness from the boy.

“Sure he can, I was just wondering why,” Piper mused. “If you like your uniform it’s more than okay for you to use it.”

Well, *like* was a strong word. It was more like he didn’t have much else to wear. Sure Mrs. Weasley had bought him dress robes but that was a bit too much for the occasion, Chris had thought.

“Okay,” Chris said vaguely. But Phoebe had narrowed her eyes at him.

“You don’t like them, so why wear them?”

“Aunt Phoebe,” Wyatt warned. Trust the Empath to but in.

Chris shrugged, but Phoebe pressed on, “Whatever your embarrassed about don’t. We won’t judge.”

The mortification coming through the bond was drowning Wyatt, they would have to start learning to block each other out. He was sure the only reason Chris hadn’t figured the bond out was because he must think it was part of his empathy. Maybe Aunt Phoebe’s lessons would help.

“I’m not,” Chris tried to smile feebly. “S’ just Piper said to dress nicely.”

A horrible thought went through Leo’s mind, “Do you have nice clothes to wear?”

And everyone in the room knew the answer even without being able to know what Chris was feeling just by the awkward and embarrassed look in his face.

"I see," Piper said coolly.

"It's just I don't want to spend too much because my vault is all I have and-"

"You misunderstand me Chris," Piper said calmly, "This is neither your fault nor your responsibility. Your *guardians*," and Piper spat the word out as an insult, "get an allowance for you every month, that from what Sirius told us, is more than enough to provide for you comfortably. Sirius also said you actually have more to inherit than your trust vault but you'll only be able to access that once you are of age, until then he is the executor. Regardless of that, your guardians should have seen to that you had proper clothing. But we will remedy that."

And what would be done to remedy that Chris never did find out because out of the blue, Paige commented. "You talk funny," as if the tension hadn't been high in the room and Chris had the impression she did it on purpose.

"I could say the same about you," he smirked.

"Touché", she nodded towards him but Chris could see she was amused. He figured that to her it might be even weirder her nephew having a different accent since she was used to hearing Future him talk in an American accent. Whatever reason she had for making that comment it did break the tension and led to lighter conversation. All in all Chris had to admit he had a good time with them. He especially liked how Paige didn't refer to Leo and Piper as 'your mom and dad' which Phoebe did a few times but stopped after a pointed look from Paige. Chris had no idea why Paige did it but he was glad for her help. He wasn't ready to see anyone else other than James and Lily as mom and dad.

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As soon as the boys left Piper went directly to the Fireplace and threw a handful of powder in it. Paige and Phoebe were about to make fun of the strange behavior when Piper crouched down and put her head in the fire and they jumped to stop her just to be stopped by Leo.

"It's okay. The fire won't hurt her. Remus showed her how to use it."

And although all they could see was Piper's butt sticking out of the fireplace they could hear what the people on the other side were saying.

"You never told me about the Chamber of Secrets and the Basilisk and-" Piper was ranting without even taking the time to say hello when she was interrupted by two shrieks from Remus and Sirius:

*"There's a Basilisk?"*

*"There's a Chamber?"*

"You didn't know?" Piper asked. "But you told me what happened in his third year."

"And that's all we know!"

"Remus," Leo supplied to the bewildered sisters.

"I heard rumors that he had gotten himself in a bit of trouble his first two years but that's all. I thought he had gotten caught out of bounds out of hours! You know, kid's stuff!"

"Piper," the other voice who had to be Sirius said. "Why don't you step through so you can explain this properly?"

"Just a sec," Piper pulled her head out of the fireplace and asked her sisters. "Will you wait till we're back?"

“Sure,” Paige nodded and Piper and Leo took more powder and with a yell of “Lupin’s cottage” they were both gone. Phoebe stared at the fire and then turned to Paige.

“That was weird. And coming from us that is saying something.”

Over an hour later Piper and Leo came back. Apparently Sirius and Remus’s reaction to the tale of Chris’s first two years had been quite similar to their own. Leo had then made an excuse that he was going to shower to give the sisters some alone time but before he left Paige stopped him.

“Just a second Leo. Did Wyatt mention anything he sensed from Chris?”

Leo stopped mid way to the bedroom and shook his head, “No, why?”

Paige looked at his sisters and Leo, “Because I sensed something different from him. Different from what I was used to sensing from future him.”

“Can’t that be the blood adoption?” Phoebe asked.

“I don’t know. I mean- I sensed Chris, and he was Chris- but you’re right there was something more to Chris, but then there was something else too. Like another presence that had nothing to do with him,” Paige struggled to explain.

“Another presence?” Piper asked worried.

“Yeah,” Paige nodded. “Like he had two souls in him or something. But it was weird, because when I focused on him. Chris, you know, what is him, was the strongest presence and the other one was faint, and it was isolated- and –er,” Leo notice she wasn’t sure of herself, or maybe afraid of what she’d say. After all these years Paige had a much higher grasp of her Whitelighter side and if she said that the presence was isolated to just a part of Chris than it was.

“Where Paige?” Leo asked dreading the answer. After the story about the diary with a piece of Voldemort’s soul his mind was jumping to one only conclusion and if she said what he thought she would say they were in big trouble.

“His scar,” she winced.

“What, what does that mean?” Piper asked Leo frantically.

“I’m not sure. I need to look something up,” He looked at Phoebe and Piper. “Do you two mind if Paige and I pop by Magic School? I know a book there that might help.”

“No,” Piper shook her head. “Go!” she urged them and Leo walked away with Paige, all his thoughts of resting flying out the window.

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A/N- Thanks for reviewing!

## Chapter 11- A talk about souls

Leo closed the book with a sigh and rubbed his eyes resting his elbows on the table. He had researched everything he could about souls and how they worked ever since Future Chris died. He wanted to know his baby boy would be safe and that he wouldn't be affected by his other self dying. All his research had not given him much on that account since time-travel was tricky and Chris's case was unique. But it had made him come across a lot of information that he wouldn't have come across otherwise. Such as Horcruxes, one of the darkest kinds of magic there was. A kind of magic that explained why, when hit by the rebounding killing curse, Voldemort hadn't completely died. He had already thought of that when Chris told him about the diary and figured the diary must have been a Horcrux. But Voldemort had to have had more than one or else the piece of his soul that wasn't corporeal would have moved on when Chris destroyed the diary. Which if Chris's dreams were right, he hadn't.

The question was; how many Horcruxes were out there or was Chris all that was keeping Voldemort anchored to the world? He didn't believe so, he thought Voldemort might have wanted to use Chris's death to create a Horcrux and unintentionally made Chris into one. Because unfortunately, there was no denying it. It explained the dreams, why Chris was a parselmouth and the presence of another soul that Paige felt.

Chris was a Horcrux.

And Leo had no idea how to stop him from being one without destroying the vessel, Chris's body. But he would find a way, but right now he had to think of how he'd tell Piper and the others this.

"Did you find what you were looking for?" Paige asked and Leo gave a start. He hadn't heard her coming into the library.

"Yes," he said heavily.

"That good?" she grimaced. "I popped home to let Henry and the kids know I might take a while to come back home. Are you ready to go back?"

No he wasn't. He'd never be, but he had to.

--

"So, how was dinner?" Hermione asked curiously from over Chris homework at a secluded table in the Gryffindor Common Room.

"Okay," he shrugged extending his hand to get back his essay. "You don't need to do that."

Hermione swatted his hand away, "Of course I do," she dismissed him and Chris smiled lightly, happy with his frail effort to not give her the trouble that would make the fact that he did want her to go over his homework lighter on his conscience. "So, details."

"Dunno. They were all nice," Chris cringed. "I kind of had to explain about first and second year because of something I let slip."

"What?"

"The Basilisk."

"Ouch! How did they react?"

"I expect the same way your parents reacted," Chris said annoyed and Hermione snorted.

"I don't tell my parents what goes on here! They'd never let me come back!"

"Oh," Chris said surprised. "You don't?" Hermione shook her head. "Oh well, there was a lot of pacing and cursing and Piper wanted to barge into Dumbledore's office and explode him limb by limb."

Hermione looked pensively, "Yes, I expect my parents would react in the same way and then withdraw me from school. Why did you say anything?"

"I thought they knew! That Remus and Sirius had told them. They seemed to know about third year."

"I don't think Sirius and Remus know about it anymore than they did," Hermione shrugged.

"Of course they do," Chris snorted not knowing the earful he was about to get from the mirror.

"Anyway, other than that- er-excitement. It was nice, my aunts seemed nice, and Phoebe is going to help me with my empathy and-" he fidgeted with one of the parchments on the table and mumbled something.

"Come again?"

"They're going to buy me clothes."

"About time."

"Hermione!"

"What, those rags you wear do not constitute clothes Chris! Good for them!" she nodded satisfied. Chris heard his name being called in a muffled way and took his bag fumbling for the two-way-mirror. He took it and a very stern looking Remus said firmly:

"Go find a private place for us to talk."

What followed next was a very stern lecture from Remus and Sirius about being reckless and endangering his life, and next time letting the adults deal with the situation.

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"He was an Empath Phoebe," Piper said sadly. They were both seated on the couch and once Piper had calmed down from her rant about Dumbledore they had started talking about Chris.

“Explains a lot. How he was able to manipulate us. He knew what we were feeling. And why he was so interested in us taking the empathy blocking potion. I thought it was to protect his emotions but I only got a whiff of his emotions once. I bet just like me he learned to block himself out to other Empaths if needed. But he probably didn’t want to feel some of our emotions anymore and blocking out is energy consuming. I rarely do it,” Phoebe winked.

“Like me hating him.”

“I was going for the more horny kind of emotions,” Phoebe tried to lighten the mood.

“I didn’t want him to know,” Piper mumbled through tears.

“You didn’t know who he was.”

“He felt that whole time how angry I was with him. How I blamed him for something that wasn’t his fault. His own mother! And when I knew he never felt how much I loved him because of that stupid potion!”

“He knew. He didn’t blame you Piper,” Phoebe pulled her into a hug. “He never did.”

“Didn’t he? Did he really know?” Piper asked worried. “One of the last things I ever said to him was that Wyatt being without Leo while I was in labor was more dangerous than him being eaten by a dinosaur. What if he thought I thought Wyatt was more important than him? What if he thinks that now, because we raised Wyatt? It wasn’t that I thought that, I was just so scared that we hadn’t saved Wyatt, that the future was still dark and I didn’t really want Chris to go there...I wanted him to stay, where I knew he was safe. But he was so determined to leave before he was born that I couldn’t tell him not to.”

“The last thing you told him was that you loved him,” Phoebe said firmly. “And he knew that and besides, no one was more determined than Chris to save Wyatt. Believe me, he must have argued with Leo himself that staying with Wyatt was more important than going with him. He

did, when he sent Leo after Wyatt when he was...," she faltered, "when Gideon had gotten Wyatt."

Piper gave her a small grimace and nodded. She could only hope he had known. She missed that neurotic boy, she wanted him back, but at the same time she never wanted the Chris of now to ever remember his previous life. To ever have that pained look of someone who lost everything. She sighed, why couldn't anything in their life be uncomplicated just for once? She and Phoebe stayed silent for a long time and when Leo and Paige finally came back she knew by the look in his eyes that things were about to get even more complicated.

--

Piper stared at Leo not wanting to believe what he just said.

"You're wrong," she said flatly.

"I want nothing more than to be wrong Piper. But--"

"No buts, you *are* wrong!" she said firmly getting up and pacing. "My son *isn't* one of those Hor-whatever. He *doesn't* have a piece of a murderer's soul in him and he *will not* die again! Do I make myself clear?" she finished yelling at the other three who were looking at her with a mixture of pity and pain.

Leo got up and stopped her pacing by pulling her into an embrace, "You're right. He won't and we will find a way to save him."

"What if we do kill him?" Paige asked and Piper turned around sharply but before she could yell Paige hastened to explain. "Listen up. I heard about that time you were sick and died and Leo brought your soul back before you could cross over. What if we did the same, except we only brought Chris's soul back and Voldemort's moved on."

Phoebe looked at Paige nodding, "Yeah, yeah, what?"

Piper turned to Leo expectantly, "I was a Whitelighter--"

"Paige or Wyatt--"

"Are half-witch. They are not dead. I was, that's why I could move around the spirit realm and guide you back."

"What if we used a spirit? Mom, or Grams, even the Potters?" Phoebe asked.

"Or dad? He's a Whitelighter," Paige added.

"I'm not sure that will work," Leo said. "I think that a big part of me being able to guide Piper back was because I could also heal and because of our bond. I don't know if Sam would be able to guide him back. But-but maybe we can do something along those lines use a spirit that has a bond with him and the Whitelighters in our family together. We'll have to do some research before we even try. This is very dangerous and I will not risk Chris's life unless we are a hundred percent sure this will work. Right now that piece of soul is completely contained. It's not affecting Chris other than giving him some abilities. It's not possessing him. And I know Voldemort can't die while it's there but I won't sacrifice Chris for that."

"No, you're right," Piper nodded. "It's too dangerous. We can't just go at this blindly. We also need to look into other ways of getting that soul out of Chris."

--

The next day, before a meeting they had with the other Heads of Schools Piper and Leo flooded to Remus and Sirius. They felt the two men not only deserved to know but they could help with the research for something in the Wizarding world. Remus's and Sirius's reaction was very similar to theirs. At first plain disbelief, then despair and then anger.

"He knows!" Sirius raged. "He has to! He would have come to the same conclusion when he came across that diary! He's raising Chris as a pig for slaughter!"

“Because of the prophecy?” Leo asked.

“What prophecy?” Remus turned his head sharply to look at Leo.

“You didn’t know? That’s why the Elders asked us to protect Chris. Because there is a prophecy surrounding him and the destruction of Voldemort. I don’t know the words. I don’t even think the Elders know. They just know of the existence of one. I figured that that was why Lily and James went into hiding.”

“If they knew they never told us,” Sirius shook his head. “Dumbledore found out from an informant that Voldemort was targeting them and they went into hiding. But I always figured it was because of them. James and Lily were very active members of the Order before Chris was born. Responsible for bringing down many Death Eaters.”

“James wouldn’t have believed in a prophecy. But he would think there was a chance Voldemort did, and he wouldn’t tell us so Voldemort wouldn’t want to try and get it out from us,” Remus said looking at his hands.

“Maybe Dumbledore never told them why Voldemort was targeting them,” Piper mused.

“No he had to have had to. The only reason James backed off of the fight was because Chris was a target. We thought Chris was a target because Voldemort wanted the whole family, but if Dumbledore wanted to make sure that James would not put a foot out of line he have to have told him that he and Lily weren’t the target,” Sirius said. “or else James would have sent Lily and Chris into hiding and continue his best to try and kill the bastard who was trying to hurt his family. Hiding was just not James,” he smiled sadly. “It’s not that he wouldn’t put his family first, he would. If it was just hiding to not get involved in the war, to not be a target. He would. They already had withdrawn from the fighting since adopting Chris. They had been helping with research and funds. But with his family being the target he would have wanted to stop it, so they could live.”

Leo nodded pensively understanding James's desire to do something. He himself had that urge when Chris was born, after Gideon almost killed Wyatt and killed future Chris, "Dumbledore must think that they'll both end up killing each other somehow and that is why he has Chris so isolated. So ready to sacrifice himself because Chris doesn't think he is worth the same as everyone else," Leo said and was worried Dumbledore was right. He'd seen it before. Chris risking his own existence, giving his life because he thought Wyatt was more important. No, Leo wouldn't have it. Dumbledore might be the war general that needs to put the whole world's needs before the individual but he wasn't. And to him, his family came first. He looked up resolutely and together with Piper, Sirius and Remus they planned out how they would find out how to get rid of the Horcrux and how to find out if Voldemort had more and where they were.

They decided that for now the children shouldn't know. There was no need to burden them. They were the adults. Leo wondered if Wyatt had sensed Voldemort's soul or if the only reason Paige noticed the extra presence was because she knew how Chris's soul felt like, whereas Wyatt was three- years-old when Chris became a Horcrux and couldn't possibly remember. Since Wyatt never mentioned anything he figured he was right.

--

"I told you, Ron has a lot of issues about being overlooked because of his brothers, and now he's jealous," Hermione rolled her eyes. "You just don't understand because you don't have- er- you weren't raised with siblings," Hermione corrected with a look at Wyatt who was nodding in an understanding way. They had come outside and stayed by the lake to flee from the gossiping looks and murmurs. And the mean remarks from the less nicer members of Hogwarts, namely Malfoy.

Rita Skeeter's article had come out the previous morning and to say she embellished Chris's silence and inflated Piper and Leo's remarks was an understatement.

*“With tears in their eyes Piper Halliwell and Harry Potter told me how they have helped each other heal from the terrible losses in their lives.”*

Was just an example of what she had written. She had gone further to digging out the fact that Chris usually hung out with Hermione and made them out to be a couple. The taunting and quoting hadn't stopped since and even Wyatt had been a victim.

“Do you just go picking up any orphan to replace your brother or just the truly pathetic ones?”

Malfoy had jeered just this morning. To top that his detention with Snape the previous night had been horrible and Ron had glared at him and given him the silent treatment the whole time. As if the article had just inflated his rage even more. The only difference was that lately Ron seemed to be glaring at Wyatt too and Chris could feel jealousy and resent coming out of him. Was Ron jealous because Chris had a famous friend? Did he think Chris was seeking more fame by hanging out with Wyatt? Well Wyatt was his brother, and Ron would know that if he wasn't so intent on being a stupid prat.

“You neither,” Chris pointed out to Hermione.

“But she's right. I can relate to Ron,” Wyatt said.

“You were practically raised as an only child too,” Hermione snorted.

“Not in my family, no. You're right. Because of all that happened I was basically the only child until I was about six years old. Almost six, but then,” Wyatt took a deep shuddering breath and had a pained look in his face, “*She* happened.”

“She?” Hermione asked.

“Yes, she's *evil!*”

“Who?” Chris asked curiously.

“Prue.”

“Who’s that?” Hermione asked.

“Our cousin, Aunt Phoebe’s daughter,” Wyatt made a choking sound and then whined, “And she was a girl! My reigning days went out the window.” he made an exaggerated motion with his hand.

“Oh, stop whining,” Hermione huffed but Wyatt looked at her with wide eyes.

“You don’t understand! The Halliwells had been a long line of women. Men were just used to procreate and then discarded. Chris, our cousin Junior and I are considered anomalies. But Prue no, oh no! Finally a girl! It was like she was the first heir of the Halliwell line, and even *mom* cooed over her. She’s evil,” Wyatt nodded firmly.

Hermione and Chris couldn’t help it and burst out laughing at Wyatt’s pout. When they did manage to get control of their laughter Chris looked at his watch and nodded towards Wyatt to get up.

“Let’s go,” he nudged the other two and grabbed his broom and a school broom that had been resting by his side.

“Are you two sure about this?” Hermione asked.

“Of course,” Wyatt said. “It’s ten o’ clock. Mom and dad had a meeting with Dumbledore, Karkaroff and Maxime. They’ll be too busy to look out the window.”

“That’s not what I meant,” Hermione rolled her eyes as they walked towards the Quidditch pitch. “It’s dangerous.”

“He’ll fly with me first Hermione,” Chris said getting on his Firebolt. “Get on behind me Wyatt.”

Wyatt eagerly complied, "Hold tight," Chris said and Wyatt held on to him as if they were on a motorcycle and Chris took off. Wyatt couldn't help himself, he let out a delighted yelp as the wind started roaring through his hair and Chris went further up. He looked down and was amazed at seeing the castle and grounds from up high. He grinned widely! Oh, he so was going to try this on his own!

--

"So, how was your morning?" Piper asked when she met Wyatt in the halls after lunch.

"Nothing much, just playing some Quidditch with Chris and the twins," Wyatt said evasively.

The twins had seen Wyatt and Chris flying from the tower and taken their brooms down to the pitch. After Chris had instructed Wyatt on how to fly on a school broom, which had nothing on Chris's broom, but Wyatt was a little more comfortable with it for his first time flying, and then flying around with him for a while, the twins brought a Quaffle and challenged them to a quick Quidditch game. Wyatt loved it, even though he lost the ball more than once. It was tricky to keep control of the broom and fly at the same time. But he wasn't in Magic School's basketball team for nothing and Chris and the twins' regular positions didn't involve handling the Quaffle either so they were more or less evenly matched.

Piper smiled at him, "That's nice. It's good to share their culture with them. Is Quidditch fun?"

"Great!" Wyatt smiled. "A little bit like basket."

Piper nodded satisfied and Wyatt just hoped his mother didn't kill him too much when she found out he had been on a broom. Oh, and Chris said he heard Sirius had a flying motorcycle! Wyatt wondered if Sirius would let him ride it. He gave his mother his most innocent smile.

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A/N-Thanks for reviewing!

## Chapter 12- The First Task

Time seemed to fly by. Chris started training with Phoebe and had to admit that meditating was a lot harder than it looked. Especially since when Phoebe told him to shut the world out and think of nothing his mind kept drifting to the looming first task. Even though the meditating sessions weren't getting him anywhere he enjoyed the time he spent getting to know his new family. Phoebe came every Friday with Paige and, while Paige and Leo were taking care of Magic School's affairs, they trained. Wyatt showed up a little later, when he knew the training session would be over, and they usually had dinner in the quarters hearing stories of what his cousins and uncles had gotten to that week.

He liked Paige the most, she got him.

"It's overwhelming isn't it? I was used to taking care of myself. Having only myself to answer for and then suddenly I had these two sisters that were giving input in every detail of my life, without me asking, even when I didn't want any, especially if I didn't want any," she told him when Piper had announced to him that in the next Hogsmead weekend they'd orb to Muggle London unseen so they could buy Chris some decent clothes. He had been mortified and tried to say they didn't need to but Piper just brushed him off.

Then on one of the dinners when they kept making fun of Paige she sighed and asked, "Why didn't I run the other way when you found me?"

"You did," Phoebe snorted. "We were faster," she winked at Chris.

On the promised Hogsmead weekend, which just happened to be the last weekend before the First Task, Chris went to Hogsmead with his Invisibility Cloak and Hermione. He met Leo, Piper and Wyatt on the way and Hermione and Wyatt struck a conversation. Out of the blue Paige orbbed in front of them saying she needed Piper and Leo at home. Piper and Leo made a show

of telling Wyatt to call if any of the students needed them and Chris took one of Paige hands while Piper holding Leo's took another and orbbed for the first time in his life.

Orbing had been a different experience. It was a little disconcerting to suddenly be somewhere else but at the same time it wasn't as disconcerting as portkey. He felt as if he had been growing lighter, disappearing and then he suddenly felt like himself again when he appeared somewhere else. And even if he wasn't used to it he was sure he had felt the same way that time when he was little and had appeared in the school's roof.

They spent the day in London, Chris fighting tooth and nail about every item of clothing. Trying to convince them to go for the cheaper ones. His parents didn't listen to him much and he got very frustrated. He didn't want to be a bother and risk them getting tired of him. But at the same time he couldn't deny, that walking out of the first store with clothes that actually fit felt extremely nice. And the world seemed completely different after they picked up his new glasses prescription. Clearer.

Piper had made a point of making an appointment at an optometrist for him and they had then bought him new glasses at one of those places that had the prescription ready in a few hours. The optometrist had been appalled at how poorly adapted his glasses were for him and had started berating Piper and Leo. Mortified, Chris rescued them explaining that he had lived with his Aunt up to now and the only time he had his eyes checked was one time that his school had organized for optometrist and dentists to check all the children. Piper had mumbled something about getting even as they left the doctor's office, Paige had an expression that didn't bode well and Leo was pretending he wasn't hearing them plot instead of pacifying them as Chris would expect a former Whitelighter to. Weren't they supposed to give pacifying advice? What was he turning his ear the other way for?

The bright side of the day was that Paige made a detour to Remus's cottage before dropping them off back at Hogwarts and Chris got to see Sirius and Remus, and Paige got to meet the famous Sirius Black, she'd been very curious.

Once back in the castle Hermione and Wyatt, who had spent the day together, relayed a message from Hagrid to Chris, and Chris went to meet Hagrid. An hour later he had ran up to his room and taken his mirror running back down to the Common Room and almost yelling for Sirius.

"Dragons! I'm dead! Dragons! Those Elders won't have to worry anymore because this time I'll be dead for real!"

"Calm down. What are you talking about?"

"The first Task! They're Dragons! Nestling mothers!" he saw Sirius trade a glance to the side and supposed Remus was close by.

"We can deal with Dragons," Sirius said calmly and Chris had an urge to shake some sense into him! How could he be so calm when Chris wasn't? "You just have to use a Conjunctivitis Curse."

"I don't know how to perform a Conjunctivitis Curse! I don't know what the hell a Conjunctivitis Curse is!" Chris cried hysterically.

The mirror was pulled farther away from Sirius and Chris could see Sirius becoming smaller but making room for Remus.

"Let's keep our heads on Chris," Remus said. "You need to calm down. I don't think the Conjunctivitis Curse is the best answer, you'd not only need a clear shot but you'd have to master the spell all by yourself by Tuesday. Do you know what you have to do?"

"Charlie said he thought we had to get past the dragon."

“Okay,” Remus thought. “And you’re only allowed a wand right?” Chris nodded and Remus frowned in thought “Maybe the answer isn’t to subdue the dragon but to distract it so you can get past at it somehow-“

“Flying!” Sirius cried “Flying, you have to outfly the dragon. You’re a great flyer Chris, even better than James was. What you need is to get your Firebolt to you.”

“Can you perform the Summoning Charm?” Remus asked. “It’s fourth year curriculum.”

Chris cringed, “I’ve been having trouble.”

“Get Hermione to help you. Practice that charm Chris. It’s your best chance to-“

“Who’re you talking to?” a voice came from behind Chris and he quickly stuffed the mirror in his pocket startled. He turned around and was face to face with Ron.

“What’s that got to do with you?” Chris snarled annoyed at being interrupted. “What are you doing down here anyway?”

“I just wondered where you-“ Ron broke off shrugging. “Nothing. I’m going back to bed.”

“Just thought you’d come nosing around did you,” Chris knew Ron did it by accident but he was at the end of his rope. He had no idea how he’d get through that dragon. He’d had his life turned upside down and all he had wanted was to tell Ron. All he wanted was to tell Ron right now how scared he was, but Ron didn’t care. Ron did want to know or to believe Chris and right now Chris let all his frustration come up and directed it at Ron, hating everything about him and completely ignoring the faint concern he felt from Ron before.

“Sorry about that,” Ron said his face reddening. “You’re probably training for your next interview or is your new best friend coming down so you can train together? I’ll leave you in peace,” he said turning around and without thinking Chris caught one of the POTTER STINKS buttons that Malfoy had made and spread around school and the Creevey brothers had been

trying to change and now said POTTER REALLY STINKS and threw it at Ron's retreating back. It hit Ron on the forehead and bounced off.

"There you go!" Chris cried. "Something for you to wear on Tuesday. You might even have a scar now, if you're lucky, that's what you want isn't it?"

He strode across the room and towards the stairs.

--

Piper looked at her husband calmly. He had just come back from talking to Wyatt, who had talked to Chris that morning and at Chris's request had alerted Olivia and Cedric, since Chris figured that Olivia and Cedric were the only champions that didn't know what they were facing, and then had gone to let his father know.

"Funny, I thought I heard you say they had to face dragons," Piper said calmly to Leo.

"I did."

"ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR FRIGGING MIND?" she yelled.

"I'm not the one who decided on the tasks!" Leo cried back.

"Well, object then!" Piper said in a no nonsense tone.

"I can't Piper," Leo sighed rubbing his temple. "The agreement signed by the schools says we can't object to the Tasks unless there is a clear violation of safety."

"Don't you think dragons are a clear violation of safety?" she hissed at him.

"Yes, I thought that," Leo said annoyed. "Which is why I went to the other Heads and Dumbledore introduced me to the dragon handlers which showed me all of the precautions they are taking. Theoretically the Task is safe because the dragon handlers will intervene at the slightest chance that the dragon might get out of control."

Piper raised a skeptical eyebrow. Dragons, to her, were out of control by definition,

“Theoretically?”

“Well, if Sirius and Remus are right whoever put Chris’s name in the Goblet could find a way to neutralize said precautions. But unfortunately that wasn’t an arguable point seeing as no one believes Chris didn’t put his name in and Maxime and Karkaroff don’t want the Task changed.”

“You’re saying Dumbledore did?” she asked incredulously.

“He said he wouldn’t be opposed to the task being changed.”

“Then that’s a tie,” Piper nodded satisfied.

“No,” Leo sighed. “I told you, there is no breach of contract, for the task to be changed without one all schools had to agree. And all the other two Heads are saying is that I don’t think Olivia is able to handle it and that is why I want it changed.”

“Will she?” Piper asked.

“I vaguely talked to her afterwards. I couldn’t be direct or else I’d let on that I not only knew but I knew she knew, and she said she was confident.”

“And Chris?”

“Hermione and Wyatt are helping him with an idea Sirius had. They wouldn’t tell me what it was though,” he said pulling her into an embrace. “Let’s have faith that Dumbledore knows what’s he’s doing.”

Piper snorted.

“He won’t want to lose Chris this way,” the implicit remark that Dumbledore thought Chris would have to die at Voldemort’s hand was left unsaid. Lately just talking to Dumbledore without strangling him was an ordeal. Leo wanted to believe Dumbledore was trying his best.

That he didn't want Chris dead and might be looking for a way to save Chris just as they were. But he was taking no chances with his son's life. "He can't afford to," he kissed her hair. "And besides, a dragon isn't a witch or wizard." he smiled at her. She looked at him and her mouth formed an 'oh', "if it gets out of hand you can freeze it while we get Chris, or any of the other champions for that matter, out of there."

"The freeze probably won't last long. Dragons are very magically resistant."

"I'm sure it will last long enough."

"Fine," she mumbled. "Dragons."

--

"It doesn't work," Chris grumbled. They'd been trying for him to master the summoning charm in the Room of Requirement all day Sunday and for hours already on Monday and nothing. The Task was the next day and he was getting desperate. "All I've managed to get is a headache," he rubbed his temples. "Are you sure you won't get into trouble?" he asked again. All three of them had basically skipped all classes to help Chris train. Which he knew to Hermione was worse than pulling teeth out. The other two glared at Chris as an answer.

"It's because you're nervous," Wyatt insisted but Hermione was looking at him in a calculating way.

"No I don't think it is," then she turned to Wyatt. "What powers did you say he had?"

"You mean future him?"

"Yes."

“Oh, we’re not sure about all of them,” Wyatt stroked his chin. “He was tight lipped, but mom knew he had to have a lot more than he showed them because he handled a lot of demons, high level demons, alone.”

“Was telekinesis one of them?” she asked.

“Yeah, actually. That’s the one they saw.”

“Thought so,” she nodded.

“Why?” both Chris and Wyatt asked.

“Because that is why this isn’t working. You’re trying to do it the wrong way.” she said firmly.

“But the swish is perfect-“ Chris started protesting but Hermione cut him off.

“I know, but your magic doesn’t accept it because it’s programmed differently.”

“I thought Leo said we all have the same magic,” Chris said and Wyatt nodded.

“Yeah, I’ve even tried a few spells myself.”

Hermione took a deep breath and entered her lecture mode, “Yes, the core of our magic comes from the same place. But this is evolution, centuries ago the two worlds divided and each world started focusing their magic in a different way, remodeling the way magic worked in us. It’s like wisdom teeth for instance, how some people don’t ever develop them, why? Because at some point we stopped needing them, and going from generation to generation our DNA realized that and mutated making it so that new generations don’t have them. The same applies here. Our magic mutated and even though it’s similar at the basis and someone like you and Wyatt can learn to use some of your magic to cast spells through a wand instead of a rhyme, you can’t do the same for your active powers. Because your magic knows that’s not the right way. Telekinesis is moving objects with your mind, and you’re trying to do it

through a wand when you don't need it, so your magic short circuits and doesn't accept it. For instance; here, Wyatt, take my wand."

Wyatt cautiously took her wand, with all the respect in the world, he knew how a wand meant for a witch.

"Telekinesis is one of your powers; I've seen you do it. So we can't try that. Can you produce water alone?"

"No"

"Good, then try this," she showed him the wand movement, "And say *Aguamenti*."

He did and he smiled as a gush of water came out of the wand, as he knew it would. He had tried this spell before when sitting on the sixth year's charms lessons.

"Good now try the summoning spell."

He did, nothing happened. He frowned and tried again. Come on, he conjured a dragon before he was one! This should be easy! At least a little twitch should have happened. But the more he tried, the more nothing happened, the more wrong it felt and a dull ache started forming in his temple. He stopped and looked at Chris.

"She's right! We're going at this the wrong way. Loose the wand."

So Chris pocketed his wand and looked at the pillow he'd been trying to summon. "So what do I do?"

"Well, let's start in a simple way. We first need to see what type of Telekinesis you have. I know you have the same as Aunt Prue had, but maybe you can also orb stuff to you. I can do both, so maybe you can too since that has to do with our Whitelighter side. So, first things first. Focus on the pillow and try to move it. Just move it not bring it to you. I like to make the

movement with my hands, helps to focus, but with time you shouldn't need to. Mum for instance can blow stuff up and freeze. She used to need to put her hands up, she still does for blowing stuff up so it helps her aim. But she doesn't for freezing anymore. She just has to want it, and she can even freeze just one person in a room. She didn't have that kind of control before. So think of moving the pillow and swish your hand."

Chris nodded, he concentrated on the pillow and slashed his hand through the air. The pillow went flying away and Chris's eyes widened.

"Wow, I never got it on the first try," he said awed.

"Because you were trying to force your nature," Hermione nodded satisfied and Wyatt agreed. That *Aguamenti* spell had taken him a whole week to get it right, and not just the few droplets he had gotten at first.

"Good, now extend your hand and call for the pillow. Picture it appearing in your hand."

Chris obliged, "Pillow," and the pillow disappeared in a flurry of blue and white lights and reappeared in his hand.

"Good," Wyatt smiled widely not only because Chris managed it but because a theory he had was confirmed. "That poses a problem"

"Uh?" both Hermione and Chris stared at him.

"Well, you see. Every time I need to summon something, I orb it to me. I never tried using my Telekinesis to summon something."

"Can't I just orb my Firebolt to me?" Chris asked.

“No you can’t or people will know something’s wrong when they see it appearing in a flurry of orbs,” Hermione rolled her eyes. “And someone might figure out who you really are and we don’t want that now do we?”

Chris shook his head vigorously.

“No, we need to train your Telekinesis. At least now we know how to do it. Just try beckoning the pillow towards you,” she continued. And that’s how they spent the next hours. When Chris was finally happy because he had managed to summon every object successfully. Hermione told him to get his wand out.

“What for?”

“Well now you have to train summoning stuff with your wand in your hand-“

“But you said I can’t focus my magic-“

“Exactly, you can’t focus your magic through your wand but you need your wand or else people will get suspicious. You’re too young to master wandless or non-verbal magic at that level. So now you have to get used to holding your wand and saying the spell but not using it. Just think of it as any old stick and silly words.”

Easier said than done, Chris’s instincts after four years of training was to let his magic flow through his wand. It was dark outside by the time he finally managed to master it to Wyatt’s and Hermione’s satisfaction and they allowed him to go back to the dorms to rest for the Task the next day.

--

Piper had thought that after seeing Cedric, Krum, Delacour and Olivia getting past their dragons and taking their eggs she couldn’t have had any more heart attacks. There was no way. She’d seen it all. She was proud of Olivia, who Astral-projected to make the dragon

confused as to whom to follow and while her projection was keeping the dragon busy she took the egg. Cedric had done something similar by transfiguring a rock into a dog but the dog couldn't really goad the dragon as Olivia did. Piper was left imagining if Prue would have had that level of control of her Astral-projection had she lived. She never had been able to stay conscious while projecting. Unfortunately Olivia never had been the most gracious girl and while running away with her egg she tripped and smashed some of the eggs. She wasn't the only one, Krum's dragon smashed some of the eggs too.

She was relatively confident that whatever Chris came up with could not scare her more than she had already been watching the other champions. How wrong she was. Chris had walked to the arena yelled a spell and just stood there, and Piper was going to yell at him to do something when a broom zoomed towards him and what happened next almost killed her from fright and she couldn't help but cry:

"What the hell is he doing on that *stick*?" she shrieked.

"Flying?" McGonagall, who was seated in front of her, said proudly as Chris zoomed in and out of the dragon's reach. "He really is a great flyer. Takes after his father. Youngest seeker in a century. Picked him out for the Quidditch team myself."

Piper looked at her aghast, "Quidditch involves *flying*?"

"Of course," McGonagall said without missing a beat. Piper searched the bleachers for where Wyatt had been seated and zeroed on the blond boy who was cheering his brother on. Oh, he was so grounded!

## Chapter 13- A Gryffindor

“Did you notice Crouch?” Leo asked as he watched Piper pace.

“No I was a little bit busy having a heart attack because one of *your* sons was dangling from a stick high in the sky and thinking of all the ways I’m going to ground *your* other son!” she shot out and Leo glared at his two visitors who were biting their lips amused on the couch.

“What about Crouch?” Remus asked.

“He looked worse than in the Feast and he didn’t react, to anything,” Leo said. “When everyone was flinching or awing- nothing. I mean even Snape had reactions.”

“Crouch is a very by the book man,” Sirius said bitterly. “There probably is some rule against showing emotions in public. I mean, the guy sent his own son to Azkaban just to maintain his image.”

“From what I learned his son was a Death Eater,” Leo frowned. “But what I don’t get was why he didn’t excuse himself from the trial. Conflicts of interest and all.”

“Exactly to show he wasn’t conflicted,” Remus said shrewdly. “Nothing is more important to Crouch than his career. If he thinks that it is good for his carrier to be still as a stone while teenagers face dragons, he will.”

Leo frowned slightly, “He wasn’t still as a stone...he was more...apathetic. I mean, Snape was still a stone, glowering down at the students. But Crouch, it’s like he was in another world. And he looked even more ill than when I saw him the first time.”

Sirius shrugged not very concerned about Crouch’s health. For all he cared Crouch could drop dead.

“Have you had any luck with finding out how to get the Horcrux out of Chris?” Remus changed the subject eyeing Sirius carefully and knowing what a sore subject Crouch was to him.

“No,” Piper shook her head sitting down. “We’ve been searching the library here and nothing.”

“Paige is searching Magic School,” Leo explained. “There was the book where I’d seen it. But it only explained what it was and why it shouldn’t be done. I think that if she finds anything it will be in some hidden corner, after all, it doesn’t get more “personal gain” than a Horcrux.”

“We’ve been discussing it,” Sirius said leaning forward and resting his elbows on his knees.

“And we wondered why Voldemort would have more than one Horcrux. If it was just to be on the safe side or if he had other reasons. We’re pretty sure he had to have more than one or he wouldn’t have been so careless with the diary.”

“And he started young. That version of Voldemort Chris fought was what, sixteen, seventeen?” Remus asked. “Chris said he was a half-blood who wanted nothing to do with his Muggle heritage. So for Voldemort magic was very important. So we figured that if he had a reason it had to be magical.”

“Yes, but what?” Leo asked.

“You would be amazed about what one can find out through bureaucracy in the Magical World,” Sirius smirked. “Remus here had the idea of learning more about Tom Riddle Jr.. About what he was interested in.”

“So I looked into what were his interests in school. His O.W.L.s and N.E.W.T.s, our exams,” he added for Piper’s and Leo’s benefit. “They are a matter of public record. And Tom Riddle Jr. was quite adept in Arithmancy. It was one of his electives and he had bonus points for extra work on both his O.W.L.s and N.E.W.T.s. He had even been offered an apprenticeship.”

“What has that got to do with anything?” Piper asked but Leo had caught on.

“Arithmancy is all about numbers and how they affect magic and the strongest magical number is seven,” his eyes grew wide. “He would have made seven Horcruxes to make his immortality stronger.”

“That’s what we think,” Sirius nodded. “But we don’t think he knows Chris is one or else he wouldn’t have tried to kill him in his First year. So it’s the piece of Voldemort that is lurking around, the one in Chris plus six others. One has already been destroyed and now there are still five missing.”

“That could be anywhere,” Leo said dispiritedly.

“No,” Remus shook his head. “I don’t think so. I think that even as twisted as Voldemort is they are still pieces of his soul, and more so, they are his guarantee to immortal life. He would want to keep them safe and probably close by. He entrusted one to Lucius for safe keeping, why not to his other Death Eaters?”

“And we have to remember that if he wanted to use Chris’s death to make one he didn’t manage to, so he probably hasn’t made his last one yet,” Piper added.

“We don’t know that for sure. In Chris’s dream he saw Voldemort kill a man. He could have done it there,” Sirius said dubiously.

“Which Death Eater’s would Voldemort trust?” Leo asked.

“I know Bellatrix Lestrange bragged about being his favorite, but because she bragged doesn’t really mean anything,” Remus said. “But Sirius and I will go check the Black family home to see if there are any clues there.”

“My family supported Voldemort, and my cousins, with one exception, and brother were Death Eaters. I’m not proud of my family having such a past but at least thanks to our archaic system I do have access to Bellatrix’s vault as Lord Black. Being in Azkaban the goblins consider

her incapacitated. But the problem is that even if the goblins don't care about me being an escaped felon I can't really waltz through Diagon Alley."

"Can't Remus do it for you?" Piper asked.

"No, only the current Lord Black can. As my heir, Chris could if I was considered incapacitated by the Goblins. But since I'm not in Azkaban anymore, and have withdrawn from my vault by owl order, he can't."

"That poses a problem," Leo said. "It's too risky for you to go there even under disguise. You wouldn't be able to keep your disguise inside the bank and from what I heard about goblins and wizards relations, I can't see the goblins going out of their way to make sure no one in the bank finds out who you are."

"No, they won't. But at least it's a lead," Remus said. "We can see later if we can or even need to access her vault later. Right now, Grimmauld Place would be a good place to start. We will go as soon as possible."

"And I'm sure my parents must have had something on Horcruxes too," Sirius grimaced.

--

"Halliwell!" Smith called Wyatt as he was walking towards the great hall for breakfast the day after the First Task. Wyatt groaned as he saw he was surrounded by his little burly gang, Stabler, Walker and Ryan. Smith had always been a bully. He enjoyed showing how he was better than others at school and often liked to antagonize Wyatt. Usually Wyatt had his friends with him and Smith never did more than talk. But his friends were all back at Magic School.

"What the hell do you think you're doing?"

"Going for breakfast," Wyatt drawled.

"You don't think we know you've been helping the Potter brat?"

“He’s not a brat and the last time I checked that’s exactly what the Elders asked us to do,”

Wyatt said through gritted teeth.

“He’s a cheater and I don’t protect cheaters,” Smith crossed his arms over his chest in what he obviously believed to be a threatening pose.

“He didn’t put his name in!”

“A cheater and a liar, you should be ashamed of yourself. But since you aren’t, I think you ought to learn a lesson.”

Wyatt snorted, “You’re kidding me right?” he might be younger and Smith was about twice his size but he was the Twice-Blessed. Magically this guy had nothing on him. But Smith smirked.

“No Magic allowed in the halls Halliwell,” he drawled. “The Headmaster’s son wouldn’t want to give a bad example now, would he?”

And Wyatt started realizing the mess he was in. If he used magic and broke a school rule, that would be awful for diplomacy, but if he didn’t he’d get pounded. They were four against one. Smith swung the first punch and he was fast to duck. He tried running for the door but it was blocked by Stabler and Ryan grabbed him from behind. Smith was about to punch him again grinning manically when two identical blurs knocked him down. Another two Hogwarts’ students he recognized as being a seventh year Gryffindors advanced on Walker and Stabler drawing their wands as Lee Jordan, the twins friend, drew his wand and pressed it to Ryan’s neck.

“Let him go,” he hissed. “We have no problems with getting a detention.”

Ryan let Wyatt go instantly.

“Are we good?” one of the Weasley twins who were both sitting on Smith asked. “Are we all calmed down?”

"Yeah, yeah, please get off me," Smith gasped.

"Good." and they slowly got off him pointing their wands at him. All four Gryffindors let the four Magic School Student's huddle together never lowering their wands.

"Remember, Gryffindors always have each other's back, before you try to attack a Gryff again. Actually, that's mostly a rule for any house," one of the seventh years shrugged. "Now scoot."

"Not you," Lee Jordan didn't take his wand away from Ryan's neck. "You're coming for a chat with old McG."

"What? Why?"

"You were assigned to Gryffindor for the duration of your stay here, therefore you're a Gryffindor and abide to Gryffindor rules. And Gryffindors do not attack each other and always have each other's back. No matter how pissed off at each other they might be. We're a family. Clear? Now, we're going for a chat with our Head of House who will deal with your breach of House rules. Let's go."

"You attacked me," Ryan squeaked.

"No, I was forced to stop you from attacking a family member. Now mama McG is going to ground you. Let's go!" the seventh year snapped pushing Ryan along.

"Are you okay," George asked and Wyatt nodded grinning. He very much liked those house rules. He walked to the Great Hall with Fred and George and they sat close to Hermione, Ron and Chris. Wyatt smiled as he watched Chris and Ron chatting excitedly as if they had never fought. He was a little disgruntled at Ron, and couldn't believe Chris forgave him that easily but he was happy for his brother. That didn't stop him from pulling Ron aside later in the evening after the festivities though. Chris being tied with Krum in first place had the Gryffindor partying till dawn.

“Did Chris tell you?” he asked already knowing the answer. Ron nodded.

“Good, you do that to my brother again and you’ll have me to answer for,” Wyatt poked Ron on the chest.

“I won’t,” Ron said firmly and when he added he looked sick. “I- I thought he was going to die today. He’s my best friend- I’m never leaving him again.”

“Good,” Wyatt nodded.

--

Wyatt had managed to avoid his mother quite deftly the previous day. Such were the advantages of such a big castle. But unfortunately he could no more. After class that day as she dismissed the students Piper gave Wyatt one pointed glare that showed him that his “getting to class just in the nick of time” trick had been caught on and that if he tried to run away after class he would be in even more trouble.

So, when class ended, quite silently Piper made him follow her to hers and Leo’s quarters and as soon as the door had been shut she turned on him:

“FLYING! FLYING! ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND! HOW COULD YOU HAVE POSSIBLY THOUGHT YOUR FATHER AND I WOULD ALLOW SUCH RECKLESS-“

“It was perfectly safe. And Chris is really good at it,” he tried to defend himself.

“And when you told me you had been playing Quidditch the fact that it involved flying on a *twig* escaped your mind?”

“S’ a broom, and Chris’s is a really good one,” Wyatt corrected her but she shut him with one pointed glare.

“You and your brother are not allowed on brooms anymore!”

“You can’t do that mom!” Wyatt protested.

“Of course I can I’m your mother-“

“Chris has been flying for four years. He loves it. He’s in the Quidditch team, you can’t just come and forbid him to play!”

“I’m his-“

“That he never knew he had mom! You have to adapt to him too you know?” he asked gently and Piper’s face fell as she saw the logic on Wyatt’s reasoning. Piper sat despondently on the couch and Wyatt sat next to her putting his arms around her shoulder.

“S’ okay mom. We knew it wouldn’t be easy,” he tried to say something but this was just one more thing that showed that Chris hadn’t been raised as he should have been. Wyatt decided to change the subject to something he’d been meaning to talk to his parents since the day in the Room of Requirement.

“You remember when Christy and Billy kidnapped me?”

Piper nodded.

“How I got away?”

“You orbbed.”

“No I didn’t mom. I tried telling you, I was orbbed. I didn’t orb. Remember how my future self kept telling you that he didn’t have his powers, that that would be impossible. But then he had this smirk on his face, like knew what had happened.” Even though Wyatt was quite young he remembered that experience quite well.

“Chris?” she asked.

“Yeah, I think he did it accidentally. He must have felt through our bond that I needed help and orbbed me to grandpa’s. To somewhere I thought safe. And my future self knew that. He said it, he didn’t have any powers. So someone had to have cast the spell that sent him alone to the past. And I bet it was Chris, and he just didn’t come so we wouldn’t know the future and especially the Elders wouldn’t know about him. We’ve been talking. And he’s been telling me about his bouts of accidental magic. And I think he orbbed once. I think his Elder powers have been leaking through the bind.”

“What are you saying?”

“That you should unbind his powers so we can train his Elder powers.”

“But they would be an immense tell off,” Piper said worried.

“He orbbed a pillow to himself when we were training summoning,” Wyatt said flatly.

“How?” Piper asked lost. “He shouldn’t have been able to.”

“I didn’t tell him his powers were bound. I wanted to see if he managed to do it even with the bind. But I think it’s better if he learns to control his powers when they’re completely free and not just when he really needs or wants it to.”

“You’re right,” Piper nodded. “Powers sometimes are tricky to control,” she winced as she remembered her problems with her explosive powers and some of Wyatt’s as he was growing up. “And he needs to rein them in. But I don’t know if now with the stress of the tournament is the best time.”

“Actually, we all agreed someone entered him in it to hurt him right? So I think he would benefit with having a quick getaway if he needs it. I think he should train his orbbing.”

“There are wards-” Piper started but Wyatt cut her off.

“Not in the Room of Requirements. It won’t let anyone orb in or out of the castle. I tried. But inside the room I was be able to because the room provides what one requires, so if he needs he will have a place without orbng wards. Or else he wouldn’t even have been able to orb the pillow to himself. I haven’t been able to orb stuff to me anywhere else.”

Piper nodded thoughtfully. She had a lot to talk with Leo. Well, at least if he could orb he would be able to orb to safety if he fell off his broom. So no more flying inside the no orbng wards, she nodded to herself.

Wyatt shook his head imagining what could be going on his mother’s head and the fights they would generate. Oh, well. Welcome to teenage life with parents Chris. He’d be sure to show Chris the tricks; after all, he was dying to get back on a broom.

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“I don’t understand,” Leo said confused as he watched Sirius pace from the couch. Sirius and Remus had flooed to Leo’s and Piper’s quarters, the Halliwells having given them full access, and Remus had gone in search of the couple and brought them here. Then they had started to talk about Horcruxes, Sirius’s brother and a house-elf and Leo was thoroughly confused. “What has your brother to do with this?”

“Well,” Sirius said excitedly. “Horcruxes are the darkest kind of magic. And my parents were into all that stuff, so I thought we could get some information in the Black Family’s library, like we told you. So we went to Grimmauld Place, that’s my family’s home. Anyway, it was completely abandoned, and well, not very friendly. But the thing is, we were discussing the Horcruxes and what we could find and I had completely forgotten about Kreacher, don’t worry I ordered him not to talk about it with anyone-“

“He is the Black family’s house-elf,” Remus explained at the other two bewildered looks.

“Anyway,” Sirius continued his convoluted tale. “We were talking about ways to destroy a Horcrux and we found a few. Fiendfyre, Basilisk venom, none that was useful to us in Chris’s case but the thing is Kreacher heard us and well, instead of insulting us like he had when we first entered the house he came begging us for help to finish Master Regulus’s orders and then well-” Sirius looked lost, “What he told us- he- my brother- I was so harsh on him, so wrong-”

Remus continued the tale taking pity on Sirius, “Regulus, Sirius’s younger brother, had joined the Death Eaters, but somewhere along the way he realized that what they were doing was wrong. You have to understand. Sirius’s family was very high strung on the pure-blood principles and Regulus followed them. But I don’t think he agreed with Voldemort’s methods. He was young and wanted to please his family. But I think by the end he saw Voldemort for the monster he was. And I think Kreacher’s story helped him a lot to realize that,” he took a deep breath and explained how Kreacher had told them about Regulus lending him to Voldemort and Voldemort taking him to a cave where he safeguarded a locket. About the horrors he lived in that cave and about how the only reason he survived was because of the house-elf magic that made him fulfill his master’s orders, and Regulus orders had been for him to go back home. And then how Regulus made Kreacher take him there, how he exchanged the locket and ordered Kreacher to go back and destroy the locket, and died there.

“We always thought Voldemort killed him. His body was never recovered. We only knew he was dead because the family tree tapestry is charmed to record every birth and death in the family,” Sirius looked down at his hands. “I couldn’t save him. I tried to convince him that they were full of bull but I couldn’t- Kreacher heard us, and by now he had figured what the locket was by himself. And he asked our help. We tried Fiendfyre, contained. But it didn’t work. I think the locket has to be opened and I think only Chris can do that. Because Voldemort would use a password no one else could, and because the locket has Slytherin’s emblem. And Slytherin, just like Voldemort was a Parselmouth.”

"I don't know," Piper looked lost. In one hand they had to destroy that locket. There was no question about it. But on the other, she didn't want to get Chris involved. She didn't want to burden him with the knowledge of what Voldemort had turned him into. She looked at Leo's eyes which mirrored her doubts. He gently took her hand and squeezed it.

"We'll just tell him about the Horcruxes, not that he is one. And we'll make it clear for him and for Wyatt," because Leo knew there was no way of telling one son and not the other. "That we, the adults, are dealing with them. That they should just worry about school and solving his egg. He'll have enough in his mind with his powers being unbound."

"You're going to unbind his powers?" Remus asked curiously. Leo nodded and explained the conversation Piper had with Wyatt.

"But if Wyatt is right, then that means we'll find a way to save him!" Sirius said excitedly and Leo hated having to burst his bubble.

"Not necessarily. The future isn't set in stone. That is why it's so dangerous knowing about it. Because anything you do, any choice you make can change it completely. We once saw a future where Piper and I had a daughter and Prue, her sister, was alive. She's dead now and we never had a daughter. For all we know in the future that Wyatt came from we found Chris in some other way, or he might have still been a Horcrux at the time because Voldemort never managed to take power and we never had to deal with it or we may have been able to save him. The fact that there is a chance for a future where he gets to live e to twenty-four doesn't say much."

"So, for all we know in that future he never became the Boy-Who-Lived?" Remus asked.

"No, he had to. Chris was already the Boy-Who-Lived by then. Any future people we meet at a certain time are from a possible future that is based in the fact that everything that has happened up until that moment did happen. You understand now why the Elders thought

Chris a threat? Why time-travel is so forbidden? Because one little thing can change everything, and not always for the best,” Leo said and shook his head sadly. “I know Chris. He knew how important that rule was. I don’t think the Elders had to worry about him like did. They thought he was a spoiled child who didn’t like the outcome. But he wasn’t. For him to have come back...the future had to be really bad, he had to be really desperate.”

“Well,” Piper said nodding and standing from the couch not wanting to really talk about the Elders. “I’ll call the boys. I believe we better do this in the Room of Requirement. To be safe. That Fiendfyre sounds dangerous.”

The others nodded and Piper left.

## Chapter 14-Girls

“Are you okay?” Wyatt asked Chris softly.

“Yeah,” Chris nodded. “It was weird,” he shuddered. “It just felt wrong you know? From that locket, the vibe it gave? I’m glad it’s over.” He looked over to where Leo and Piper were talking to Sirius and Remus. “Do you think they’ll find the others?”

Wyatt looked at them too and nodded, “I know they will.”

The adults had explained what Voldemort had done to make sure he stayed alive and how Chris had already destroyed one of the Horcruxes. Chris couldn’t fathom being that desperate to live forever. Destroying ones soul. He wondered what that did to Voldemort. He remembered the wreck he met his first year and wondered if Voldemort still thought it had been worth it. If he wouldn’t have preferred that he hadn’t done it and had moved on.

He probably didn’t, sick the way he was. Chris remembered how cold and cruel he already was at sixteen and then he remembered the distorted images of his adoptive parents and a young boy who resembled Sirius a lot telling him it was all his fault. That he’d bailed on them. Failed to protect them and where still shrieking at Sirius when Remus cast the Fiendfyre that burned in a circle consuming the locket, and which Piper contained by freezing the air around the circle.

No Voldemort was too twisted to regret it, but somehow he knew this strange family he seemed to have gained in the last few months would win for a simple reason. Voldemort was sick and greedy. He wanted nothing but power, but the people who were gathered in that room wanted nothing but to protect each other. As Piper did by not letting the fire spread, as Remus did by shutting Riddle up.

He nodded and stood and walked towards the couch. He sat down next to Sirius and hugged him awkwardly. He'd never comforted anyone with a hug before but somehow he knew he was doing it right.

"He was wrong. You didn't abandon them. You did your best to protect mom, dad and me and you never stopped trying to help your brother. Or you wouldn't have finished what he started."

He felt Sirius nod against his head and they just sat there in silence. He never saw Wyatt closing his eyes and concentrating on his Whitelighter senses. And he was so preoccupied with calming Sirius up that he didn't realize that the sad and worried feelings came from Wyatt too, not just the adults. Nor did he see Wyatt's eyes linger suspiciously on his parents.

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"And we went to see Dobby and Winky. Hermione was little miffed I hadn't told her before that I knew Dobby was here. But honestly I'd completely forgotten," Chris was telling Leo how his week had gone while they waited for Phoebe to arrive for his weekly session. It had been a few days since they destroyed the locket and he hadn't seen either boy alone. As a matter of fact he had the distinct impression that Wyatt was avoiding him. "She said Bagman was a bad man," Chris shrugged. "I thought him odd. He kept trying to help him, but I refused. I mean, the judges aren't supposed to help the champions are they?"

"No," Leo smiled filing the comment about Bagman away for further inquiry. "They aren't. Though as we've seen there is always a little cheating."

"Yeah, but you were fair with me and Olivia. You deducted points and all for our mistakes and you were fair with the others too. Karkaroff wasn't," Chris huffed. Now that the elation of being friends with Ron again had subsided, the four Karkaroff had given him was hard to swallow. Chris looked at Leo and bit his lip. "Uhm, Leo?"

“Yes,” Leo said calmly noting Chris’s change in posture.

“You know the Ball?”

“Yes.”

“Well, McGonagall says I have to have a partner,” Chris fidgeted with his robe. “I have to open the dance.”

“Yes, all champions have too,” he said sympathizing with Chris. Being the center of attention was never easy. And while Wyatt had no problem when he was the center of attention, he had always been a popular kid in school, much like Leo, Leo had the impression Chris took after his mother in that department. Piper glared at him every time she remembered he had been popular in school. Said he didn’t understand her.

“Yeah, well. She said I have to ask someone to come with me- like a girl. And I asked Sirius how to but, well, he just stared at me,” Chris said raising his hands helplessly. “And then I tried to ask Cho out, cause well- she’s pretty and all, but she said she already has a date and, well I don’t know what to do.”

Leo squelched the jealousy that tried to surface at the fact that he was the second choice and concentrated in helping his son instead. “As you pointed out, you will be the center of attention. You’ll already be nervous so you shouldn’t take someone who will make you even more nervous. Why don’t you ask Hermione?”

“She said she already has a date but she wouldn’t tell me who,” Chris shrugged. “And they like- they all walk in groups, and giggle! You have no idea how hard it was to get Cho alone. How am I supposed to find another girl?”

Leo tried to bite back his smile at Chris's desperate look, "You could ask one of the younger girls too. They won't be able to go otherwise and maybe you'll be more comfortable than with someone you want to impress. Doesn't Ron have a younger sister? Isn't she your friend?"

"She is going with Neville but-" Chris looked pensively and then smiled. "Thanks. I know just who to ask!" he said happily and then his face fell. "Er- can you teach me to dance."

And that was how the evening morphed from an Empath training session to dancing lessons, with all three sisters giving both brothers input on how to waltz, which Wyatt had no idea how to do either. And as it turned out, Leo knew quite well how to waltz and properly disgusted both his sons by having a long all gooey eyed dance with his wife while they tried to mimic his steps with their aunts.

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"So?" Piper asked that night when they were in bed.

"Hum, let's see. Apparently one of our boys drooled over the Veela and she turned him down for being zust a little boy even if 'e is ze Twice-Blessed!"

"She can't be much more than a year older than him the stuck up b-"

"Piper! Doesn't matter, Wyatt wasn't the only boy to make a fool of himself because of her Veela powers. Good thing was that as soon as she left, he was himself again and remembered who he wanted to ask in the first place and did so."

"Oh, who?" Piper asked interestedly.

"You'll see," Leo said mysteriously. He had talked to Wyatt after the dancing lessons. Wanting to know if there was something wrong. Wyatt had been evasive. He had asked pointedly:

“No dad. Is there something wrong?” and Leo was afraid Wyatt might have started realizing that they were holding back and promptly changed the subject to the ball.

At Magic School Wyatt had had tons of friends and Leo had been worried that he’d feel out of place at an event where none of his friends would be, but Wyatt had been quite happy with who he had asked to the ball and the friends he was making. “Let him have his secrets. I’m happy for him. I was worried about how he was adapting.”

“Well, he is missing his friends. All our kids here are a year older than him and you know teenagers, they don’t mix ages,” Piper wrinkled her nose, “That’s a big no no. I think he made friends with the Diggory boy and the twins and likes to stick with them.”

“Yes, well our other son, apparently tried to also ask an older girl out. They must get that from you,” Piper smacked him.

“Better than being a cradle robber,” she stuck her tongue out at him. “And we already knew that, Bianca was like six when we saw her younger self and Chris wasn’t even conceived.”

“Yeah, hopefully this time there will be no Phoenix assassins in his life. Anyway, he got politely turned down and then I told him to ask someone his age, or maybe one of the younger girls who can’t go to the ball unless they’re invited.”

Piper smiled cuddling more into Leo’s chest, “It’s so funny to see him awkward around girls. I remember how he seduced those three blond bimbos so easily. He was so confident. It’s nice to know he also had a time of doubts.”

“I think he always was insecure, but by when we met him he didn’t show weakness. I can understand, the world he came from, showing weakness might get you killed. So Chris made sure he looked confident even if he didn’t feel confident,” Leo said and then he frowned.

“What?”

“He asked Sirius for help first. With the mirror they left here. He came to me because apparently Sirius choked at the thought of how to seduce a girl. I don’t think he ever tried to.”

Piper chuckled thinking of the expression Sirius must have had.

“Well, it’s understandable,” she said calmly even though she understood Leo’s jealousy. “He’s known him longer.”

“A few months longer.”

“I know, but give him a break. We turned his world upside down. He needs time to adjust.”

“Humph.” Le huffed and pouted and Piper tried to break the pout with a quick kiss. All that dancing had left her feeling very giddy. Leo smiled at her and turning her around on the bed kissed her soundly.

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The next day Wyatt walked resolutely to the Gryffindor Common Room. He had been talking about the Yule Ball with the twins yesterday when they mentioned the subject. Well he hadn’t known, and the twins of course were just mentioning how they had already done it, they had no clue Wyatt had to do it too. But Wyatt knew he had too. So he had been thinking hard since yesterday and had gotten everything ready. He spotted Chris studying and approached him pulling him away from the Common Room to the Room of Requirement which had turned into what looked like a nice teenager’s room.

“It’s my room back home,” Wyatt said pulling one of those chairs with wheels away from a cluttered desk and in front of the messy bed where Wyatt made Chris sit. He took the chair and then added, “Well, it’s my room before mom makes me clean it.”

“Oh,” Chris said nodding. Yes, he really couldn’t see Piper abiding by this mess.

“So young Christopher,” Wyatt started and Chris looked at him strangely. “The Yule Ball is coming and new experiences will be happening and as your big brother it is my duty to prepare you,” he said seriously.

“Ah-what now?” Chris spluttered.

“Now,” Wyatt said pulling a shoe box from under his bed. “Pay attention”.

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Hours later Ron found Chris in their dorm room rocking back and forth with his knees drawn up to his chest. He immediately got worried.

“Chris, are you okay? What happened?”

“Wyatt,” Chris squeaked.

“Is he hurt?”

Chris shakily shook his head.

“Then what?”

“He came here...and then he...and it was horrible,” and somehow by the expression on Chris’s face Ron understood and he sat down next to his friend and sympathetically patted his back.

“He gave you the big brother talk didn’t he?”

“How did you know?” Chris looked shocked.

“I had it five times,” Ron wrinkled his nose. “And Percy’s involved a diagram and rules. Did you have the dad talk too?”

“There’s a dad talk?” Chris asked aghast.

“Of course, the dad talk is all about safe sex and why you shouldn’t be doing it while the brother talk assumes you will.” Ron said simply and Chris’ eyes widened at the thought of having that talk with Leo. Asking him about asking a girl out had already been embarrassing enough. He almost hadn’t. He asked him out of sheer desperation. Chris groaned dropping on the bed and burying his face in the pillow. Ron just patted his back sympathetically.

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The Yule Ball had approached and he didn’t know if he was more nervous about the Ball or about what was expecting him before it. Since they wouldn’t be able to have Christmas dinner with their family Phoebe had let Piper know that Christmas brunch would be ready at the manor and they were expected, as were Ron, Hermione, Sirius and Remus.

Paige orbed to Remus cottage to pick up the duo earlier and then orbed to the Hogwarts gate to help Wyatt with the others. Wyatt, Chris, Hermione, Ron and the twins and Ginny were meeting Leo and Piper at the doors so they could meet Paige at the gates. Piper had personally orbed with Paige to the Weasleys and the Grangers to ask if they could have a special consent to attend. Piper wasn’t comfortable telling more people yet about who Chris really was but Chris had vouched for the twins and Ginny. And since they were telling Dumbledore that Wyatt wanted to invite some of the friends he made here not inviting the twins and inviting Ron would be a dead giveaway. And leaving just Ginny behind would be just plain rude. Though Piper did not have a choice and to convince the Weasley and Granger parents she did have to disclose the truth so they’d allow the overseas orbiting. As long as they didn’t tell Dumbledore, she wasn’t worried. Which is what had her hesitant to tell the Weasley parents the most. The Grangers didn’t have any relationship with Dumbledore but Piper had heard that the Weasleys were big Dumbledore supporters. But Molly surprised her by hugging her tightly and smiling.

*“Family comes first. We trust Dumbledore, but if had treated one of ours that way, believe me we’d be doing the same. And no one deserves someone to protect him more than Chris does. Oh, and if the twins misbehave, feel free to send their sorry butts right back here.”*

She had been surprised with the lack of resistance but apparently Remus had talked to Arthur Weasley previously vouching for the Halliwells. He hadn’t said Chris was their son but had mentioned that Leo had been Lily’s Whitelighter. Still though Molly and Arthur had been reluctant to let their kids go. But Piper wanted very much to show Chris they didn’t just want to welcome him to their life but all about him. And she had realized that Ron and Hermione were practically an extension of Chris.

To Wyatt’s luck Cedric had gone home for the holidays to his parents only flooding back for the Ball, so inviting him wasn’t even an issue and any awkward situation was avoided.

Chris was nervous about meeting the family and even more nervous because his parents had decided that the manor would be a good place to unbind his powers. Since it was warded against magical eavesdropping any magical surge that happened would go unnoticed.

So, after almost being killed by a heart attack from Dobby waking him up and giving Dobby his gift, which Piper had reminded him was a good idea to get, he picked up the presents he had bought and the present from Hagrid and from Mrs. Weasley that was waiting for him at the bottom of his bed. Put it all in a bag and went down to meet the others. He had no idea what was waiting for him.

**A/N- Sorry for the delay. The last couple of weeks have been quite rough for me and my family and I was out of the country without being able or having the mood to write. I don't know if any of you know but though I am Brazilian, my parents are Argentinean and all my family lives in Argentina. Which is where I was.**

**On that note, I want to make a dedication. At the beginning of this story I had dedicated it to my friends at the SiriuslySirius yahoo group but now they will be sharing the dedication with a very important person: My Uncle, Rodrigo, my mother's twin brother, who died the 15<sup>th</sup> of March of Cancer at the age of 67. We had all thought he had beat his cancer back in September but two weeks ago we found out we were wrong, and unfortunately it was too late to do anything more and he left us very quickly.**

**So, this story is for him, who is being sorely missed by his whole family.**

#### **Chapter 15- A Charmed Christmas**

"Wow!" Fred said as they materialized in the living room of the Halliwell manor. "Loved that! So much better than side-Apparating!"

Wyatt grinned at the twins' enthusiasm. He had never Apparated but he had heard people talking about splinching and stuff like that and it seemed rather painful. Orbing was a little disconcerting at first but it was more the shock of being in one place and then suddenly in another, or so his grandfather told him. Because to Wyatt orbing was as natural as breathing. He'd always been doing it.

He looked at Chris who was looking around a little awkwardly.

"This is our house. The Halliwell manor has been in our family for generations," Paige explained. "It's the home of any Halliwell. Right now only Piper, Leo, Wyatt and now Chris

actually live in it, since Phoebe and I moved out with our husbands years ago. But we all see this as our home.”

“It is also built on top of the nexus and it’s been the Halliwell’s duty to protect it for generations so there always has to be a Halliwell using it as their actual home to power up the wards protecting it,” Leo explained.

“But who’s here while you are at Hogwarts?” Hermione asked.

“Before they left we all worked on warding the place even more. So if there is any movement in the house we get warned and come to check. It kind of sounds a beep in our head,” Paige wrinkled her nose. “It was a little annoying at first until we developed a system of sending a message to everyone’s cell phones if someone came here. You see, even with mine and Phoebe’s family not living here we or the kids often come here. Because the Book of Shadows is here. Piper’s food is here,” she sighed. “Not now, but normally. We’ve been going hungry,” she made a suffering face.

“Oh, poor you- speaking of food- Phoebe didn’t cook right?” Piper asked worried.

“Oh, God no!” Paige looked horrified. “We ordered out! Anyway. We’re around enough to charge the wards with our magic and with the alarm we have things covered. I’m gonna pop home to get the hubby and the kids. Phoebe and the others should be here soon. Oh, and our other guests were going to wait in the kitchen,” she made a weird motion towards the twins and Ginny.

“Oh, yeah! Fred, George, Ginny, you better sit down for this,” Ron said nodding at Paige.

“There’s something we need to tell you.”

“More than Chris having a family?” Ginny asked.

“Oh, yeah,” Hermione worried her lips.

Piper and Leo looked at her and Piper asked gently, "Do you two mind explaining to them while we show Chris around?" Ron and Hermione shook their head. "Come here Chris. There is something I want to show you." Piper took Chris's hand gently and led him upstairs closely followed by a silent Leo and a giddy Wyatt. She led him to a door and opened it gently. She led him inside and looked at him taking both his hands.

"This is your room. I don't know if you like what's in here. You can redecorate, do what you want. There are things in the closet that you might not want anymore but...but we always bought them. Even if we knew you wouldn't be able to use them. For your birthday, for Christmas...We wanted you to know that you were always in our minds. We wanted to be ready for whenever we'd have you back with us."

Chris looked around mesmerized. This was his room. Not someone's second room, *his*. Not a cupboard he had to share with the cleaning supplies. His room. There was a single bed with a blue duvet. There were a variety of toys on top of it. Some which were clearly for a younger child. Some he remembered wanting so badly when Dudley got them, even if just for Dudley to share them with him but he was never allowed to touch them. There was a small TV hooked to a video game, and a laptop on a nice desk, very similar to the one he'd seen when the Room of Requirement had turned into Wyatt's room. He walked to the bed and touched some of the toys reverently. He was too old to play with most of them, but he'd keep them, he'd keep them just because he'd never had them. He turned around and said huskily hugging a plush bear, "Thank you."

"You don't have to thank us son," Leo said walking to him and resting his hands on his shoulders. "This is *your* room, this is *your* house. It has always been waiting here for you."

Chris smiled through misted eyes and hugged the bear closer.

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Ron and Hermione honestly weren't getting anywhere. They kept trying to tell the others but the twins started one outrageous theory after the other. So fed up with them Ron just walked to the door Paige had indicated led to the kitchen. Poked his head inside and asked the people in there to come outside. That shut the twins up as Ginny yelled.

"AH! SIRIUS BLACK!"

Sirius poked Remus and grinned cheekily, "So nice to have an effect on people."

Remus rolled his eyes and turned calmly to the poor Weasleys, "Now, Fred, George. No need for that. Put your wands away. Sirius is perfectly harmless," then he stopped to ponder a bit "I mean, he won't hurt you, harmless might be going bit too far."

"He wants to kill Chris Professor! Step away from that man," George said not lowering his wand that was pointing directly at Sirius. The only problem was that right in his line of fire were Hermione, Ron and Remus protecting the murderer.

"Now, see there. I'd never hurt my Godson!" Sirius protested.

"He's innocent!" Ron sighed. "He was framed. Do you think Mrs. Halliwell wouldn't have already blown him up if he had tried to hurt Chris? Just sit down. Shut up and listen already!"

"Bu-"

"SIT DOWN AND SHUT UP!" both Ron and Hermione cried firmly and in such a tone that had not only the twins and Ginny sitting down immediately but Remus and Sirius too.

"Touchy," Sirius mumbled and Remus nudged his foot to shut him up.

"Okay, so this story begins when Sirius and the Potters decided to change Secret-Keeper..."

Hermione began and by the end of the tale the twins and Ginny had a mixture of disgust and shock in their faces.

"I knit a hat to that awful rat," Ginny growled disgusted.

"I know, I let him sleep in my bed. A grown man!" Ron commiserated with his sister.

"So, er, what you're saying is that you are Padfoot and Moony?" George asked seriously.

"No, what we're saying is he's innocent," Hermione rolled her eyes.

"Details," Fred dismissed her. "To the important part. You are Padfoot and Moony, Purveyors of Aid to Mischief?"

"Yeah, why?" Sirius asked bewildered.

"Fred!" George choked grabbing his brother's sleeve.

"I know George. All that time! *Professor Moony!*" he cried throwing himself at Remus and hugging him. "You've taught us so much," he sobbed as George did the same to Sirius. The other three just rolled their eyes.

--

By the time Chris, Leo, Piper and Wyatt came back down. The rest of the family and the food had arrived. Fred had a disgruntled face as he finally figured out why he and George could never trick Chris into getting them confused. After Hermione had taken the lead and first introduced them all he had tried to pull an 'I'm George' to a little girl of seven who was Paige's daughter and she just looked at him and said flatly.

"I'm part Whitelighter. I can sense the difference and you're Fred. Now, I'm Helen," she smiled mischievously and Fred eyed the other identical grinning girl next to her suspiciously.

To say Chris was shocked when he first stepped in the room and everyone turned around to see him and no one had one ounce of restraint and unceremoniously pulled him into hugs, was quite the understatement. The first one had been of course Sirius with a 'Happy Christmas

pup!' and he had hugged back enthusiastically as he did Remus but then, an older man he had never seen in his life, and who turned out to be his grandfather Victor, pulled him into a fierce hug and cried.

"Oh, Chris! You're so big! We've missed you so much!" followed by a bunch of kids who he was quite sure were attacking him but Wyatt assured him they were just hugging him and two amused dark haired men who turned out to be his Uncles Henry and Coop. When the last person released him he ended up next to Ron and cried.

"What was that?"

"What?"

"That!" he pointed at the crowd. Ron looked at them and shrugged. "Come on Ron. I was just mauled over there."

"Oh, that's normal," Ron said placidly taking a sip of the hot chocolate he'd poured himself.

"Welcome to life in a big family," he patted Chris's back sympathetically just in time for Chris to see an older man, who he found out later was his other grandfather Sam, materialize in front of them and cry his name and attack him all over again. Chris glared at Ron who was laughing.

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Presents had been opened and Chris's head was still spinning. He had never in his life received so many presents. He was wearing his Weasley jumper. It was a tradition for him after all, and he had been playing video games with his cousins, Hermione and the Weasleys. It was quite funny to watch how amused the Weasleys were by all the Muggle gadgets. Though they learned fast and he was watching as Ginny pounced Wyatt on a game when he had an idea. He went upstairs to his room and quickly separated the toys he had thought were for kids around

his cousins' ages. Then he went back downstairs and called them all upstairs and with their help and of his friends he opened them all up and with his youngest cousin on his lap, Phoebe's five year old daughter Penny, he said:

"You can all use them whenever you want. It's like toys you can leave here for when you come to visit or if you want to borrow them and take them home for a while. You can play with them all you want, I just ask that you be careful with them and return them so the others can play too."

He wasn't ready to part with them, they were toys that he would have loved to have had at that age. But he thought it a waste to just keep them in their boxes. And he hadn't really bought presents for his cousins, not knowing them and all; he had just bought a bunch of candy from Honeydukes. Which honestly his Uncle Henry did gulf down a good part of it.

He had a hard time knowing who had more fun. The little kids going through the toys or the teenagers helping them. Especially the ones from the Wizarding world who had never seen most of those toys before.

He never saw the satisfied smile from Victor Bennet as he watched his grandchildren practically ransack Chris's room.

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"Your skepticism against Dumbledore runs deeper. He couldn't have known how the Dursleys were," Phoebe pointed out to Remus. They had been talking for a while seated at the couch and Phoebe had questioned the need to keep Chris's identity a secret. The Elders wouldn't be able to anything more. The only people that mattered where Dumbledore, because Piper and Leo didn't trust him, and Voldemort, because if he didn't know Chris was a half-Elder half-Witch Chris would have an advantage over him. Remus looked at Sirius who was having an

animated talk with Henry about motorcycles, which he found quite ironic, the escaped felon and the cop, and Chris who was surrounded by his younger cousins.

“I told him there was no way Sirius would betray James. He was Head of the Wizengamot. He vouched for Snape. Why not get Sirius a trial? I couldn’t but he could. It was his duty to.”

“Maybe he thought you were biased and he believed in Sirius’s guilt.”

“And didn’t want to bring attention to where Chris had been placed,” Remus said shrewdly. “I said this before. I don’t think he is a bad man. And I truly believe he thought Sirius was guilty. I think he would have pushed for a trial if he thought, beyond a shadow of doubt, that Sirius was innocent. But even guilty Sirius deserved a trial, and Dumbledore overlooked that, overlooked the individual’s right for what he considered to be the greater good.”

“He overlooked his doubts that he could be innocent and chose to believe what the evidence said without questioning because it suited him?” Phoebe asked and Remus nodded.

“And that is why I don’t trust him to make the best decisions in regard to Chris. I trust him as my general and will follow him. I respect him. I owe him. But my family comes first,” Remus said firmly. “There is a lot that he has done...more like let happen that irks me. Gives me the impression that he is training Chris as a soldier. If not, why not tell me about everything Chris had gone through his first two years in his letters to me giving me updates on Chris? No, they were all trivialities like he made the Quidditch team, or he is adapting nicely. And even the year I taught there. I heard rumors that Chris had gotten into trouble but not the details. Not until Chris told Piper and Leo. I had thought those rumors were about being out after curfew. Getting in the kind of trouble we got into when in school. Not facing Voldemort twice! Why bring the Philosopher Stone to Hogwarts? And didn’t he have an inkling as to Quirrell being up to something? Why not confront him himself? No, I think he made sure Chris found those

clues, that Chris came up face to face with Voldemort in a controlled environment. They were tests.”

Phoebe looked up to see Chris patiently reading to her youngest daughter who had attached herself to her cousin once she realized he would do anything she asked him. He was so young and yet had lived so much, “You think he’s measuring Chris up, seeing if he is up to the task of vanquishing Voldemort and preparing him for that task?”

“Yes.” Remus answered flatly. “And I don’t like it.”

“Neither do I,” Phoebe nodded firmly vouching she would do her best to protect her family. and she didn’t know if Remus and Sirius realized it, but now, that included them too.

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He was in the middle of the Halliwell manor’s attic. The three sisters had been chanting and Wyatt, Leo, Sirius and Remus where a little to the side watching expectantly. Everyone else was waiting downstairs. The Christmas party had come to an end and they were planning to go back to Hogwarts in about half an hour to get ready for the Ball.

They had left the unbinding to the last moment because they didn’t want to ruin the party with memories of why they had to bind his powers in the first place. But now he was nervous about what would happen.

A golden light washed over him and at first he felt nothing but then he felt a tingling sensation run through his body and felt lighter. He couldn’t explain, he just felt right. Like this was how he was supposed to be. He closed his eyes and suddenly he could tell exactly where each person in the house was. That faint feeling he always got from people, the feeling that let him tell Fred and George apart wasn’t faint anymore. It was strong and he could pinpoint where each one was.

"Wow, that's wow," he said eloquently.

"I know!" Paige nodded being able to relate to him. She had an idea of what he was feeling having his sensing powers suddenly in full drive.

"That's how you always find me!" Chris cried looking at Wyatt.

"Yeah," Wyatt grinned but Chris scowled and crossed his arms.

"That's cheating!" he whined and Sirius couldn't help it, he burst out laughing and coming next to Chris he snaked his arm around his shoulder and asked:

"Beside hurt pride, how are you feeling?"

"I'm fine. It feels right- like there was something stuck before, something locked that I couldn't reach but now I can."

"Good," Sirius nodded pulling Chris close.

"Now we'll have to train whatever powers you got from me," Leo explained. "I know you could orb and you couldn't heal, but as an Elder I had a few other powers. More active powers that you might have."

"Oh, how do we find out?" Chris asked curiously.

"Well," Piper started frowning, "With us our powers kind of came slowly. Well not slowly, but we didn't have them from the start. But we already know you can orb things to you so you can probably already orb too. That was one power that Paige had from the moment she unbound her powers. We also don't know if because they are Elder powers and not Wiccan powers they will behave in the same way as ours. Wyatt could always heal, and orb and have his shield. Those are things that he had even as a baby. But each person is different."

“Yes, the twins could orb since they were born,” Paige nodded agreeing with them and wincing as she recalled that, “But Henry Jr. was almost two the first time he orbed.”

“Okay, so what if I try like I tried my other powers in the Room of Requirement?” Chris asked.

“Good idea,” Remus nodded. “He can right?” he asked the others.

“Why not?” Piper shrugged. “As a Halliwell he is already keyed into the wards. He should be able to.” They all moved things around to avoid any crashes.

“Okay,” Paige said coming in front of Chris. “Close your eyes. Picture the other end of the room, where the love seat was. Now picture yourself there, you need to want to be there,” she said and they all were about to cheer when Chris disappeared in a shower of blue orbs, except he never appeared again and instead they hear a muffled, “Womph!” and “Chris!” from downstairs.

“I’m okay! I hit a loveseat!” Chris’s voice came from downstairs.

“Yeah! You fell on us!” Ron’s disgruntled voice complained.

“Well, he has to train his aim,” Leo winced. “Just to be on the safe side, *you* help Wyatt take us back,” he told Paige.

The others couldn’t help the snickers which turned into full blown laughter.

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A/N-As explained earlier in the chapter. I haven’t written much. Just basically edited this chapter. The next chapters are not fully written. They are in the first stages of the rough draft. I usually don’t update until I have at least two chapters fully written ahead to avoid long gaps between updates, but since you’d been without an update for so long I decided to put this up.

I just wanted to warn you that I might take longer than usual to update again since I have to make sure everything works together and write a huge part of the next few chapters too.

Thank you for all your reviews, sorry if I forgot to answer to anyone!

## **Chapter 16- Excuse-me, aren't you half-Whitelighter?**

"You look very nice," Chris told his date as she met him on the stairs that led to the front of the great Hall. He had followed his father's advice and had decided to invite someone he knew no one else would. He didn't mind the odd looks he got as they walked towards the other champions that McGonagall was lining up. He had known how it felt to be the person no one wanted to befriend in Muggle School. And the few times he had seen her in the Magic School classes he noticed she was very much the same. So yes, she was a tad odd. But who wasn't? Besides, they were just friends, and unlike the other Ravenclaws, she had talked to him even before they saw a dragon trying to kill him. When no one else in the school wanted to be caught dead talking to him. He stopped behind Krum and Olivia and gave Olivia a shy nod. Apparently the two champions had decided to be each other's date. He saw Cho with Cedric, figures, and Fleur Delacour with the captain of the Ravenclaw Quidditch team, who looked at his date disdainfully. Chris just stared back at him as if daring him to say anything rude. He didn't.

As they watched the other students go into the Hall Chris spotted the twins and their dates, Angelina and Alicia, Ron with Parvati Patil going in with Seamus and Lavender Brown and saw Ron stealing glares to somewhere behind him. He looked backwards as he felt his brother approaching and let out a small chuckle when he saw Wyatt proudly leading a blushing Hermione. So that was his mysterious date!

Once everyone was settled professor McGonagall told them to go in. Chris extended his bended arm to the young lady and asked, "Shall we?"

"Of course," she said nodding and they entered the Hall, both with their heads held high as they walked towards the main table and sat next to Percy Weasley, to Chris's surprise. From then on the dinner was quite enjoyable, if you didn't count Percy boring his mind out with details of his job. He actually had a very enjoyable dinner and he mostly enjoyed to watch how

Luna made conversation with his mother ,who was seated next to her. His suspicions that Luna was a lot smarter than she led on where more than confirmed during the dinner. She did make some of her outrageous comments, but they were mostly directed to people like Percy or Fleur Delacour. While she was talking to Piper she had been very eloquently discussing the benefits of mixing potion ingredients without once adding a ludicrous remark. She had also been the most gracious dancing partner when they opened the dance, helping him with his less than gracious feet.

All in all Chris had a wonderful time and had mostly forgotten that the girl he wanted to come with was dancing with Cedric. It was quite refreshing to be out with someone who didn't care what other people thought of them while they danced. As he spotted his brother and Hermione once or twice he knew they were having a great time, at least they were both very happy.

The only one who didn't seem to be enjoying himself was Ron, who had spent most of the night seated at a table glaring at Hermione and Wyatt.

"Why don't you go to him?" Luna asked later.

"Ah, you-"

"Oh, don't worry. Neville Longbottom is going to dance with me."

"How do you know?"

"Because I'll tell him too," she said simply with that faraway way of hers. And then she just walked away and went to Neville, who was seated next to Ron and pulled him to the middle of the dance floor without saying a word. Chris didn't even think Neville knew who she was. He could only stare gobsmacked at the scene. He shook his head and went to join Ron who was exuding jealousy.

Chris sighed. Ron and Wyatt weren't getting along very well. Wyatt still thought Chris had forgiven Ron too fast and Ron was feeling his place on Chris's life threatened by Wyatt. They both acted civilly towards each other but Chris could feel the tense atmosphere when they were together. Chris honestly didn't know what to do. Sometimes being an Empath sucked. Ah well, he sat next to Ron.

"How is it going?"

"He's too old for her," Ron stated. Chris looked at Wyatt and Hermione.

"Actually the age difference between Hermione and Wyatt is more or less the same as Hermione and me, I think less."

"Whose side are you on? He's too old for her, and he is from another country. He'll break her heart!"

"Ron, he can orb. Remember how just this morning we were *in* that other country? And he won't break her heart. They are just having fun," he looked at Ron seriously and decided to let Ron know he knew what he was feeling. "If you like her then you should have asked her out. Next time think of that. You still have time. Start treating her like a girl and not another one of the boys and you might luck out." To be honest that enlightening thought hadn't come from himself but from his cupid Uncle, who had asked about the gossip on Skeeters article, apparently the whole family had heard about that, Chris was truly amazed at how information ran rapidly throughout the Halliwell network, and then had pulled Chris aside during Christmas brunch and added that tidbit in case Chris ever had feelings other than friendship for Hermione. To Chris Hermione was like a sister, he just had a lot of bells screaming wrong in his head at the thought of them together. But he knew for a fact, and from Ron's feelings, that that was not the case for Ron.

He also didn't know if Watt had noticed that and didn't want to end up in the middle of a tug war, especially since he was quite sure that Wyatt only had a passing infatuation.

"I don't like her like that!" Ron almost shrieked.

"Uh hu," Chris rolled his eyes. "Just don't do anything stupid that will get us all fighting again," he begged. "Come on, let's take a walk. Being here won't help your brooding any."

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Leo opened his eyes blearily. The night had been long. As Headmaster he had to stay up until he knew his last student had left the Ball back to the dormitory. He had liked it though. He and Piper hadn't had much chance in their life to attend such an extravagant event. They had danced all night long and it wasn't until there were only a few straggler students that she had kissed him goodnight with an evil smirk that said "I can go to sleep even if you can't" that they stopped.

He had woken with someone shaking him and stared directly into the blue eyes of his oldest son. He looked to the side.

"Where's Piper?" he asked stifling a yawn.

"There's a note saying she went for breakfast but left you to your beauty sleep."

"Oh," Leo sat up on the bed and rubbed his eyes to wake up. "Okay."

"We need to talk," Wyatt said seriously sitting next to Leo on the bed. Leo looked at him worriedly.

"Did something happen between you and Hermione? Son, you just met her-you're both young-you should wait until you know each other be--"

“NO! OH GOD, NO!” Wyatt looked at his dad repulsed. “We already had that talk and I’m not repeating it! Go have it with Chris!”

Leo nodded and realized he had neglected his parental duty there. He had talked with Wyatt when he was thirteen and he absolutely forgot to talk to Chris. He would have to remedy that soon. “Then what?”

Wyatt looked at his father seriously, not a trace of humor in his face and said firmly, “He’s a Horcrux isn’t he?”

Leo bit his lips nervously and looked at his hands. He nodded silently. He wouldn’t lie to his sons; not burdening them was one thing, lying was another. He knew Piper might get angry at him but he had suspected for a while that Wyatt had started realizing it when they destroyed the locket.

“How did you figure it out?”

“When I first sensed Chris there was something off, something I didn’t feel was right. But I didn’t know what. It had been so long since I’d been in his presence; I couldn’t have said that it didn’t belong to him. I mean, I always felt Chris’s presence faintly through the bond, but I had never realized there was something that shouldn’t be there. The feeling of wrongness only came when we met him again. But I just figured it was because of the blood adoption, or maybe him practicing magic a different way. But when-when you explained- I started paying attention and I realized that what felt wrong didn’t come from Chris as a whole but just his scar. I was almost sure- but I didn’t want to believe-you said the only way to get rid of a Horcrux is to destroy the vessel- I didn’t want to-“

“We’ll find a way, we already have a theory and we’re trying to figure out if it will work,” Leo said squeezing Wyatt’s hand. Wyatt nodded.

“But yesterday, when mom and the aunts unbound his powers they took away whatever was blocking the bond. It always felt like something was there in the way. And suddenly I could feel Chris completely, like I never felt any of you. I knew where he was and how he felt. I know now, without having to sense for him. He’s in the Great Hall and he is quite content and happy that they have treacle tart. I mean. I was never able to pinpoint his emotions that way. Knowing exactly why he felt some way.”

Leo smiled, he had a feeling that Wyatt and Chris’s bond would only grow. Paige’s children had an uncanny ability of knowing exactly what each other was feeling and where they were, but with Chris and Wyatt being so much more powerful than them it would stand to reason their bond would be stronger. He remembered how after they knew who he was future Chris stopped holding back things that might give him up and he would just say things out of the blue like, “Wyatt’s up- Wyatt need’s a nappy change- Wyatt’s hungry- He really does hate those beans.” Even when he was nowhere near Wyatt.

“And when I felt him, completely I knew that whatever was in his scar wasn’t him- at all. It was nothing like him. It’s bad, it’s evil. It’s not tainting him or anything. It’s like if it were in a bubble or a safe, not touching anything else. But I knew it wasn’t him and-“ Wyatt bit his lip- “It felt a lot like what I felt from that locket.”

“We found out more or less like that, your Aunt felt it when she sensed Chris. You have to understand, you’re Aunt had put older Chris in her radar, so she knew how he felt. So when she sensed him it was easy for her to realize there was something more there,” Leo tried to explain to Wyatt that there was nothing wrong with him missing it.

Wyatt nodded silently looking at his hands, “I didn’t say anything yesterday because I didn’t want to ruin the Ball for any of us. I still had hope-had hope you’d tell me it was nothing and I was imagining things.”

Leo pulled Wyatt close to him with one of his arms and said, "I can't do that but know that we will save him. We will find a way."

Wyatt looked at his father with pained eyes, "How? I don't want to lose him again dad."

Leo took a deep breath and explained their theory, of how they wanted to do the same he had done for Piper all those years ago but they still didn't know if they could because they didn't have a Whitelighter with a deep bond with Chris.

"What about Lily Potter?" Wyatt asked.

"What about her?"

"Well, wasn't she your charge because she was a potential Whitelighter? You said that's the only exception for Wizarding folk to get a Whitelighter."

Leo looked at Wyatt appraisingly "I don't know if she became one. It's a choice; there are people who chose to move on. And a Whitelighter isn't allowed to keep in touch with their mortal loved ones, so she wouldn't have been able to stay near Chris. But-you're right- she might have become one- and she does have a bond with him. I'll talk to Paige, Coop and Sam. See if they can find out if she became one and can get in touch with her- that's," Leo smiled getting excited at the prospect. Their biggest issue was that they couldn't have all in one, they either had spirits with a bond with Chris or a Whitelighter, Sam, who even though he was family, he had only met Chris for the first time the previous day, and didn't share any blood with him. With the blood adoption, Lily did, and more so, she had a bond created by her sacrifice, by her protection. "a great idea son!"

Wyatt smiled at him and Leo said seriously, "Don't tell your brother. He doesn't need this on top of everything else."

"He might figure it out through the bond. Why I'm feeling this way."

“Chris has less experience than you with his active powers. He might not realize what he’s feeling. If he does, then we’ll deal with that, but your mother and I didn’t want to burden either of you with this knowledge.”

Wyatt nodded seriously. Sometimes he got annoyed at the fact that his parents kept things from him, saying he was too young. But right now, he’d give anything to go back to being carefree and not knowing the ticking bomb that was inside Chris.

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“So you think Remus was right? That he is loyal to Dumbledore?” Paige asked as she sipped her tea. Even though all the kids were on break Phoebe had kept Chris’s training session and they had their usual dinner with the family. The boys had gone back to the tower and Piper and Leo were filling them in what had happened since Christmas. At first Piper hadn’t liked Wyatt knowing, but she agreed with Leo. One thing was withholding the information to protect them, the other was lying to them.

Then Piper had told all of them about a conversation she overheard between Dumbledore and Snape the night of the ball, where Snape told Dumbledore that Karkaroff was afraid and that their Dark Marks were getting darker. Snape had said Karkaroff would flee and when Dumbledore asked him what he would do he said he wouldn’t, that he was no coward.

“I don’t know,” Piper shrugged. “He might as well be thinking of rejoining Voldemort. Snape is a very shady character.”

“Could he be the one to put Chris’s name in the goblet?” Phoebe asked.

“I don’t think so,” Piper shook her head. “From everything I’ve heard about him I think Snape protects his own skin. And doing something to the Boy-Who-Lived for some half alive Dark

Lord right under Dumbledore's nose wouldn't be in his best interest and I don't think he'd risk it. But I don't doubt that if Voldemort returns he'll play a double game."

"I could try to read him," Phoebe mused stroking her chin.

"Wouldn't help, Olivia has already said Snape is blocking her out," Piper shrugged.

"The fact stands that if their Marks are getting darker this means Voldemort is getting stronger and that is bad for us," Leo tried to focus the discussion.

"Yeah, but we already knew that," Phoebe drawled.

"Which means," Leo pressed on. "That we need to speed up finding those Horcruxes, besides the locket we've had no luck at all."

"Actually," Paige started. "I was talking about the subject with my dad and he pointed out that we've been quite stupid."

"Excuse-me!" the other three cried offended.

Paige just shrugged, "We found one by a lucky chance, the locket. But honestly, we could have just sensed for the others."

"What?" Piper spluttered but Leo slapped his head.

"Of course! Paige knows how Voldemort's soul feels like because of the one in Chris, she can sense for the others."

Piper and Phoebe's head snapped towards Paige who was sporting a satisfied smirk, "Already have." She said pulling out a map from her handbag. "Now earlier I orbed Remus and Sirius to this location. Don't worry, they glamoured themselves," she pointed to a town named Little Hangleton.

"Wait a minute!" Piper snapped. "You knew this all along and are telling us just now?"

“Well, I was waiting for the right moment, the boys were here, then you started on about Snape...”

Seeing that Piper and Phoebe were about to throttle Paige Leo tried to act as the pacifier, a role he had pegged down very well after the years of experience. Deep down he never stopped being their guide, even if he didn't have his powers any more.

“Okay, okay, settle down girls and let Paige talk.”

“As I was saying; Remus and Sirius are here. It's a rundown shack. There were some wards and Remus and Sirius were going to work on them and then bring the Horcrux here so we can destroy it with the other in the Room of Requirement. There is one here at Hogwarts, and if Remus was right it is in the Room of Requirement.”

“How, the room turns into whatever you want?” Phoebe asked.

“Remus says that one of the versions of the Room is a room where many generations of students and faculty have hidden or stored things. It would be the perfect place to hide something. Apparently the Marauders were very familiar with that room to store their ‘incriminating evidence’, as Sirius put it. As soon as they come back Remus will open the Room. The other one, as we suspected is at Gringotts. So it must be in Bellatrix's vault as they thought. That one will be tricky unless we can prove Sirius's innocence. And the last one, yes, there is one more. He managed all the ones he planned for,” she sighed hoping they wouldn't kill her. “We can't get to it. It's right next to Voldemort.”

“So you know where Voldemort is?” Phoebe asked.

“No,” Paige shook her head. “I was able to sense the part of soul that is him and the Horcrux. They feel similar but the one that is Voldemort is distinguishable because it's stronger than the others, way stronger. I know they are together, and I know they are close to where Remus and

Sirius are now but I can't pinpoint where he is. There is something blocking me. That's why I asked them to go. Since they would be more familiar with whatever wards Voldemort could put around and because if we went in a large group I was afraid we'd call Voldemort's attention. I'm sorry I didn't consult you before, but when I realized they had to be close I was afraid he'd hide that Horcrux too and acted fast."

"You did right," Piper nodded realizing why Paige hadn't said anything. She must have been worried about the duo and had been trying to distract herself with the family. Telling them would just make them all sit and worry together.

"At least we have a general location for Voldemort. Do you know how close he is to that shack?" Leo asked and Paige shook her head sadly.

They all bit their lips nervously thinking the same. Paige had been with them for hours. Which meant Remus and Sirius were gone for even longer. Where they okay?

The fire suddenly roared green and the four of them jumped as a tired looking Remus and Sirius stumbled out. Leo couldn't help but smile relieved and chuckle at the bewildered expressions of the two men as they were assaulted by the three women hugging them. When they were released Sirius dropped a ring on the coffee table.

"That one was tricky. He had all sorts of nasty wards we had to dismantle till we found it. And don't put it on. The ring itself has a withering curse if anyone puts it on."

"Good thing you know about those," Phoebe smiled.

Sirius shrugged, "Growing up in my house there was no way not to. That withering one was one of my dad's favorite."

"We left a replica there. If Voldemort tests it won't fool him but if he doesn't it may," Remus said.

“So, shall we get the next one and proceed in destroying them both?” Phoebe asked happily and the others nodded smiling tiredly.

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A/N-Thanks for reviewing

### **Chapter 17- A Charming Giant**

The front door of the hut exploded, “Hum, that was easy wasn’t it?” she said looking at the four startled teenagers. Leo bit his lips to stifle a laugh. She stepped over the debris and entered the hut. “Very cozy. Nice place you have here Hagrid,” she said looking around.

Hagrid had disappeared since Rita Skeeter published an article about his giant heritage.

Immediately after learning about the article, Chris, Ron and Hermione had stormed to Hagrid’s hut trying to talk to the half-giant and had taken Wyatt with them. They had been hammering on the door for a long time when Piper and Leo, who had gone towards the very same hut because they wanted to talk to Hagrid about the possibility of showing unicorns to the Magic School students, spotted them. Dumbledore had already alerted them that Hagrid was hiding from the world but Piper had not taken him seriously. When seeing the begging teenagers and hearing their explanation she had just flicked her wrist.

“Me door!” the half giant spluttered. Piper looked at it.

“Well, you wouldn’t open it. Don’t worry. I’ll get one of the kids to fix-oh, for crying out loud will you four come in!” she ordered the still gaping teenagers.

“Maybe I didn’ want visitors, eh?”

Piper just stared at Hagrid and chuckled waving him off.

“Privacy is a concept that completely bypassed my mother,” Wyatt tapped Hagrid’s arm sympathetically. “You’re just unlucky there are anti-orbing wards here, or we’d just have orbed in.”

A little flustered Hagrid served tea to his visitors while Hermione fixed the door. Soon enough everyone was declaring that they couldn’t care less who Hagrid was related to and that he ought to come back to teach.

“That’s what Dumbledore’s saying but that’s not what the parents will think,” Hagrid shrugged.

“You can’t let other people’s opinion stop you. I wouldn’t have done anything if I cared what other people think,” Piper said firmly.

“Er- Halloween 2005,” Leo said weakly.

“What- don’t bring that up! Why did you bring that up?” Piper glared at him and turned to Hagrid, “He was popular in school,” she said as if that explained everything.

“Caution is a concept that has completely eluded dad,” Wyatt said. “You’d think he’d know by now,” he finished shaking his head and ignoring Leo’s glare.

“But she’s right!” Chris cried. “Who cares what they think! That’s the same Remus did last year, resigning before anyone complained. Let them come and we’ll deal with them! We already lost one great teacher because of bigotry we can’t lose more!”

“Oh, Chris, yeh thin I’m a great teacher?” Hagrid cried emotionally.

“Er-“ Chris looked at the others. He loved Hagrid but his teaching methods left a lot to be desired. “We think you’re great Hagrid,” he nodded and Hagrid never realized Chris didn’t add ‘teacher’.

“We don’t care who your mother is,” Ron said firmly. “It’s you we care about- I mean look at who Chris has for relatives!” he said as if that proved a point. Hagrid was nodding with him, having met the Dursleys, but the other five were gawking at Ron who realized his mistake even though Hagrid didn’t know, he added. “The Dursleys are nothing like Chris!”

“Oh, yeah!” Chris nodded. “And you liked me even though you met them. And you don’t think any less of mom for being Aunt Petunia’s sister do you?”

“Course not. Lily was the sweetest person ever-“ Hagrid said indignantly. “Yer right-me dad would be ashamed of me if he saw me. He always said, ‘Hagrid, keep your head up. Never be ashamed. There’s some who’ll hold it against you, but they’re not worth botherin’ with.”

“Cause they’re idiots,” Wyatt nodded. “Thinking we’re less than them just because we have mixed blood.”

Hagrid looked at him questioningly and Wyatt shrugged, “Stupid Elders look at us like we’re filth because we’re what they call ‘half-breeds’,” he made quotation marks. “There was this really stuck up one who told my cousin once, when he was waiting to talk with my Aunt Paige, that we should have never existed because a Whitelighter having children is an abomination.”

“Yeah,” Piper growled. “Believe me that Elder *never* came back down to give us messages again,” she crossed her arms angrily.

Hagrid sniffed, “Yeah know what Chris? When I firs’ met you, you reminded me o’ me a bit, mum and dad gone, an’ you was feeling like yeh wouldn’ fit in at Hogwarts, remember?” Chris nodded awkwardly since his mum and dad were actually sitting there listening. “Not really sure you’d fit... An’ look at you now Chris! School champion!” Hagrid looked at Chris for a moment and then said seriously “Yeh know what I’d love Chris, fer yeh ter win this. Show ‘em all...that yeh don’t have ter be a pureblood ter do it. Yeh don’ have ter be ashamed of what yeh are. It’d show ‘em Dumbledore’s the one who got it right letting anyone in as long as they can do

magic," he nodded firmly and then as if realizing who he had as guests he added. "No offense ter your champion Professor."

Leo smiled, "None taken, besides, I think if Olivia won she'd be sending the same message. Her mother is a witch but her father is a Mor- I mean, what you call Muggle."

"Good fer her!" Hagrid smiled widely.

They left Hagrid's hut with promises of seeing him in the next class and Chris decided to take Cedric's offer up. Cedric had pulled him aside after the ball and told Chris to take the egg for a bath and gave him the Prefects' bathroom password. He'd do it that same night. Take the egg to the Prefect's bathroom and see what happened.

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"So you'll have to go into the lake? We need to know how you could breathe underwater for an hour," Hermione frowned. The next morning Chris had filled Ron, Wyatt and Hermione on what he had found out the previous night. As Cedric had told him, he had gone and taken the egg with him to the Prefects' bathtub. And after some embarrassing help from Moaning Mirtle, which had Chris wondering if he should find out about privacy wards to put around his dorm's bathroom, he was finally able to hear the clue that the egg contained and surmise that he would have to retrieve something he cared for at the bottom of the lake and have an hour to do it. He wondered what they'd take. His most prized possessions were the gifts he had from his friends and family and the heirlooms he had from his adoptive father, not to mention his photo album, which now also contained photos that had been taken with the Halliwells during Christmas and that Piper had given him. He shuddered at the thought of someone ruffling through his things, or would he have to present them? He didn't think so, given a choice he would give them some of Dudley's old socks instead of risking any of the things that

mattered to him because of who gave them to him. He chuckled at the thought of presenting Dumbledore with a pair of old socks and smiling innocently:

*“One can never have too many socks Headmaster.”*

“Scuba diving gear,” Wyatt said smiling and bringing Chris back to reality. “We just have to buy some,” at the looks he got he whined. “What? This time they didn’t say he couldn’t take anything beyond his wand with him!”

“No, but are you a scuba dive expert?” Hermione asked slowly.

“Er-no.”

“Do you know one that can come to Hogwarts before the task and teach Chris?”

“Uh-no.”

“I guess that settles it. Let’s stick to magic,” she said flatly.

“What’s scuba diving?” Ron asked Chris in a whisper. Ron had decided he would completely ignore the fact that Hermione and Wyatt seemed to be dating. Not only had they gone to the Ball together but they were seen holding hands from time to time and disappeared every now and then. Chris knew Ron was jealous. Every time Wyatt or Hermione even looked at each other Chris felt the jealousy coming from Ron, but Chris was surprised and quite thankful at how incredibly mature Ron was being. He had been worried he would have to choose between his brother and best friend.

They started looking for books and throwing ideas around, which were summarily shot one after the other.

“Transfiguration, he could turn into a fish.”

“That’s sixth year curriculum.’

“He could summon whatever they took.”

“They probably thought of that and warded whatever it is.”

They finally caught a break when Neville passed by them and heard them talking. He then enlightened them on the many uses of Gillyweed and Chris decided to buy some the next Hogsmead weekend. Chris was surprised to find out that Neville had learned it from the book Moody had given him in the beginning of the year and had frowned. After Neville had left Wyatt had leaned closer and asked.

“What’s wrong?”

“Nothing, s’ just Moody seems to be everywhere.”

“How so?”

Chris shrugged, “Before the First Task he cornered me to know if I had it covered. I said I had. Now this. And sometimes I feel like he’s watching me.”

“Dumbledore probably asked him to,” Wyatt said not worried and Chris nodded, then bit his lips looking at Wyatt. He looked over Wyatt’s shoulder and saw Hermione and Ron where busy while Hermione lectured Ron about his homework. “Can you swim?” he asked quietly.

“Of course,” Wyatt gave a half-chuckle half-snort which turned serious when he noticed his brother’s embarrassed expression. “Room of Requirement, tomorrow after classes,” he said firmly and cursed the Dursleys as he walked away. Morons! He bet Dudley knew how to swim!

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Time seemed to fly, Chris was now completely capable of orbiting wherever he wanted, and just to prove that, on the Hogsmead visit before the Second Task he had quickly orbited Hermione Wyatt and Ron to the Grangers, who had been ecstatic at being able to see Hermione, and

back to Hogsmead just in time for Hermione to have a row with Rita Skeeter. Nothing good could come from that.

Though he had yet to show any other powers he might have gotten from his father Chris had mastered his telekinesis and was starting to make some progress in his empathy training and was now able to calm his emotions enough so that Phoebe had a hard time reading him.

Though after a lot of prodding she was able to. But an inexperienced Empath like Olivia, for instance, wouldn't have been able to. Wyatt didn't like that one bit though, as he confessed to his father that when Chris blocked himself out to Phoebe he dimmed Wyatt too. Though he could still feel his brother it wasn't as clear as when Chris wasn't blocking himself. Leo mused that that must have been why future Chris learned to block his emotions out, to keep evil Wyatt out.

Chris was also quite happy at his progress in his swimming lessons. All in all things were looking quite up when Leo was called to Dumbledore's office a couple of days before the second task.

"I've called you here Leo because we have faced a problem during the selection of the hostages," Dumbledore said calmly.

"Decided to take something else instead," Leo asked hopefully. He was not a fan of having five people in the bottom of the lake for an hour. In enchanted stasis or not.

"No," Dumbledore chuckled.

"So, what's the problem? I've already alerted my student's parents and they have agreed."

"Oh, no. We have no problems with your student's hostage. As you know, each Headmaster or Headmistress withdrew their own champion's hostage from the goblet. Now, when it was my turn to withdraw Harry's I was extremely surprised to have, again, two names come up," he

finished leaning over his desk and handing Leo a slip of paper. “When were you intending to share with me that our Harry is your Christopher?”

Leo cursed internally as he read Wyatt’s name right next to Ron Weasley’s. He looked up and met the Headmaster’s blue eyes.

“Probably when you intended to share with us that my son was turned into a Horcrux.”

### **Chapter 18- A Charming Headmaster**

Dumbledore met the impassive green eyes of the father in front of him with some shock. He had been suspicious of the Halliwells’ interest in Harry from the start, and the fact that he not only had the same age but his middle and preferred name was the same as the Halliwells’ late son’s had not escaped his notice. When Wyatt Halliwell’s name came out of that goblet his suspicions were confirmed. Why would a boy young Harry just met be as important as his best, his first friend? Unless that boy was something else, something else Harry always craved; family.

But that in so little time the Halliwells would have realized what took him years to find out and confirm was shocking. He had always suspected Voldemort had done something to cheat death, but the theory of Horcruxes only crossed his mind when he was presented with Riddle’s diary two years previously. From there to realizing Harry was one was very quick, and suddenly the prophecy made sense, how Voldemort marked him as his equal. Why they had to face each other. Dumbledore believed that Voldemort had to be the one to destroy the Horcrux in Harry and by doing so it would cause his downfall.

He always knew of course, thanks to the prophecy, that Harry would have to face Voldemort. And he took steps to make sure Harry felt compelled to. Yes, he should have confronted Quirrell. He should have let Harry know that with the Philosopher stone being inside the mirror Voldemort would never be able to get it. But he thought that if he let it play out, he would

know where Harry's heart lay at, and he was not disappointed. Harry, as the champion he needs to be, rose to the occasion. He regretted it afterwards, how close he came to losing the boy. How his heart constricted as he saw the boy thrash in nightmares in the Hospital Wing. But his theory had been proved right. His mother's sacrifice gave him protection and placing the boy with Petunia instead of a loving family had been justified. He had to think of the big picture. Not the small boy under those white sheets.

He told himself that and yet he spent the nights by the boy's bedside asking for forgiveness.

And when the Chamber of Secrets had been opened he knew Voldemort was behind it, but he didn't know how. And to his eternal shame, when Lucius Malfoy kicked him out of the school once again he placed the burden on those small shoulders, and once again his mind said he had to but his heart berated him. So when the next year he saw that Harry was finding his own way to Hogsmead he let him, a feeble attempt to make up for everything he stole. And when at the end of the year he realized that in his drive to ensure their champion, he had not only condemned Harry to a hard life but he'd condemned another innocent man, he had no problem breaking the law to help Sirius escape and then went to Remus' cottage, knowing Sirius would go to his lover, and without the two men knowing he erected the strongest repelling wards he could manage. No one who had not been told by either Marauder, after he put up the wards up, how to get there, would be able to. He made sure of that. He made sure Sirius was safe. But it wasn't enough, it wasn't enough. Because even trying to find a way to save Harry, he had not wavered at the notion that in the end, no matter how much it hurt him, he would sacrifice the boy if needed.

But with the same certainty that he knew that, he also knew that the green eyes, Harry's green eyes, staring back at him won't and he knew that if he doesn't want to lose the war he needs to work with them, and hope, that they find what he hasn't. A way to save Harry.

Leo stared at him firmly and said, "We've found the location of the other Horcruxes and other three have been dealt with. We only have a problem with one that is in a vault in Gringotts, a vault Sirius could access if he were innocent," and the slight at Dumbledore was not lost in him. "And one that currently is near Voldemort. Unfortunately we are not able to say precisely where that is. We just know they are together."

"How?"

"Paige. She sensed the piece of Voldemort in Chris and from there sensed for the others. The one that belongs to Voldemort and his last one are protected, she can sense them but she can't pin point a location. We believe he might have warded himself against Whitelighters because of our presence here."

Dumbledore was shocked, in just a few months they had managed to find what he hadn't in two years, if they could destroy the other Horcruxes before Voldemort found his way back to a body he would move on. He only realized he said that out loud when Leo said:

"Chris saw him holding a wand in his dream. Which means he already has a body, even if not a good one. And before you go thinking of sacrificing my son, we are already working on a way to rid him of the Horcrux."

"How-"

"None of your business," Leo answered shortly.

"I am not the enemy here."

"Depends on the point of view," Leo said coldly. "If you want our help you can't be wanting to sacrifice Chris."

"Fair enough," Dumbledore conceded defeat. "But there is a prophecy-"

“That we want to hear...and then we can decide what it means.”

Dumbledore nodded accepting defeat. He was wise enough to realize that now that Harry had a family behind him things would be different. Truth be told he had wanted to tell Harry the prophecy long ago. His plan had been to tell him once he had established that Harry would indeed fight against Voldemort, at the end of his first year. But when looking at that young face he was unable to bring himself to destroying whatever was left of a childhood he had had so much part in destroying already.

He rose and went to a cabinet in his office. He retrieved a Pensieve and as he walked to the desk he said, “This will allow you to view my memory of the day the prophecy was said.”

“Wait a second,” Leo said getting up. “There are other people who should hear this.”

“Leo, in wrong hands-“

“My family, Remus and Sirius are not wrong hands Dumbledore. Get used to something Dumbledore, we Halliwells operate as a family. We might keep things from the children because they aren’t old enough, but not from the adults. Be sure that right now, every single adult in this family knows about the Horcruxes, as a matter of fact it was Sam, Paige’s father, who reminded her she could trace the other pieces of Voldemort’s soul with her Whitelighter’s ability. And it was Sirius who found the location of another Horcrux and realized he could access Bellatrix Lestrange’s vault if he was able to go to Gringotts. Some times more heads thinking on the problem is a good idea.”

“Fine,” Dumbledore nodded knowing that even if he just showed it to Leo the others would know. “When can you gather everyone?”

“Give me an hour.”

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An hour later, true to his word, Sirius, Remus, Phoebe, Paige, Piper, Coop, Henry and Leo were gathered in Dumbledore's office.

"I believe you haven't met my sisters and brothers-in-law yet Professor," Piper said gesturing towards them.

"My pleasure," Dumbledore said nodding towards them. "I was under the impression that Ms. Mathews was married to a Muggle."

"Yeah," Henry smirked raising his hand, which had been holding Paige's all the time. "We found a way to bypass your wards."

Dumbledore couldn't help but smile, maybe Leo was right. And having more heads to think would be good. He had been so used to doing it all alone. For everyone not only to defer to him but actually expect him to have all the answers for so long that he had stopped even considering the possibility of asking for other opinions. But sometimes, an outsider could find a simple solution, such as to hold a witch's hand to bypass the Muggle repelling wards.

"I believe that once inside you don't need to hold your wife's hand anymore," Dumbledore said and Henry shrugged.

"I like it."

"We'd like you to know that even though they couldn't be here, my father and Sam will be informed of whatever we learn," Piper added and Dumbledore nodded.

"Please take a seat," he said conjuring chairs for everyone and removing a memory from his temple and into the Pensieve as he sat. "There is a record of the prophecy in the Hall of Prophecies at the Ministry, but I was the one who witnessed it being done by Sybil the day I interviewed her for the post she holds today. Just a few short months before Harry was born."

“Wait a minute; Trelawney!” Remus cried in shock and a little disgust. “You mean to tell me that this is all over something that fraud said?”

“Sybil might not have the sight as she claims, but she does have seer blood in her family and has made two real predictions. Trust me to know the difference between a real prophecy and one of her false claims Remus,” Dumbledore chided.

Remus huffed a little but said nothing. Dumbledore poked the Pensieve and a figure of Sybil Trelawney emerged from it.

*“The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches...born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies...and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not...and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives... The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies...”*

“At first I thought only one boy fitted the description, Neville Longbottom, but then, James and Lily announced that they had a two-months-old baby. That they had kept the pregnancy hidden and since Lily had been doing more research from home than being on the field for some time, I had no reason to doubt them. And therefore Ha- Christopher,” he corrected nodding towards Piper “Fit the description as well.”

“Lily had been depressed after she found out she couldn’t have children due to an injury she sustained on a raid,” Sirius explained. “Actually, the Healer who tended to her, Madam Pomfrey, is the only one who knows Chris is adopted, and she is bound by her confidentiality vow. She doesn’t know who the biological parents are though. She supervised the blood adoption.”

“Poppy often tended to my Order Members back in the war. She was a member and I could trust her. There were so many infiltrated Death Eaters that I didn’t trust the care of my most targeted members to St. Mungo’s,” Dumbledore nodded. “Makes sense.”

“Yes, so after she found out, Lily had a real tough time before James managed to get her out of her funk convincing her to adopt a Muggle child. There were the orphans from the war, but as close related as the Wizarding community is it was rare to have one who didn’t have some living relative. Slowly she came back to help in the Order but she remained doing research and James didn’t complain. She had come close to dying and he was scared of her being in the field again. So when they announced Chris, no one batted an eye,” Sirius finished.

“And he fit the description, both James and Lily had defied Voldemort three times and he was born as the seventh month dies,” Dumbledore added.

“But he doesn’t,” Coop said, “The prophecy says “born to” and even adopted Chris was born to Piper and Leo who didn’t-no!” he said his jaw dropping when he saw his wife and sisters-in-law flinch.

“If you count the fact that Leo was our Whitelighter or even as an Elder he still took care of us as charges at the time and we operate as a group, than yes. Both parents did,” Piper said.

“They were accidents; we crossed paths with him when pursuing other demons, got in a scuffle, escaped and then went after our demon. He never came after us afterwards,” Paige tried to defend herself.

“He wasn’t stupid to. Going after you would mean the Wiccan community would have to interfere and that was a whole other ball game he didn’t want to deal with,” Leo said.

“Two of those times were when we were after demons future Chris sent us after,” Piper said pensively. “And one of those times future Chris was with us.”

“Which means he’s been defying Voldemort even before he was born,” Phoebe snorted.

“I always believed Voldemort chose Chris and not Neville for the similarities between them. Voldemort was a half-blood and he believed Chris was one too, by his standards,” Dumbledore clarified.

“But he got the right kid, didn’t he?” Henry who had been quietly thinking spoke for the first time. “No, listen. Think about the words. The prophecy says Vanquish, which is what you girls call what you do. You don’t call it killing the demons, you call it Vanquishing them. And the prophecy didn’t say defeat. It said Vanquish, so maybe the power he knows not, has to do with Chris being a Wiccan witch and not a Wizard. Maybe the power isn’t even just his powers alone but all of you together. Maybe that’s his power, his family.”

“I always thought it was love, which is something Lord Voldemort does not understand, but you’re right, family. Family love, is something he doesn’t understand either. Or else he would have never underestimated Lily’s love for her son,” Dumbledore looked at Henry impressed. He surveyed the people in his office seeing their determination. Leo had been right, he had been working alone for so long and for all his brilliance he had taken years to make the advances this group had made in just months, by working together. And somehow by seeing the determination in their eyes he knew they’d find a way to save Chris and then maybe the boy would have a chance to the life Dumbledore denied him, and then may his conscience could ease a bit. Yes, the power he knew not was exactly that; love, family.

### **Chapter 19- The second Task**

Wyatt hated the wait, at least in the first task they could see what was happening. Now they were just left at watching the surface of the lake waiting for the champions to surface. Wyatt of course had an advantage, he knew Chris had a fright when he met a bunch of Grindylows, Wyatt actually had to fake a little hiccup there since he had given a startled gasp and people

had looked at him weirdly, and now he knew Chris was waiting for the others, he was worried for the hostages. Wyatt was at the same time proud of his brother and a little annoyed at him for taking the poem so seriously. He looked back at Fleur Delacour who was sobbing her heart out as Madam Maxime reassured the girl that as soon as the champions were back they would retrieve her sister and she was not in danger. Fleur didn't believe her. Honestly, Wyatt wouldn't have either.

He smiled as he felt his brothers annoyance at the merpeople for not letting him take the Delacour girl and then determination, he knew Chris was back on route. This bond was very handy, he felt a little bad for not letting Chris know. On the other hand, he thought Chris might have noticed that he had a better grasp of Wyatt's emotions than others. The other day he had stopped Wyatt before they went to their parents' quarters.

"You shouldn't worry so much. I'm sure I'll be fine, with all the help I'm getting and all. Nothing will happen."

"I'm not worried," Wyatt tried to play it cool.

"Yes you are. You've been feeling sad and worried towards me ever since Christmas. But you shouldn't. In the end, I always manage," Chris gave him a cheeky grin and ran ahead. Chris must have thought he was worried because of the task and not because of the Horcrux, and Wyatt started worrying Chris would start having a better control of the bond and be able to tune it better like Wyatt did. So that night, Wyatt played close attention to his Aunt's Phoebe's teaching. He should maybe start learning how to close the bond too. Besides, up till now he and Hermione had just shared a few kisses, but he most certainly did not want his brother privy of anything he was feeling in that area.

Wyatt smiled as Cedric broke surface pulling up the pretty Asian girl Chris had a crush on, Olivia was next with her best friend, and soon Krum came up pulling a little boy that looked

like him. He went to congratulate Cedric and started biting his lip as the hour mark grew closer and there was no sign of Chris.

“He was the first one there,” Cedric told him. “I don’t know what he was waiting for. He had his hostage and all.”

Wyatt knew, and silently demanded his brother hurry up. A rush of irritation at some unknown feeling came through the bond and Wyatt quickly started the meditation techniques trying to keep his feelings to himself.

Finally Chris broke the surface and everyone started applauding. Wyatt shook his head and followed Hermione as she ran to her friends. He scowled a little when Hermione hugged Ron a little too long.

He wasn’t stupid, he knew the girl had a crush on Ron, but the other boy was too oblivious to act and Wyatt really enjoyed her company. He’d have fun while it lasted. He couldn’t deny either that when he had arrived and realized Ron was Chris’s hostage he had been jealous. Ron was like a brother to Chris, he was occupying the place in Chris’s life that Wyatt should have had if the Elders hadn’t meddled and this was just one more proof that no matter how close they got it would never be how it should have been. And that made Wyatt jealous and sad to think he’d never get as close to his brother as he would have. That is, until his father pulled him aside and had a whispered rushed conversation with him telling him his name had come out too but they had decided for Ron, and he’d explain everything better later. Wyatt didn’t know if his dad did it on purpose or if he had something else to tell them, but that little phrase *“You’re name came out too,”* made his day.

He laughed at Chris’s blushing face as Fleur thanked him for saving Gabrielle and envied Ron’s brother, Percy was it? As he fussed over Ron. He wanted to be able to fuss openly over Chris. But he couldn’t. So he casually strolled over, took a glance at his parents who were sneaking

longing glances at Chris as they conference with the other judges, and patted Chris's back, "So, took the song seriously did you?"

Chris scowl, "Don't even start, I already heard it from Hermione, Ron and apparently even my conscience," he muttered the last part. Wyatt bit his lips. Chris must have mistaken Wyatt urging for him to be faster as his own feelings. Why wouldn't he? The other two people with him were in a stasis.

"Yeah, well. Listen to your conscience, it must be real smart," oooh, he hoped by the time Chris figured the bond out he forgot that comment.

They turned to listen as Dumbledore gave away the points and Wyatt couldn't help but cheer as Chris got points for moral fiber. Another task surpassed. Now they were left with the Third Task and the hardest one; finding out how to save Chris.

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"So Dumbledore knows now," Chris nodded. He actually preferred it that way. After hearing the adults' reasons for not trusting Dumbledore completely Chris understood why they thought it better to live him out of the loop. But even though he had already questioned himself why the Headmaster had allowed those things to happen, Chris hadn't been able to not see the man fondly. Maybe it was because he was used to not have anyone take care of him so he hadn't expected it from Dumbledore, or maybe because Chris liked knowing that the Headmaster was human, made mistakes just like any other man. Everyone wanted Dumbledore to have all the answers, be perfect, and then they got angry when he wasn't. Just like everyone wanted the Boy-Who-Lived to be perfect, and when they were faced with a scrawny kid with glasses, that didn't have a clue about what he was doing, knew nothing of the Wizarding World and was a parselmouth to top it off, they all got extremely disappointed as if he had betrayed them or something.

Chris liked Dumbledore, he was fond of him, and he wasn't going to shun him because he made mistakes. But he wasn't going to be stupid either and think everything Dumbledore said was law, do it without questioning. He had passed that stage after he found out how Sirius had spent twelve years locked up without a chance to defend himself. No, that naïve Chris that entered the Wizarding World at the age of eleven thinking it would be perfect was gone, replaced with a realistic one. The Wizarding World wasn't perfect, just like the Muggle World or any world wasn't, he had to learn to live in it and make the best and maybe, who knows, help change what was wrong. And why did he have to give up one world for the other? Why not take the best from both. He had been thinking about that a lot since he realized that Magic School taught Muggle curriculum too. He had studied a little during summers, before it was interrupted by his usual drastic departure from the Dursleys. Dudley had needed summer lessons with a tutor to make up for his grades, and to make Dudley feel better and keep appearances to the neighbors, the Dursleys had ordered Chris to study too, making it sound as if Chris was the one in need of remedial lessons and Dudley was being generous and helping him. Chris didn't mind. It allowed him to keep up with his Muggle studies. He thought about talking to his parents and maybe making it a permanent thing. He knew Hermione did. She had summer lessons and during the year she had her books with her and a study course. But that was Hermione, and well, it was quite self-explanatory.

"Yes," Leo confirmed bringing Chris back to the topic. "But we still don't want others to know so Voldemort won't know. This way you'll have an advantage since he won't be expecting you to have any Wiccan or Elder powers."

Chris nodded, not that he had seen any Elder power besides orbiting anyway, but maybe one day he'd have some. He did find out a new Wiccan power the other day. And when he'd come to tell Piper and Leo Piper couldn't help stop gloating, in a very classy way mind you. But she couldn't. Wyatt confided in him later that the fact that she had seen that future Chris had

powers that came from their Aunt Prue and Paige but she hadn't seen one from her had always made her jealous. So when Chris came and told them about how earlier in the day Ron's full vial of potion slipped from his hand, after Chris had already emptied the cauldron they were working in, and when Chris saw it and panicked it froze in mid air as he made for it, she had a smile that reached from ear to ear.

*"No one saw it," he assured them. "They were all busy with their own potions and I was quick to pluck the vial out of the air. Whoever might have seen something must just have thought I acted as if it was a snitch."* They hadn't cared anyway. Piper was extremely happy and had already decided that the time Chris had previously dedicated to training his orbing would be used to fine tuning his freezing with her help and Wyatt's. It turned out Wyatt could both freeze and blow things up.

"Do you think Wyatt and I will have the same powers?" Chris asked since Leo brought the subject up again. So far the new active powers he had shown were the same as Wyatt's, and he'd wondered if they would be the same.

"I don't know, probably not. I'm not an Empath," Wyatt said. And he wasn't, the only person whose emotions he could read was Chris. "And mom and the aunts don't have the same powers. Dad says that because mom and the Aunts were the Charmed Ones and wielded the Power of Three for a while before they had us that opened their magic in a way that made all of the offspring more attuned to our heritage and therefore we show more active powers than they did. According to dad it's the same principle of why Wizards nowadays need wands. They conditioned their magic to this. Every Halliwell has the potential to develop any of Melinda Warren's active powers, but magic also works with emotions, so the active powers we end up developing have to also be in tune with our character. For instance, many say mom has the most fire power of the three sisters, but if you look at her mom is also the most explosive."

“And that means?” Piper said in a voice that promised a good grounding. Wyatt smiled sheepishly but was saved by Leo.

“That you don’t spare anything to protect your family,” Leo saved him and Wyatt mouthed ‘smooth’, “Phoebe on the other hand was always more attuned with her emotional side. She’s the romantic one, she’s the one who is always worried about how everyone is feeling, so developing Empathy was quite a natural step for her. From his Wiccan side Wyatt can freeze and blow, he has telekinesis and telekinesis orbing that is his Wiccan magic mixed with his Whitelighter side. Then from his Whitelighter side he can orb and heal and has his shield. And last but not least he wields Excalibur. If you notice he has some quite aggressive powers. And Wyatt was always one for attack as the best defense,” Leo gave Wyatt a scolding look at which his oldest son smiled sheepishly at him. When Wyatt was younger he had gotten in more than one brawl with other students thanks to his short temper until the sound groundings he got made him understand that such behavior would not be tolerated. “I’ve noticed that you, on the other hand prefer to try and handle things before you’re left with your last resort. You are more attuned into considering how things affect others. Which is why I think you developed Empathy and freezing. But at the same time I also think that you aren’t as passive, that if there is no choice you will attack, so I think you’ll have some kind of firepower too, just maybe not the same as Wyatt or in the same quantity.” As a matter of fact Leo was quite sure he knew which firepower Chris would have and if he was right it came from his Elder side.

When Leo had gone on his vanquishing demons rampant he had found out that he wasn’t the only one that had used lightning bolts against demons. They seemed to have already been wary of them. Elders are pacifists and Gideon, for all his craziness had no reason to go vanquishing demons. There was just one other person that could have these powers and did vanquish a whole lot of demons, and that was future Chris. But as he said, he didn’t think Chris would have other attack powers, such as blowing up. He got to know future Chris better in

those last months and as he got to know this one his suspicions were confirmed. Leo always felt that future Chris didn't like the way he went after demons, attacked them before they could attack the sisters, but he did it because he had no choice. Because he came from a future where it was attack first or die. The Elders lightning bolts were exactly that, a power that beings that were predominantly pacifists and that would try to deal with the situation first had, but if left with no choice, as a last resort, they would do what they had to do. And he always thought that defined Chris quite well.

Of course, just like anyone, Chris wasn't perfect, and he had the Halliwell's mighty temper, so if his buttons were pushed you didn't want to be near him, but Leo was sure that his limit line was a lot farther than Piper's was for example, that he withstood a lot more before he blew up. The months of patience with the sisters his future self handled was a good indication of that, and so was the fact that the Dursleys were still alive and with no injury during all the years Chris was with them.

Chris didn't like talking about them, but a little comment here, something he found surprising that was natural there, and Leo could pretty much guess pretty well what went on there.

There was also the way Chris had withstood the taunting he received from the whole school before the first task. Yes, he had almost punched Malfoy once and then he and Ron had drawn their wands at Malfoy again later, but it was mostly to defend Hermione and because Malfoy had offended Remus, other than that Chris mostly tried to ignore what was happening. He knew Piper, or Wyatt wouldn't have. There would have been a lot of bloody noses running around. He liked to think that even though Chris resembled his mother so much, that was something he got from him.

"Well, this is all very nice and good, but we mister, have work to do!" Piper said motioning for Chris to get up from the couch. "Let's go train."

--

In the end choosing Ron so no one would find out Wyatt had been chosen as a hostage too had been for nothing. Somehow, and for the life of them none of them could find out how, Rita Skeeter found out, and she published it, in an article that was mainly directed at attacking Hermione. She basically talked about how Hermione, who she had previously said was dating Chris, had decided to dump the younger boy for someone older and still famous. The Slytherins had shown the article to Chris, Hermione and Ron in Potions class. Which led to one horrible class with Snape threatening him, accusing him of stealing ingredients, which he later remembered he did steal once to make Polyjuice Potion and related it to his parents, whoever might have put his name in might be the one stealing the ingredients, and also told them about Karkaroff coming in the class and Snape and him having a hushed conversation. Piper and Leo told them what Piper had overheard about Karkaroff. After class they had come to show the article to Piper, Leo and Wyatt. Because this could be bad.

"I'm an international bonbon?" Wyatt snorted as he read the article.

Skeeter had elaborated in the friendship that was flourishing between Chris and Wyatt and mused on the fact that the young which was trying to bring discord between the friends.

*"Losing his family in such a tragic way young Harry has found solace and guidance in the Halliwells, looking up to their son, the Twice-Blessed, Wyatt Halliwell as a mentor, friend and why not older brother, in such a way that the Twice-Blessed was one of young Harry's possible hostages for the Second Task. With no pity whatsoever to what this young boy has already lost, Hermione Granger pits friend against friend in a dispute for her."*

"Mentor?" Chris spluttered.

"This is bad," Hermione worried and looked up to see Piper and Leo frowning over the article. What if someone read more into Skeeters inflaming words and realized Wyatt was Chris's older brother.

“Do you think they’ll figure it out?” Wyatt asked.

Leo sighed, “No. She is so scandalous that no one will make the connection, besides, she never once referred to him as Chris, I’ve noticed that most people don’t even know you prefer to be called Chris or that it’s your middle name. Most people think of you as either Harry or Potter. What I want to know is how she found out. Only Dumbledore knew and he wouldn’t tell, and everywhere else we talked about this were warded places where she couldn’t have spied.”

“You told me by the lake, but there wasn’t anyone within earshot,” Wyatt frowned.

“And I thought Dumbledore banned her from the grounds,” Chris added.

“She wasn’t there,” Piper agreed. “She’s hard to miss and I paid attention on everyone on that task. I didn’t want anyone trying to drown Chris or something.”

“Well, I don’t know how she did it. But I for one will find out and then she’ll have to deal with me!” Hermione grumbled and the others looked at her with a little fear for what the girl had in mind.

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A/N-I was planning on showing Chris’s and Wyatt’s powers throughout the story but since it’s been a common question I will answer here. When I was deciding which powers they would have I took one important thing for me into account: Wyatt and Chris are equal in power. I never understood the whole Wyatt being more powerful, and I’m not a big fan of stories that turn Chris into this super-witch that is the most powerful around. They’re brothers, from the same mother and father so it’s reasonable to think they’ll have more or less the same power.

So I decided this way. They would have some active powers in common which would be:

Telekinesis, Orbing Telekinesis, Freezing and of course Orbing and they will both have shields (as I’ve already mentioned before).

Then they differ in the following:

Wyatt: Blowing up, Healing

Chris: Empathy, Lightning bolts and he can become Invisible (the last two being Elder powers).

Now you're saying: Hey! She's a liar! She said they'd be equal in power but Chris has one more active power than Wyatt. And I defend myself:

As I'm sure many of you already figured it out (because I'm not as smart as I'd like to believe I am) Wyatt wields Excalibur. At the beginning, when deciding their powers I had given Wyatt one more power to equal them in the amount of active powers but then I remembered Excalibur and bit my lips, because, if they had the same amount of powers and Wyatt had Excalibur too then he'd be more powerful. I toyed with the idea of having them both be able to wield Excalibur but that made no sense since Wyatt was supposedly the reincarnation of King Arthur; can't have two reincarnations at the same time. So my way of equaling them was giving Chris one active power more than Wyatt that balances Excalibur out.

Also, if anyone is wondering, I know that evil Wyatt could conjure energy balls but I always thought that was a demonic power that I figured he had because he was evil. So he doesn't have it here.

So there you have it. Those are their powers, you'll probably forget what they are (I always do when there are lists) but I'll mention them again in the story so don't worry!

I know the article in the book didn't say bonbon but I loved that phrase!

Thanks for reviewing!

## **Chapter 20- The madness of Mr. Crouch**

"She resigned?" Leo asked aghast.

“Yes,” Paige groaned.

“In the middle of the term?”

“Yes, apparently she found true love and didn’t want to have to deal with unruly teenagers anymore. I’m pretty sure her problem were the unruly teenagers,” Paige snorted.

“But- in the middle of term? Couldn’t she have waited for the year to end?”

“No, obviously,” Paige said annoyed. “We have hire someone else,” she almost whined.

“But who?” Leo asked flustered.

“Actually,” Paige smiled. “I kind of have an idea.”

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“Come again?”

“I did some digging and I found out you write under a penname for a few Wizarding magazines on Magical Creatures. And I’ve read some of your articles. I’ve noticed you don’t broach just the Magical Beings that deal with the Wizarding World but you also talk about the ones that are more connected to Wiccan Magic.”

“They’re all Magical Beings,” he shrugged.

“Exactly!” Leo smiled “And that point of view is why we thought you could give our students a more comprehensive view in our Magical Life class. I talked to Dumbledore and he only had good things to say about your time teaching there.”

“Yes, but what about my monthly problem?” Remus asked.

“Magic School is in another plane, we can open a door to your cottage so that that time of month you can come back home to transform,” Paige explained. “As a matter of fact you don’t

actually have to board at the school if you don't want to. Honestly, nowadays there are just a few cases of students that board so we only have a few teachers that live there."

"I- I don't- Won't the parents mind? I mean the prejudice-"

"Look," Leo said seriously. "I won't lie to you. Had this been over a decade ago the parents might complain. At that time demons were at their height, attacking witches everywhere and anything that might have had a slight connection to Dark was repelled immediately. But since the Triad, demon activity has been very low. The Triad made a whole mess in the underworld and exterminated many of their own. Since, we have been able to have relative peace, not only our family but other witches too."

"And we make a point of doing preemptive measures. Keeping an eye out and vanquishing whoever tries to reorganize them and mess with our peace," Paige added and Leo smiled.

"The point is; most witches haven't had to deal with demons in a long time. It's all been theoretical, which has allowed us to educate not only the students but the parents in the differences between demons and magical creatures, and most assuredly the difference between a really dark magical creature and one that is considered dark because of prejudice. A werewolf is just that. I know that without the Wolfsbane, which by the way we can provide-"

"Albus has been providing me since before I taught at Hogwarts."

"I know," Leo smiled. "I'm just saying we can too. But my point is, that even though without it a werewolf can't control his impulse one night a month, people like you take precautions to make sure they don't hurt anyone. A werewolf that doesn't even try, that deliberately sets out to hurt people, would do it even if he hadn't been beaten. Would be a mortal, witch or wizard that would find a way to hurt people. What I'm trying to say, is that we managed to make our students and their parents realize that being a werewolf doesn't make one dark."

“Which is what I’ve always said,” Sirius nodded exasperated. “And which basically means Moony, you have no excuse to say no,” he grinned at his lover, happy for him to have a chance at teaching again. Remus had always loved it, ever since school when he tutored students.

“Oh, come on Moony! You know you want to do it!”

Remus smiled biting his lips. Yes he did. And Magical Creatures, or Magical Life as Leo called it, was a subject that had always interested him for obvious reasons. Being one himself he had always wanted to understand not only what he was but what others were, so he wouldn’t make the same mistakes as the people who shunned him for ignorance. And along the way he fell in love with the subject. Defense Against the Dark Arts was something he had to learn well because of the times they lived in but this was his real passion. To be able to show young generations how the Magical balance worked, how all creatures contributed to them, even the ones that should be feared, was something he thrived on.

“Yes, okay. I’ll take the job,” he smiled.

“Great,” Paige smiled. “Or else I might have had to kill myself instead of facing a horde of students with free periods for lack of teacher.”

They all burst out laughing, Paige could be so dramatic.

--

“So! Hu, what do you intend to do?” Piper asked angrily as she paced Dumbledore’s office.

Paige had appeared with some Magic School disaster right after the kids had left their rooms but Piper had not forgotten that little detail about what Chris had related earlier. Oh, no. And now she could do something.

“What do you expect me to do? Chris has not complained to me. How would I know?”

“He threatened to use a truth potion on a minor. That is illegal! I want Snape fired!” she yelled.

“My dear lady,” Dumbledore tried to appease her. “If I fire Severus I have to not only tell him but the Board of Governors why, and unless Chris makes the complaint himself, I would have to tell him that his mother did and then everyone would know.”

Piper’s eyes narrowed, “I don’t like your tone.”

Dumbledore sighed, “I will talk to Severus, I know I’ve let his childish behavior run amok. But it serves a purpose too. Every single student in this school knows he hates the Boy-Who-Lived.”

“Which means the Death Eater’s offspring relate it to them.”

“Yes, I can’t tell you why. I gave my word to Severus, but believe my word, he is on our side, and as much as he might threaten Chris, he will never touch a one of Chris’s hair to hurt him.”

“Because of Lily?” Piper asked. “Leo was her Whitelighter,” she said simply at Dumbledore’s shocked look. As the older man nodded she added. “How do you know he wouldn’t hurt Chris because he represents what Snape lost?”

“Because he gave me his word.”

“Oh, and that is worth a lot coming from an ex-Death Eater,” Piper snorted derisively.

“Believe me, Lily’s Potter death was not an outcome that Severus found acceptable.”

“So, the enemy of my enemy is my friend. He wants revenge.”

“And he is a Slytherin. He is our best chance at knowing Voldemort’s plans once he is back, because we know that sooner or later he will be, and I’m afraid that it is pointing to sooner,” Dumbledore said tiredly.

“Fine!” Piper snapped leaning over Dumbledore’s desk threateningly. “But if that bat touches one hair of my son’s body I will blow him up, bit by bit. And *that* is not a figure of speech.” she waved her hand in front of him. “Ask Hagrid’s door if you don’t believe me,” And with that she

stalked out. And Dumbledore shook his head as she reminded him of another witch, the very same one Severus loved. Yes, the Halliwells had chosen Chris's adoptive parents very well.

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Things went south after that, Hermione started receiving hate mail and was even more decided to find out how Skeeter had found out about Wyatt. Even Mrs. Weasley seemed to have thought Hermione was playing both boys as, when her usual Easter toffee eggs came, Hermione's was extra small while Chris's and the one she had sent for Wyatt, which Wyatt had been pleasantly surprised by, had been extra large. Wyatt and Chris had made a point of floo calling the woman from their parents quarter's to clear up any misunderstanding. The next morning Hermione received a full box of homemade fudge which helped her get over her annoyance at the letters.

Ron had been annoyed at Chris because Chris hadn't told him the leprechaun's gold he used to pay the Omniculars Chris had bought him at the World Cup disappeared. Chris had tried to tell him he hadn't noticed but Ron had only been more upset about not having money.

"It's a question of pride," Leo had explained to him when they talked about it. "To be able to pay you for the omniculars made Ron feel better. I know you hadn't realized but if you had would you have told him?"

Chris shook his head. He hadn't minded buying the Omniculars for Ron.

"But you should have. Think of it this way. The other day, when Wyatt wanted to go flying again and Piper didn't let him and he yelled at her you were shocked."

"Of course, I mean. She's a great mom and he yelled at her because of flying!" he looked aghast. The last Friday dinner Sirius and Remus had been there too because Leo wanted to know how Remus was fairing with his classes and Wyatt had asked Sirius about his flying

motorcycle. Sirius had told him that Hagrid might have it. Wyatt had asked if he could ride it, after all he was 16 and he would be getting his driver's license as soon as he got back to the US. Piper had blown a fuse and expressly forbidden him to ride any kind of motorcycle, much less a flying one. The shouting match that ensued had the guests wide eyed and the Halliwells, who had already been present to such matches, shaking their heads.

"Every child fights with their parents. It's normal. But because you never had parents you don't understand anyone taking them for granted. For Ron it's money. He doesn't have it, so he doesn't take it for granted."

"But I didn't have it either before. I don't take it for granted, I just don't mind sharing with my friends," Chris said seriously.

Leo smiled, "I know. And if Ron suddenly had some money he probably would have wanted to share it too. But Ron only met you after you had money. So he doesn't see that, he just sees the fact that he doesn't have any."

Chris sighed, "This is all very confusing. How do you know so much?"

Leo chuckled, "Human emotions usually are. I could say that it was my years as a Whitelighter but it wasn't. My family wasn't starving, but they weren't rich either. And every extra cent was saved for my education. I know how Ron feels. I felt that same way growing up. Now and even when I was fulfilling my dream of becoming a doctor I understood why they did it. If they hadn't I wouldn't have been able to study. But when I was younger, all I wanted was to not have to use second hand things, to be able to invite my friends to things as they did me."

Chris nodded. He would try to keep that in mind when dealing with the issue again. Or maybe he'd just sit Ron down and explain to him how Chris liked sharing with Ron not because he wanted to flaunt his money, but because before Ron he had not only never had money to share but no one to share it with. He nodded to himself, yes. That would be better. It was

about time he explained to Ron that for Chris, Ron was the richest person he knew, because he had what Chris had always wanted, a loving family. He smiled at Leo.

“Thanks,” he said and bit his lip thinking if he should add the dad. He had been wanting for a while but he didn’t know if Leo and Piper would appreciate it. So he didn’t.

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Chris was walking back with the other Champions from the Quidditch pitch where Bagman had explained to them about the Third Task when he heard a noise and turned back abruptly.

“What was that?”

The others stopped and looked backwards too.

“I didn’t hear anything,” Fleur said taking her wand out.

Chris had and he had also started specifically sensing for others as he had been taught by his Aunts, both with his Empathy and Whitelighter senses. There was someone in the woods, it was familiar, he had sensed this person before but didn’t know who it was. It had to be before his bind was broken. The emotions coming from whoever was there were a jumble, there was fear guilt, urgency and then it would mute and an eerie calmness would happen just to be replaced by the jumble again. One look at Olivia told him she had felt it too.

“I think someone better call a teacher,” Olivia said firmly.

Chris turned around and cried “*Expecto Patronum*” and his bright Patronus went galloping away.

He looked at the others and shrugged, “I asked Remus to teach me how he used it to send messages. He did it once with me.”

“That was a corporeal Patronus!” Victor Krum gasped.

“Er-yeah-so? I bet you can do it too,” Chris said awkwardly turning his attention back to the bushes.

“No I can’t! And I’m seventeen!”

“Er- uhm, okay- movement in the woods! Focus!” Chris tried to change the subject which was aided by the fact that a figure tumbled out of the woods.

“Mr. Crouch!” Cedric cried running forward.

“CEDRIC!” Olivia cried pulling him back. “We don’t know if it’s really him. He could be glamouring!”

Mr. Crouch looked wild. His hair in disarray, his face scratched and unshaven, his clothes ripped and bloody. He moved forward and grabbed Chris by his robes. Chris, who had lowered his wand at seeing someone known, took an involuntary step back but Crouch didn’t let go.

“Dumbledore...horrible...son...Harry Potter.”

“Mr. Crouch,” Chris tried to explain. “It’s me, Harry Potter. I’ve already called Dumbledore.”

“Stupid thing...Dumbledore...son...who are you?”

“Harry, Harry Potter...Mr. Crouch. You’ve met me. You’ve met all of us,” Chris repeated nervously looking up and silently asking the others for help.

“Vat is vrong vith him?” Krum asked.

“His emotions are a mess,” Olivia said. “We better take him inside.”

Chris agreed with her, his emotions were a mess, but as soon as she finished saying that the eerie calm washed over Mr. Crouch and he stood up and started talking to someone none of them could see.

“Thank you, Weatherby, and when you’ve done that I would like a cup of tea. My wife and son will be arriving shortly, we are attending a concert-“

“E is crazy,” Fleur whispered. “I think ‘e thinks ‘e is talking to ‘is secretary.”

“Harry! Cedric!” Dumbledore’s voice came booming from the darkness and Chris felt relieved as he saw Dumbledore approaching with Mad-Eye Moody and Snape. “What is happening?”

“It’s Mr. Crouch Professor. I don’t think he is well,” Cedric said stepping to the side so Dumbledore could get to Crouch. The four students watched as the teachers approached.

“Bartemius,” Dumbledore said firmly. “What happened to you?”

“Yes, my son received twelve O.W.Ls, most satisfactory, yes, thank you,” Mr. Crouch kept talking to the air.

“Bartemius,” Dumbledore said firmly again shaking the man with one hand. That seemed to bring Crouch out of his stupor and he grabbed Dumbledore’s robe.

“He’s coming back...got to tell Dumbledore.”

“Bartemius, it’s me, Albus.”

“My son...Harry Potter,” he continued and suddenly straightened, “Yes, Weatherby, thank you, we need to talk to-“ and who he needed to talk they couldn’t hear because Moody sent a stunner to the man that made him drop on the spot.

“Alastor!” Dumbledore chided.

“He was raving. We better take him up to the Hospital Wing where Poppy can sort him out and we can find out what he wanted.”

“Yes, right. You’re right. We were getting nowhere,” Dumbledore nodded and with a flourish of his wand he conjured a stretcher under Crouch and levitated him.

“Children, please go back to your respective dorms. We will take over. Thank you for your help. Ten points to Hufflepuff and Gryffindor and I will be thanking your respective Heads.”

With that the teachers left carrying the unconscious man. Going back to his dorm was the last thing in Chris’s mind. He wanted to tell his parents what he just saw. He had planned on ditching Olivia and Cedric once they started heading towards the Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw dorms but unfortunately Olivia seemed to think the same as him since she didn’t head to the Ravenclaw dorm but to the staff wing. Chris sighed and headed to the dorm. He’d at least tell Ron, Hermione and Wyatt and then call Sirius and Remus with the two-way-mirror.

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“I don’t understand what happened,” Sirius asked exasperated.

“Neither do I Sirius,” Dumbledore said tired. He had arrived at the Halliwell’s quarters to post them on the news and found that they already had been warned about Mr. Crouch’s appearance by Olivia who, taking her duty to protect Chris seriously, had gone to warn the Halliwells that whatever Crouch was raving about had to do with Harry Potter. Chris had warned Sirius and Remus and they in turn had entered in contact with Piper and Leo, who had called Phoebe and Paige. What they hadn’t known was what happened afterwards.

Dumbledore, Moody and Snape had taken Crouch to a private room in the Hospital Wing reserved for when teachers were ill, so they could have privacy. They had locked him inside and Dumbledore had left his two of his most trusted Order Members to guard the door while he went to fetch Poppy. When they returned they found Barty Crouch dead. With a diagnostic charm Poppy surmised he was poisoned but only more thorough tests could determine how and with what he was poisoned.

“But who could have poisoned him?” Paige asked.

“I don’t know. Poppy still has to determine if he had already been poisoned or it happened while I was talking to him. She offered to work with the medical examiner. So we could be kept appraised. But he can’t have been poisoned then. We took him to a private room in the Hospital Wing and Alastor and Severus were guarding the door.”

Sirius started to grumble but Dumbledore glared at him, “And I assure you Severus did not poison him. He was never alone with Crouch. Alastor was with him the whole time if you don’t trust me, trust that Alastor does not trust Severus either.”

“Yeah, well. All we know is that now Crouch is dead and we don’t know what he wanted to warn you about,” Sirius huffed.

“We also know he was under the Imperious Curse,” Remus sighed rubbing his temple. “It’s the only explanation for what Olivia and Chris felt from Crouch. He must have been fighting it.”

“Which means he could have been the one to put Chris’s name in the goblet,” Piper nodded. “And the real culprit might have never even set foot in the castle.”

“Bartemius kept mentioning his son,” Dumbledore said tapping his nose pensively.

“He’s dead,” Sirius shrugged. “I saw the Dementors burry him myself from my cell. Crouch didn’t even come to see him. He had brought his dying wife before to visit her son once. But when he died he didn’t even spare a thought to recovering the body.”

“His dying wife came to see her son?” Paige asked. “Why didn’t she recover the body?”

Sirius shrugged.

“I think she died before him,” Remus frowned. “I remember reading in the paper. Private funeral. Just Crouch.”

“So how do you know they buried Crouch Jr? Dementors can’t see,” Piper said. “How do you know it wasn’t his mother?”

“What? Piper-“ Leo snorted.

“No, I mean it. If I was dying and one of the boys was in a place like Azkaban, guilty or not I’d do what I could to get them out. Just the other day Chris told us about Polyjuice Potion, and we’ve glamoured ourselves a hundred times. How do you know she didn’t switch with her son and Crouch Jr. is roaming free without anyone knowing? He wouldn’t be the first Death Eater to fake his death,” Piper said looking pointedly at Sirius.

“But Crouch would never risk his job like that,” Sirius tried arguing.

“He had already lost his position. And if there was one thing he did love almost as much as his job was his wife,” Dumbledore pondered. “I’ve known them since they were students here and were dating. Bartemius would have done anything she asked of him, as long as he could do it quietly.”

“And Crouch Jr. would be in the best position to Imperius his father,” Phoebe nodded. “Well, that’s just great!” she huffed, “Too bad we don’t know where he is.”

Everyone nodded grimly.

### **Chapter 21- The Third Task**

“I tried talking to Winky,” Chris sighed. “But I got nowhere there. She just said she kept her master’s secrets.”

“Can’t Dumbledore order her to talk?” Wyatt asked bending over the library table they were sitting at and making sure no one was listening in.

“She’s not a bonded elf anymore,” Ron explained. “No one can order her. But on the other hand she’s not compelled by elf magic not to tell her master’s secret’s anymore. That’s all her.”

Hermione rubbed her head, “Do you think she knows?”

“No idea,” Chris shrugged. “But Dumbledore said he was afraid she might still be bonded to Crouch Jr. So he had to send her away-oh don’t look at me like that Hermione! He sent her to take care of some remote estate he has and said that once this whole mess is sorted he’ll see what he can do for her. But he can’t risk it. Crouch Jr. could order her to poison someone you know?”

“She could have been the one to poison Crouch,” Wyatt said.

“No, she can’t,” Ron shook his head. “If she was still bonded to the Crouch family her elf magic wouldn’t allow her to hurt her master directly.”

“Which means, we still don’t know how he was poisoned,” Hermione deadpanned.

“I still vote for Snape,” Ron said and Chris and Wyatt nodded but were glared down by Hermione.

“For the hundredth time, the Headmaster vouched for him. Let’s just focus on the task shall we,” Hermione gritted her teeth.

--

“Poppy’s and the medical examiner’s findings were final,” Dumbledore told Leo and Piper in his office. “It was a fast acting poison, probably instant. Poppy found the remains of what must have been a capsule that was put inside Barty’s body by whoever might be controlling him. The capsule was ruptured and he was killed.”

“Could they determine how the capsule was ruptured?” Leo asked.

Dumbledore shook his head, “No, the remains of the capsule were too small to determine the magical signature of what ruptured it. It could have been many things, a charm triggered to act if he entered a specific ward, a time spell that had to be renewed or else it would rupture the capsule- so that if he got away and his captor didn’t renew the spell he would be killed or maybe a direct spell, but that would mean that whoever activated the spell had to have come in contact with Barty and that was not possible. Poppy assured me the poison killed in a matter of minutes.”

“Still,” Piper frowned. “The dream Chris had in Divination yesterday leads us to believe that whoever activated the spell had to have access to inside information. The Ministry is keeping Crouch’s death in a tight lid but Voldemort still found out about it.”

“How long did it take for you to get to the Hospital Wing?” Leo asked.

“Not long,” Dumbledore frowned.

“And did you check Crouch or did you just put him on the bed?” he asked.

Dumbledore’s eyebrows shot up in realization, “I had no reason to. He didn’t seem injured, just out of his mind. And he was unconscious. You think whoever activated the capsule might have been on the grounds?”

“And when you got the Hospital Wing he might have already been poisoned. Which means that maybe we were wrong and what we thought before, about whoever put Chris’s name in the goblet being at Hogwarts might be right. Maybe Crouch Jr. was acting with someone else,” Leo said.

“If you’re thinking of Karkaroff, Severus assured me he is terrified-“

“Terrified enough to try and prove his loyalty?” Piper asked. “I would feel better if we keep a close eye on him.”

“Fair enough, we will,” Dumbledore accepted. “How is Chris doing?”

“He is training hard,” Leo said. “Thanks for making it possible for Sirius to come disguised so regularly. He can help Chris in ways that the kids and us can’t. But we’ve also been training his active powers. Since no one will be able to see inside the maze we’ve decided he should use everything at his disposal.”

Dumbledore nodded satisfied. He knew Sirius had been flooing to the Halliwell quarters disguised as Remus and had been meeting with the kids in the Room of Requirement, all of them helping Chris train. Since no one here knew Remus had been working at Magic School no one found it odd for him to be here when he should be there.

“And you’re student? I hope she is not wanting for anything to prepare,” he asked. They wanted Chris to survive yes, but neither Dumbledore forgot about Cedric, giving him plenty of opportunity and nudges to where to look for nor should Leo forget Olivia.

Leo smiled, “Oh, don’t worry about that. Olivia has basically every one of our students helping her. And when she’s not with them I’ve seen her and Krum training together.”

“Really?” Dumbledore asked amused.

“Really, they’ve seemed to turn the competition into a turn on for their relationship. I’ve heard comments about how the loser has to treat the winner to a very classy dinner of their choosing,” Piper smiled. She had been worried, once she realized Olivia and Krum’s relationship was going further than that one date for the Ball, that being rivals in the competition would end up in broken hearts but she was actually surprised at how both teenagers were making it work to the point they could help each other train. That was truly cooperation. Some of the Magic School students, the same that had given Wyatt grief for helping Chris, tried to do the same to Olivia but the girl had spunk, and put them in their place. And they had inspired the other champions to do the same. Realizing that training with a

partner was easier than alone. Cedric and Fleur had paired up for occasional trainings and they had even established that once a week all five champions would train together. Making two teams that varied each week to help each other get over obstacles that the Room of Requirement provided them. She was surprised Dumbledore hadn't known, but then again he had spent a lot of time in the Ministry lately because of Crouch's death on Hogwarts' grounds.

--

Time flew, as it's prone to do when you are dreading something, and the morning of the Third Task loomed over them sooner than they would have liked it. With the pretense of bringing Olivia's parents, Paige and Phoebe had come to Hogwarts too. Phoebe saying she couldn't miss the chance of seeing the last Task. So when McGonagall called Chris to meet the Champion's families Chris was surprised to see them talking to Remus who had come as his family accompanied by his dog.

"Nice dog professor," Cedric had exclaimed petting the dog that was wagging his tail. "Has he been yours for long?"

"Oh yes, I don't even remember a time without Padfoot, unfortunately he isn't house trained so I was afraid of leaving him alone at home and find no house when I'm back."

Chris could swear Padfoot gave Remus a doggy glare and bit his lips to stifle a laugh.

"So how are your partners in crime?" Remus asked.

"They're off for finals, though Hermione had to stop by the library. She said she had an idea about how Skeeter could be getting on the grounds. Did you read the papers today?" he asked wincing and Remus nodded frowning. "Sorry."

"Not your fault," he ruffled Chris's hair.

Somehow Rita Skeeter had found out about his dream in divination and had decided that the tragic hero angle wasn't selling anymore. So she went off with Chris being probably mentally unstable, and had gone on telling about his dark tendencies. How he was a parselmouth that befriended werewolves and half-giants. They hadn't named Remus but after how Snape had outed Remus last year everyone knew they were talking about him. Chris had made light of the article at breakfast but he had seethed inside. Why couldn't they leave his friends out of it?

"I think we need a tour of the castle," Phoebe said lightly. "I've only been in Piper's and Leo's quarter," which was not true, she'd been in the Room of Requirement helping Chris learn how to fight. "I think we need a gentleman to show us the way," she said looking pointedly at Cedric who smiled sheepishly. "Sorry Mrs. Halliwell, but I think I better give the tour just to my parents," he said looking warily at his father who was glaring daggers at Chris and ushering them away.

"Okay, but don't be a stranger. Wyatt is always talking about you. He might want to invite you over the holidays."

"Thanks! I'd love that!" they heard him cry from outside the doors.

"Actually, we would love a tour," Victor Krum said from where he was standing introducing his parents to Olivia's parents. "If you don't mind. We have been around but no one ever explained us the history behind everything."

"That's right," Olivia said and Fleur nodded.

"I don't know the history-" Chris started but Remus cut him off.

"But I do," he smiled. "Shall we," he said pointing to the door and while all the other students were taking their last finals Remus led the group that consisted of the Krums, the Delacours, Olivia's parents, Paige, Phoebe and Chris, trailed by his dog to a very nice tour of the castle and

grounds explaining the history behind the halls and armors and sometimes even explaining in details some of the Marauder's most memorable pranks as his dog would bark and whine in some specific spot. They had just separated for lunch and resumed their tour afterwards. Chris loved it. He had never had the patience to read *Hogwarts a History* and there was just something about how Remus explained it that made you feel part of the story. And to learn more about his adoptive parents, both of them, since Remus never failed to explain of how Lily would scold James even if the teachers hadn't been able to prove he was behind a certain prank, was priceless.

All in all he had a great day and when the families separated at dinner he had almost forgotten why they were there. That didn't last much as when he looked up at the staff table he saw Bagman and a new addition, Cornelius Fudge.

"He's here to replace Crouch," Remus whispered in his ear and Chris nodded, he noticed Fudge looked stern and Madam Maxime was looking at her plate and her eyes looked red. "Fudge has been advocating that Maxime might have had something to do with it, because of you-know?"

Yeah Chris knew. Maxime might deny it but anyone with two brain cells knew she must be half-giant like Hagrid. But oddly enough Chris never thought she might have done it. He never sensed anything bad from her. Annoyance at Hogwarts having another champion, yes, but no hatred or any bad feelings toward Chris. Chris also noticed that Piper wasn't eating either, just shakily playing with her food. He hadn't been able to talk to her or Leo that day because they were giving their students exams, but Phoebe had told her they were very nervous. No one would be able to see inside the maze and anything could happen. Piper looked up and met his gaze and gave him a shaky smile, he tried to smile back. He looked back at the table and met Wyatt's blue eyes, Wyatt was nervous too but tried to smile. He had only seen Wyatt at meals, because he had exams too, but he had known how steadily more nervous his brother was

getting throughout the day and it had nothing to do with his exams. Chris had realized a while ago that he could feel Wyatt even if they weren't close by. And realized Wyatt must have been able to also, he hoped Wyatt was able to keep his parents calm.

"I'll be alright," Chris said tightly. "You just let them know."

Wyatt's eyes widened but he just nodded.

--

Okay, so alright was not what he was. Most assuredly not as he looked around and saw tombstones. How had he gotten here? Everything had been looking up a few seconds ago. He and Cedric would bring the cup to Hogwarts.

After Dumbledore had asked the Champions to join Bagman at the maze Chris had gotten up and seeing that his parents were already up he straggled behind a bit. That was enough for Piper and Leo to catch up to him. They didn't say anything, scared someone could catch them but Piper had taken his hand and squeezed it tightly as Leo squeezed his shoulder.

"Good luck," she whispered in a husky voice and kissed his cheek. He nodded and joined the others. Bagman tried to pep talk him but Chris wasn't really listening. He met with McGonagall, Hagrid and Moody and McGonagall had told them the rules, Bagman had announced their points and positions in entering the maze and at his turn Chris went into the maze losing track of his rivals.

The Maze had been surprisingly easy to overcome. The biggest surprise had been when he had to stop Krum from cursing Cedric. He had been quite shaky after that. Krum had used the *Cruciatous Curse* on Cedric and Chris had felt it. For a second the pain had paralyzed him but Chris pushed it away using the techniques his Aunt Phoebe had taught him to close himself off and help Cedric. He also recognized how Krum was feeling, it was the same way Barty Crouch

was feeling when talking to Weatherby. He had stunned Krum and sent red sparks up. He was afraid Krum had done something to Fleur too as he had heard her scream, but if he had, he had either stunned her or she had been too far from him for Chris to feel what she was feeling. By that point there were only him, Cedric and Olivia in the race. And somehow he had been the first to get to the cup. He had been almost there when he spotted Cedric running towards the cup, closer than him and an Acromantula going straight towards Cedric. He had yelled and without thinking orbbed the Acromantula to another part of the maze he had been before.

Cedric just goggled at him:

“Uh- er- could you forget you saw that?” Chris asked sheepishly.

Cedric looked at him and the spot the Acromantula had been. Then he looked up. “Considering I’d be dead if you hadn’t, I think I just might. Makes sense though now,” he smiled.

Chris winced, “It’s a secret.”

“I figured as much, don’t worry,” he extended his hand to Chris and Chris shook it. “Go on,” he motioned to the cup.

“What?” Chris asked. “No, I can’t, you were going to get there before me. It’s yours.”

“I would have been spider food if not for you.”

“You’re exaggerating. I’m sure you would have thought of something.”

“I’m sure I wouldn’t,” Cedric looked at the cup and then at Chris. “What do you say we take it together? A Hogwarts win?”

Chris smiled and nodded, “A Hogwarts win.” And they walked to the cup and counted down to three, and as soon as they touched it they were transported to where they were now, but where were they?

## Chapter 22- Magic

**A/N-I couldn't help myself. I'm not that evil. Two updates the same day. Though the next will probably take a week because of this! Have fun!**

--

Wyatt started making his way towards the top box with Remus and Padfoot. Something was wrong, very wrong. He couldn't sense where Chris was anymore. He could still sense Chris and there was fear, but he couldn't pinpoint his location. Something was very wrong and getting to his parents was being made difficult by the crowd. Why did they have to sit so far from the top box?

--

Chris hadn't thought much when he heard the cold voice saying kill the spare and heard the other voice say "*Avada Kedrava*" he didn't think twice, he used his Telekinesis to shove Cedric out of the way making him land on the cup and disappear. There had been a cry of rage and a rough hand grabbed him. Chris tried orbing out but there was something stopping him. He could feel his magic trying to orb him and being blocked from doing so. The man that grabbed him shoved him forcibly towards a marble head stone. He tried kicking him with one of the moves his Aunts had taught him but the man was faster and cried a *Petrificus Totalus* and then tied him to the headstone that said.

TOM MARVOLO RIDDLE

--

Cedric reappeared at Hogwarts grounds, lying on the floor, gripping the cup and staring shocked at the dark sky, he had seen the green light of the killing curse fly just inches from his head. He was suddenly surrounded by a crowd congratulating him and pulling him up.

“The champion! My son is the Champion!”

He heard his father say.

“M’ not,” he mumbled but no one heard him. Dumbledore was trying to get to him. He saw the Halliwells and Professor Lupin approaching. He knew why, Harry was one of them, the son everyone thought dead. Not Harry, but Chris, the name he preferred.

“My son!” His father yelled once again thumping his back and lifting one of his arms. Cedric yanked it back down. He was no champion.

“I’m not!” he suddenly yelled. “I’m not!” he sobbed. “Harry was there first. He is still there,” he was getting hysterical when Dumbledore turned him towards him.

“What happened Cedric? Where is Harry?”

“Portkey, the cup was a portkey. I told Harry to take it together, a Hogwarts win. It took us to this cemetery we thought it was part of the task...but then...there was this man with a bundle and he fired at me...the killing curse...but I was shoved out of the way, I don’t know how and I fell on the cup and it brought me back and Harry is still there...they’ll kill him...we have to save him!” by now he was hysterical and Dumbledore ordered his dumbstruck father to take him to the infirmary. He turned towards the Halliwells and Remus and jerked his head towards the castle. They followed him leaving the audience behind.

When he was confident he was alone he asked, “Chris must have used his powers to shove Cedric out of the way, can he orb yet?”

“Yes, but he’d be here already if he could. There must be wards around,” Leo said.

“There are, I can’t sense him anywhere, it’s like he fell off the face of the earth,” Wyatt said desperately.

“How would they know?” Piper asked.

“They wouldn’t but they probably expected you to go save him thanks to Rita Skeeter’s articles about you getting close to him,” Dumbledore said pensively and turned to Wyatt. “You said you can’t sense his location but can you sense him? With you being brothers-“

“I can, I can feel him. He’s still alive and pretty scared but I can’t pinpoint where he is.”

“Maybe we can use that to find him. Without orbing and without the portkey he has no way out,” Remus said worriedly a whine of agreement coming from Padfoot.

“What is going on here!” a voice demanded coming close. “What happened? Didn’t the Diggory boy win?”

“No Cornelius. It was a trap and they have managed to kidnap the Boy Who Lived. I need your help to get him back,” Dumbledore explained calmly even though he was feeling anything but. They were wasting time and Fudge would probably just get in the way.

Fudge looked flustered, “The Boy Who Lived, kidnapped from under our noses? This looks bad Dumbledore! We need to find him. I’ll contact Amelia and Scrimgeour at once. They’ll send their best. I’ll use your floo,” he nodded going straight to the stairs without waiting for an answer.

“Well, at least that’s help,” Remus sighed.

“Yes, but that means you need to go to Hagrid’s hut,” Dumbledore looked pointedly at the dog. “Don’t argue, we don’t have time to worry for both of you. Stay there until one of us calls you.”

“Please Padfoot, please. I know you want to help, but imagine how Chris would feel if you’re caught,” Leo begged. And maybe it was because since the start, for all their camaraderie Leo and Sirius had been a little bit jealous of each other, and for him to be the one begging he

knew he was thinking of Chris, Padfoot nodded. He brushed Remus' legs and whined as if saying:

"Be careful, bring him back."

"Maybe they warded it against Whitelighters, but maybe we can scry for him," Paige took control. "Wyatt go up to the dorm and get something of Chris's to scry with. Meet us at Dumbledore's office."

"Fudge is there," Dumbledore reminded her.

"Fudge will want all the help he can get," Piper said firmly. "You heard him. This looks bad for him."

"We also need to send someone in the maze to retrieve Olivia," Phoebe added. "We found both Krum and Fleur stunned. Maybe Olivia was too."

"I'll send Alastor in," Dumbledore nodded. "With his Magical eye he'll be the fastest. Go to my office and start preparing to scry. I'll alert Alastor and ask Minerva to get the students back to their dorms."

--

Okay, this was bad, really bad. Bad times infinity bad. Voldemort had just been resurrected and to add injury to insult called all his Death Eater buddies. Then he'd gotten into a monologue. Why did bad guys always loved to explain their evil deeds? The Death Eater groveled at his feet; Lucius Malfoy especially had been emitting a terror at seeing Voldemort back. Who would have thought? Chris always thought he'd be ecstatic, but most Death Eaters weren't. Apparently they had been enjoying a megalomaniac psychopath free-life.

And of course, after his speech and groveling it was time to kill Chris, with a little bit of torture before. Why not? Chris was currently panting from the round of Cruciatu he had been treated to. How lucky of him.

"A little break," Voldemort said, "A little pause, that hurt didn't it Harry?"

"Nah," Chris panted. "You Crucio like a girl," he honestly didn't know why he did it but he instantly regretted it as he was hit by another wave of the curse and dropped to the ground in agony wishing he could disappear. Suddenly the pain left as Voldemort lifted the curse and yelled enraged.

"Where did he go?"

"Uh, what did he mean?" Chris thought bewildered as he stared at Voldemort who was staring right back at him.

"I don't know Master- he couldn't have Apparated- the wards, only those Marked can Apparate in here," Wormtail squeaked terrified and Chris frowned. What the hell was he talking about?

"He obviously vanished Wormtail," Voldemort cried hitting Wormtail with a Crucio who withered in the ground.

Chris meanwhile got up bewildered and waved his hand in front of Voldemort. When he did so he jumped startled, his hand wasn't there. He looked down and he smiled, his whole body was invisible. Well, this was new, and handy. Chris looked around, there was no way he could take all these Death Eaters on his own. On the other hand they were all now running around as headless chickens looking for him.

"Come on Harry. This isn't hide and seek. Come out and die like a man," Voldemort taunted.

"Don't be a coward."

*"Well, there was being brave and being stupid,"* Chris thought. And right now, running away to live and fight another day seemed like the best option. He picked up his wand that turned invisible as soon as he touched it and walked slowly away from Voldemort, trying his best not to make any sound. There were wards, Wormtail said. But where did they end? If he could just get past them he could orb back to safety. He was halfway to the cemetery's gate when he stepped on a dry twig and one of the Death Eater cried.

"Over there! There was a sound over there!"

The Death Eaters and Voldemort all started shooting spells and Chris forgot all about stealthiness, he started running as fast as he could, trying to dodge the curses sent his way. Funnily enough none of them were green since Voldemort had yelled, "Capture but don't kill. He's mine to kill!"

After he was hit by two nasty curses, one burning his leg and another slicing a deep gash in his arm that was bleeding profusely, Chris's control over whatever was keeping him invisible faltered and the Death Eaters could see him aiming better at him. He got hit by a bone crushing hex in his other arm but didn't stop. He fired a few curses of his own without looking. He just thought that if he got past the gates he could orb, he just had to reflect those curses. And then something else happened out of the blue, and he was surrounded by a blue bubble and most of the curses were bouncing off of it.

"What the hell is that?" One of the Death Eaters yelled but Chris paid him no mind as his foot touched the outside of the gates and as soon as his body passed through it entirely he could feel his magic being freed and orbed away just in time to hear one more enraged yell.

--

The scrying crystal fell on the map after hours of scrying uselessly. Scrimgeour and Amelia Bones had sent their best Aurors and Scrimgeour had come with them. They were waiting for

orders right outside the Apparating wards so they wouldn't waste time. It had been his idea to move the scrying from Dumbledore's office to the Hogwarts' gate. They had quickly conjured the tables and maps needed outside. They had also been trying to find out where the portkey was keyed to but had had no luck so far. Flitwick had already warned them, to break up the spell enough to find the location could take days. Scrying was their best option. But they had been losing hope. When the crystal fell they wasted no time and Scrimgeour yelled for his Aurors and they Remus and Dumbledore Apparated at once. The Charmed Ones and Wyatt orbbed after them. *That* had been a shouting match between Wyatt and his parents and his parents lost. He had a point, he was strong and he had picked Excalibur up from their quarters. He'd be an asset in a fight. They appeared in front of a cemetery's gate when one of the Aurors yelled.

"It's You-Know-Who!"

"Attack!" Scrimgeour yelled but all they had time as they ran forward was to see Voldemort wave and say, "See you Albus," at them as he and the dozen robed figures Apparated away.

"MOM!" Piper heard Wyatt yell. He was rooted to the front gates. "We gotta get back! He's at the gates!"

Piper didn't think twice and backed up as she saw Wyatt disappear in a cloud of orbs. As soon as they stepped through the gate again Paige grabbed her and Phoebe and orbbed away just in time to hear.

"Oh my God! It's Peter Pettigrew!"

--

Chris reappeared at the front gates and his burned leg gave out on him. He felt light headed from the amount of blood he had lost through the gash in his arm and fell on the floor. He vaguely thought that Wyatt could heal him.

*"Where are you?"* he heard in his head and thought he was going crazy.

He saw the front Gates of Hogwarts and Leo running towards him before darkness took over him.

--

Leo had just seen everyone disappear in front of him and could only start praying as he took one of the conjured chairs in the path that led to Hogwarts' gates when he saw orbs forming. His head shot up, that couldn't be, they just orbed out. But instead of the girls and Wyatt the bloodied form of his youngest son formed.

"CHRIS!" he cried and ran towards him dropping next to him just in time to see him close his eyes.

"Hold on buddy!" he urged. "WYATT! PAIGE!" he cried but didn't have to wait much as his oldest son materialized falling next to Chris and hovering his glowing hand over each of his injuries starting with his arm. The gash closed, color came back to his face and the other arm that had been at an odd angle and limp straightened. Chris's eyes opened and he yelled in pain.

"What?" Leo asked.

"His leg," Wyatt answered as his mother and Aunts materialized. Wyatt ripped the leg of Chris's pants up and saw that his leg had what looked like third degree burns all over it. He quickly ran his healing hand over it restoring the skin.

“Ouch. That hurt,” was Chris’s comment as he fell back on the floor disoriented. “I can become invisible,” he said looking up at the sky lost, “Oh, and Voldemort’s back. Not good,” he shook his head.

“I think he’s in shock,” Paige said worried helping them get Chris up.

“The others?” Leo asked.

“The Death Eaters and Voldemort fled, but somehow they caught Peter Pettigrew. I guess they’re sorting that out. Let’s get him inside to the Hospital Wing,” Piper explained.

Chris didn’t respond as he let himself be led inside.

--

They were almost at the Hospital Wing when their path was blocked by Mad-Eye Moody.

“Where’s Dumbledore?” the Auror asked gruffly.

“Back at the scene of the crime,” Paige asked. “Where were you?”

“Dumbledore sent me to fetch your student didn’t he?” he answered gruffly. “You ought to go see her. She was stunned in the maze. Her parents aren’t happy at all. I’ll take Potter.”

“No,” Leo said as he felt Chris instinctively get closer to him. “We’ll take him. We’re taking him to the Hospital Wing and I expect Olivia is there too after all.”

Leo could swear there was a twitch in Moody’s good eye. He knew Dumbledore trusted Moody, to the point that Dumbledore had told them to let Chris use his Wiccan Powers inside the maze even if Moody would be able to see it with his eye. He said Moody wouldn’t breathe a word to anyone but him and if Dumbledore asked him he’d keep the secret no questions asked. But Leo, somehow, had always felt uncertain near the Auror.

“He’s my student Professor, not yours.” Moody said calmly.

“Yes, but we’re taking him to *your* Hospital Wing,” Piper gritted out. “So I don’t see the problem here.”

Moody looked at her and smiled eerily, “Protective of your little cub aren’t you? I didn’t know. Not in time to warn my Master, but as soon as I saw what he did with that Acromantula I knew. So did he orb away? Is that how he escaped?”

“What?” Piper spluttered confused but Moody had his wand drawn and was pointing it at Leo’s chest who was the one holding Chris and cried, “*Reducto!*”

Leo hadn’t had time to think but Chris apparently had because he cried, “NOT MY DAD!” and threw both of them to the ground raising his shield over them as Wyatt quickly slashed Excalibur, that had been in his hand, down by instinct only thinking he had to get Moody away from that wand and had sliced the Auror’s hand out in one swift move.

“MY HAND!” Moody cried in pain as Chris’s shield grew bigger to protect all his family from the mad man. Moody dove with his other hand for his wand when Paige cried.

“Wand”, though nothing happened due to the anti-orbing wards, seeing that Wyatt used his telekinesis to shove the wand further at the same time that a shout of “*Incarcerous*” came from behind Moody and ropes appeared around him binding him up as McGonagall’s enraged face appeared followed by Madam Pomfrey and Snape. With another swift movement of Madam Pomfrey reattached Moody’s hand that had been on the floor to the stub that was gushing blood.

“I can’t guarantee it will be perfect since it would have worked better in your true form,” Pomfrey sniffed.

“Mr. Halliwell you can put that down,” McGonagall said to Wyatt and Wyatt realized she thought the shield was Wyatt’s doing since it was well known he had one.

“Hum, yeah, right,” Wyatt said a little bit nervous. He closed his eyes and thought “*Wish the shield away Chris.*” He felt Chris’s surprise and realized Chris hadn’t realized that earlier he had communicated with Wyatt telepathically. “*We’ll think about this later little brother. You’re safe. You don’t need the shield anymore. Just think that.*” He felt Chris trying to calm down and opened his eyes to see the shield disappear. As he looked to the side he saw Chris staring at him from the floor. Piper had crouched down to check that he and Leo were fine and was frowning at Wyatt too.

“What did you mean by his true form?” Phoebe asked.

“That can’t be Moody,” McGonagall said. “Albus told Alastor to find Olivia and guard her and the other champions. The real Alastor would have never left his post. When we heard the yelling we came straight away. Now we need to find the real Moody. He has to be stashed somewhere near so he could get what he needed for a Polyjuice Potion. Search his office,” she told Snape who nodded and billowed away without a word. “We’ll also have to wait to see who he really is.”

“No need,” Piper said walking to him and eyeing the man who was smirking at them. “Barty Crouch Jr. Aren’t you?” Moody tried to wiggle from the ropes but Piper raised her hand “Uh, uh. I wouldn’t do that if I were you. I didn’t use it before because I don’t kill humans but I might just make an exception for you.”

Moody spat at her face and Wyatt and Chris cried.

“HEY!”

Paige and Leo held them back with a warning look. Piper wiped her face and sneered at the man, "I guess this time there is no mommy to get you out of Azkaban."

"My master will. He has been reborn. He will rule--"

"*Silencio*," McGonagall waved her wand. "They really do get annoying with their propaganda," she rolled her eyes.

### **Chapter 23- And now?**

Chris had been checked by Madam Pomfrey and given a clean bill of health. She prescribed him dreamless sleep potion and ordered him to stay in the Hospital Wing.

"But if he is healed he shouldn't need to," Piper had told Madam Pomfrey.

"He is still in shock from everything that happened. His dorm where all this roommates will harass him is not the best place to be," Madam Pomfrey said crisply.

"We'll take him to our quarters. He'll have peace there. Besides you have your hands full with Moody," she looked at an emaciated form slumped on one of the beds. He had been found on a magical space in a trunk in the fake Moody's office. "Please Madam Pomfrey, we care a lot about him. He's one of Wyatt's best friends and his mother was Leo's charge."

"She was, was she?" Madam Pomfrey looked at Leo speculatively and Piper remembered she was one of the people who had aided in the adoption potion and realized that she also must have figured it out. This secret would be out soon. Voldemort must have realized too after Chris orbed out of his grasp so there really wasn't much more reason to keep it a secret, except to avoid public harassment as long as possible. "Fine Mrs. Halliwell. But please, any question you might have, leave it to the morning. The boy is magically and physically exhausted."

"Of course."

After talking to Olivia's parents and reassuring them that the man they thought responsible for stunning her and Fleur and putting Krum in an Imperious was detained and awaiting the Aurors and Dumbledore, they had taken Chris to their quarters, pausing to fetch Padfoot, and given him the dreamless sleep potion. He had slept all night long in Piper and Leo's bed. After giving Wyatt, who was also restless, a drop of the potion, he too slept next to Chris in the bed and Piper, Leo and Sirius watched both of them, just as when they were little. Except now they weren't and they were about to face dangers no one should.

Paige and Phoebe had orbed home to start reinforcing the wards around all of the Halliwell homes. They didn't want to waste time. By putting Anti-orbing wards around that cemetery it was clear Voldemort knew that this time around the Wiccan World would not remain neutral.

Right before dawn Dumbledore and Remus knocked on the door. Piper closed the bedroom door gently and they arranged themselves in the living room.

"Peter was caught by a stunner that the Death Eaters were throwing at Chris. Scrimgeour administered Veritaserum. They are issuing an apology tomorrow in the Prophet pleading for Sirius to show up so they can apologize formally. And they've formally dropped all charges. Since everyone knew we were together Scrimgeour gave the papers to me. There will also be compensation since they held Sirius unlawfully for so long. Fudge is blaming it all on Crouch to save face oh, and they decided to let your illegal status as an Animagus go as long as you register," Remus explained rubbing his eyes. Sirius rubbed his back gently. The news of his freedom, so expected for, dampened by the fact that they were once again at war.

"At least he didn't try to make it go away." Piper snorted.

"He couldn't with me and you there," Dumbledore said and sighed. "There is also the problem that Fudge is resistant to the idea of Voldemort being back."

"What!" Leo shrieked "He can't-"

“No, he can’t,” Dumbledore tried to calm him down. “At least I hope so. There were too many witnesses. But that doesn’t mean he won’t try. He tried to make it sound like it had been all a mad plot from two crazy Death Eaters who were supposed to be dead. But every Auror in that graveyard saw Voldemort. Not to mention you and me.”

“Which lays a problem too,” Remus said grimly.

“What?” Piper asked.

“Fudge accused Dumbledore of trying to undermine him with your help.”

“How exactly did we do that? We helped the Aurors he sent in,” Leo said annoyed.

“Fudge is worried about what another war is going to do to his image,” Remus said disgusted.

“That’s all he talked about. He even said it when Chris had been abducted, remember? He couldn’t have cared less for Chris, he was worried that The-Boy-Who-Lived being abducted under his nose would look bad. I’m worried Fudge will be more preoccupied in making sure his job is safe than in attacking Voldemort. He refused to send envoys to the Giants, to get the Dementors out of Azkaban and he came very close to wanting to lock me in-“

“WHAT?” Sirius shrieked and Remus put a calming hand on his.

“Dark creature, remember? But don’t worry, Dumbledore very subtly reminded him that locking up your lover after everything they had to atone to you wouldn’t be wise.”

Sirius snorted, “He wants me to agree that it wasn’t the Ministry’s fault, just Crouch’s and stay quiet so he’ll do whatever I want.”

“Basically,” Dumbledore agreed.

“And Crouch Jr.?” Piper asked.

“He was questioned with Veritaserum. He was the one to put Chris’s name in the Goblet and he was trying to make sure Chris got through the Tasks and be the first to the Cup so Voldemort could use Chris’s blood in the resurrection ceremony. He was also the one who activated the spell to break the poison capsule inside his father. He did it nonverbally as he was closing the door of the room we had put Barty in.”

“That’s also why he stunned his father. So he couldn’t talk,” Leo added and Dumbledore nodded grimly.

“Your theory was right, his dying mother used Polyjuice to change places with him and Barty kept him under house arrest with an Imperious all these years. Apparently Winky, their house-elf, had convinced Barty to let Jr. attend the world cup and when she lost him in the mayhem and he managed to conjure the Dark Mark Barty severed the bond with her. That is when she came to Hogwarts.”

“So Jr. turned the favor around,” Piper said. “Was she helping him?”

“No,” Dumbledore said. “Since she wasn’t bonded anymore Jr. couldn’t order her, and Winky is good at heart. She cared for him since he was a boy but didn’t like the things he did. She loved him but knew what he was doing was wrong. He said he tried to get her to spy on Chris but she refused.”

“Which is how he never found out about Chris and us,” Leo nodded. “He said as much.”

“Yes, according to Peter, Crouch Jr. had warned them that there was some truth behind Skeeter’s articles and that Chris was getting very close to you. That is why Voldemort put up the wards. Which brings us to our other problem,” Dumbledore sighed. “Both in Peter’s interview as in Crouch Jr.’s the only people present were Auror Shackbolt, who is a member of the Order, Rufus Scrimgeour the Head Auror, Amelia Bones the Head of the Law Department and myself. They have all given me their word they won’t breathe anything of

what was said. Rufus and Amelia aren't stupid they know that not only Chris is obviously important to this war but that if they want your help they'll need to be in your favor."

"Pettigrew and Crouch mentioned the fact that Chris is ours," Leo stated shrewdly.

"Well, Crouch Jr. did and Peter just said Chris orbed out," Dumbledore nodded. "But as I said, those two aren't Fudge. They are planning for the war even if Fudge isn't. They also plan for Pettigrew's and Crouch Jr.'s trials to be closed, and if they are we'll be in luck because even though the sentence will be public the records won't."

"Including their testimony," Sirius said.

"Yes," Dumbledore agreed. "And the people that are involved in the trial will be under a secrecy vow. They won't be able to divulge anything. The problem is if Fudge decides he wants a public trial."

"He won't," Remus shook his head. "That would mean not only bringing more attention than he wants to what they did to Sirius but he won't be able to keep the war under the radar."

"I'm counting on that, but you should be ready for the fact that Chris's secret won't be a secret for long," Dumbledore said to the Halliwells.

"We already figured as much," Piper said. "And now, really, it's a mute point. If we can keep it a secret long enough to take Chris home for the summer so he won't be harassed by the press and the student's we're happy."

"Yes, hum," Dumbledore said uncomfortably. "About that."

"The last day of school Dumbledore, Chris will ride the train for appearances sake," Leo said firmly. "Sirius and Remus will be waiting for him and from there he will be orbiting to San Francisco."

“The blood wards need to be renewed-“ Dumbledore tried faintly.

“Chris didn’t say much of what happened,” Piper said. “We’re waiting for him to wake to talk to him. But he did say Voldemort can now touch him because Chris’s blood runs through his veins. Which basically means you’re blood wards are null, because Voldemort can get past them. He can’t get past the ones in Halliwell Manor though. After years of getting attacked in our own home we’ve developed wards that will keep *any* being with harmful intentions out.”

“Fine,” Dumbledore conceded. “I didn’t think you would be amenable. Just had to try. You do realize what Voldemort using Chris’s blood means for Chris though don’t you?”

“Yes, that he lost the blood protection,” Remus said exasperated but Leo and Sirius were shaking their heads.

“Nope,” Sirius said with a smirk reminiscent of their pranking days. “That Chris might be anchoring Voldemort to life but now, Voldemort is anchoring Chris.”

“So our theory has just gained a lot more potential for working,” Leo matched Sirius’ smile.

“We should do it as soon as possible. This summer. Sam told Paige the last time they talked that he was close to getting the information we needed about Lily. As soon as we get home, we should see how close.”

“We could also try summoning their spirits,” Piper said. “And you know, the Halliwells past generation spirits for a power boost wouldn’t be so bad either. Maybe this time Prue will get off her lazy ass and come too.” Piper said. She had gone past the sad part about losing her sister to the annoyed one that after almost two decades Prue had yet to come when summoned.

“If you need me for what you have in mind,” Dumbledore said. “Feel free to call me.”

Leo opened his mind to explain what they had in mind realizing Dumbledore must not have understood what they were talking about but Dumbledore rose a hand, "No, don't tell me. I pride myself on my Occlumency shields but considering the people I'll be dealing with best if I don't know in advance," the others nodded in agreement. "An Auror will be here tomorrow to collect Chris's testimony. Pettigrew gave the names of who was there too, but I tell you. I highly doubt Fudge will let anything happen to his collaborators unless they are caught in the act.," he said grimly. "He'll do everything in his power to keep them out or else the fact that they have been giving him gold for his campaign all these years will look bad for him."

"Yes," Remus said angrily. "And Lucius Malfoy is so certain of that that he was there, faking concern about hearing there had been a spot of trouble at Hogwarts," Remus faked Lucius voice. "Walked out just as we did."

"I've sent Severus in," Dumbledore said gravely. "I don't expect him to report soon. Voldemort will probably test his loyalty."

"Will he be okay?" Piper asked. Snape was unpleasant but that didn't mean she wanted him dead.

"Severus knows how to play his part," Dumbledore said calmly and gave Sirius who had just snorted a pointed glare. "I need you two to contact the old crowd. The Order needs to be reassembled. We'll also need a Headquarters."

"Grimmauld Place is empty if you want it. It's clean. After getting rid of the locket Kreacher did a 180 turn. He's been the most perfect and dedicated house-elf. With the protections my father put in, if you add yours, it will be extremely safe."

"Can't your cousins get in?" Leo asked and Sirius smiled.

“Nope, my father was paranoid. He was Lord Black, the Head of the Family. There are a lot of powers that our archaic society gives the head of the family. So he was afraid someone else in the family would try to murder him in his sleep. The house is warded against them. They can only come in when the Head authorizes and he has to authorize every and each time. And speaking of Lord Black, I think I’m due a visit to the bank,” he finished happily.

“Just let the papers run the story about your freedom first love,” Remus chuckled as he got up. “Sirius and I should go. Round everyone up. We’ll be in touch and I’ll be in class later today if you need.”

Piper and Leo nodded and Piper hugged both men, “Be careful.”

“We will. Voldemort has to regroup. He won’t start attacking yet,” Sirius tried to calm her.

--

Chris was the first to wake with a start. He was shaking horribly, having just seen the green light of the curse hit Cedric. He had been too slow.

“It’s okay, you’re safe,” he heard a soft voice say and felt arms involve him. He looked up and saw Piper holding him. She kissed his forehead.

“Mom,” he whispered snaking his arms around her and just letting her hold him. She just rocked him back and forth in silence until he calmed down.

--

It was the first time he had called her mom. She had waited years to hear that sound again, but this wasn’t how she had wanted it to be. She didn’t want him to be waking from a nightmare, scared out of his mind. She relished in the word nonetheless. He had called Leo dad the previous night too, even if he hadn’t registered it. In the heat of the moment, Chris had been the fastest and had saved Leo’s life, calling him dad for the first time. But the night had been so

full of sadness, and nervousness and planning for what was coming next that the moment hadn't been savored.

"Cedric?" Chris asked. He hadn't the previous night, but honestly. He was so out of it that night that no one could blame him.

"He's fine. He wasn't hurt. He's parents will take him home today. They didn't want him on the Hogwarts Express. He's just waiting because he wanted to talk to you. He stopped by earlier but we told him to come later."

"He knows, I- I orbbed an Acromantula out of the way- he saw-"

"We know," she said calmly. "Don't worry. He talked to us. Said he wouldn't even tell his parents."

Chris nodded into her chest. He raised his eyes a little and saw Wyatt who was still sleeping, then his eyes met hers:

"I'm a Horcrux."

It wasn't a question, just a statement. And it wasn't desperate or even resigned. Just a fact.

She nodded not able to form the words over the lump in her throat, "You don't have to worry about that. We are working on that. You'll be fine."

Chris nodded into her chest looking down again, "I know. I trust you," and that little word, trust, meant the world to Piper, meant that Chris had accepted he wasn't alone in the world anymore. "Wyatt knows. He's known for a while hasn't he?"

"Yes, we didn't want to burden you. Wyatt found out-"

“Because of the bond we share,” Chris said. “I didn’t understand it before but I do now. It was always Wyatt’s presence that was stronger. S’okay. I wouldn’t have told me either.” he looked at her and smiled sadly, “I trust you and dad to get us out of this, mom.”

She smiled and kissed his forehead.

“I love you peanut, very, very much.”

## **Chapter 24 -Moving on**

Chris had given his statement to Auror Shacklebolt the next afternoon in his parents’ quarter with them and Wyatt present, he had explained everything that had happened in the graveyard. He had been worried about telling Shacklebolt about how he escaped and had looked at his parents who had nodded towards him.

“The records will be sealed. And who we didn’t want to know already knows,” Leo had said calmly.

Chris had nodded and continued the explanations. He also told the Auror everything Voldemort had told him about Bertha Jorkins’s death and how Voldemort had decided to use him. He also said the names of the Death Eaters that were present. Shacklebolt had grimaced here and asked:

“You didn’t see their faces, did you?”

“No, but I recognized Malfoy’s voice and the others spoke too.”

“I know,” Shacklebolt said. “But Malfoy’s lawyers are claiming that that could have been anyone under Polyjuice pretending to be them. And with Crouch Jr. being caught with Polyjuice it’s hard to refute. Especially since the Minister is accepting the defense and backing them up. Our law does not permit the use of Veritaserum on a suspect unless they were caught in the act, like Pettigrew and Crouch Jr. were. A defendant may ask for it to prove his or

her innocence and a suspect may allow the use, but of course, that's never going to happen. And to top it off Fudge started questioning if what everyone thought was You-Know-Who wasn't someone under Polyjuice."

"I thought you couldn't Polyjuice the dead?" Piper asked. "Doesn't that prove Voldemort is not dead?"

"You can't," Shacklebolt said. "Which proves You-Know-Who is alive, but not back in power. And Fudge will do about anything to save his face and keep the public ignorant. He's already having to deal with the aftermath of the article that went out this morning about Sirius Black. There are a bunch of Howlers from people who are not believing his innocence, and those from indignant voters for this misconduct of justice, not to mention that every single Azkaban prisoner that has someone on the outside to fight for them have their lawyers demanding to review their cases claiming injustice was done to them too. It's a mess, and Fudge doesn't want public panic on top of that. Whatever happened in that graveyard is top secret. We're not allowed to tell anyone that doesn't already know. And the only reason I'm telling you is because, off the record, I'm Order," he said disgusted.

"But he won't manage right?" Wyatt asked. "People will rebel."

"I don't know, people don't want to hear about the war being back. They liked their life," Shacklebolt sighed.

"Including the Death Eaters," Chris whispered.

"What do you mean by that Chris?" Leo asked.

"S' just. Some of the Death Eaters there weren't happy at all with Voldemort's return. They were groveling, they were scared but they as sure as hell didn't want him back."

"He's an Empath," Piper explained to Shacklebolt.

“Could you say which ones Chris?” Shacklebolt asked interested.

Chris sighed trying to remember, the emotions had been running high, his included. “I remember Avery and Malfoy, because Voldemort singled them out. So it was easy to read their reactions. They were not one bit happy about Voldemort being back-oh and there was this guy McNair, he liked Voldemort being back, he was eager. The others were a mess and I couldn’t tell which was which. I knew the names because Voldemort said them but they were too close to each other to know which was which. They were scared but not necessarily unhappy about him being back.”

“That helps Chris, even if the Ministry doesn’t do anything that will help the Order a lot. Thank you,” Shacklebolt bid them goodbye and as he opened the door to leave he was met with a grim faced Sirius.

“Shacklebolt,” Sirius nodded.

“Always knew you couldn’t have done it,” Shacklebolt smiled.

“Thanks,” Sirius smiled.

“Of course, after all, I couldn’t give those ten galleons you lost on that bet with me for lost forever now could I?” Shacklebolt said extending his hand. Sirius face fell and then he grumbled as he took his wallet, “I’ll let interest go by in the name that it wasn’t your fault you took thirteen years to pay me.”

“Extortionist,” Sirius said as he dropped the coins in Shacklebolt’s hand.

“Goodbye,” Shacklebolt smiled.

“Yeah, bye,” Sirius shut the door behind him. “What are you all laughing at?”

“Why the bad mood?” Piper said stifling her laugh.

“Moony,” he said simply dropping on the spot on the couch Shacklebolt had previously occupied.

“What?”

“Dumbledore’s sending him to talk to the packs as soon as summer vacations start and he’s going.”

“If he thinks he can help, Sirius-“ Leo started but Sirius cried:

“It’s dangerous! The packs don’t like those who live among Wizards. They think they’re traitors. Most of those packs are full of embittered werewolves that got tired of being treated as second class citizens!”

“Which is why they are a great target for Voldemort,” Leo tried to reason. “Except Voldemort will just use them and then turn on them. If Remus can make them see that and at least convince them to stay neutral we have a better chance.”

“Easy for you to say,” Sirius grunted. “It’s not your husband risking his neck.”

“No, it’s been my wife, for the last twenty years,” Leo said firmly and Sirius looked down ashamed. “You have to trust he can do it. That he’ll be back safe or else you’ll go crazy and the moments you do have with him will be spent fighting.”

“Forgot about that,” Sirius mumbled. “I- I just- I can’t lose him- I can’t lose any of you. It’s all starting again, and I can’t help but think of James and Lily.”

“We know,” Piper nodded and Chris sat next to Sirius and pulled him into a silent hug.

“He has an advantage now though,” Chris whispered. “He can yell for any of us to get him of a sticky situation.”

“He can, can’t he?” Sirius smiled.

"Yeah, very handy," Chris smiled back.

"Speaking of which," Piper said eyeing Wyatt. "Care to explain what happened last night?"

"Uh?" Wyatt asked.

"With the shield."

"Hum, nothing. Chris and I were just having a chat."

"Yeah. Was really weird," Chris agreed.

"Excuse me?" Leo asked.

"Well, earlier I had heard Chris kind of calling for me and I knew he was at the gates because I saw them, through Chris's eyes. I saw dad running towards him. I didn't try sensing for him."

"And I swore I heard Wyatt's voice in my head. Then later when McGonagall thought Wyatt had put the shield up, Wyatt talked in my head again and told me how to put the shield down. It was kind of instinct, when I used it, both times. I didn't even know I could. Or become Invisible. That was a surprise too."

"That's an Elder power. We'll train it more in the summer. The telepathy between you two must be because of the brotherly bon- what Piper?"

"All I wanted," Piper huffed crossing her arms. "My boys being able to plan mischief without me able to overhear!"

Chris and Wyatt smiled sheepishly.

--

That night Chris thought of the day's events. Before Shackbolt had gone to talk to him Chris had also talked to Ron and Hermione, who had told him about finding out Rita Skeeter was a beetle Animagus.

"We went to see how you and Cedric were, we thought you were in the Hospital Wing and she was there too. She must have thought the same. She's currently in a jar. We'll be having a chat later," Hermione said smugly.

Ron also told them about the twins and how they had gotten robbed by Bagman who paid them with Leprechaun gold and now had escaped because he had bet with the goblins Chris would win but the goblins didn't accept a draw as a win.

"They were hoping to start their business and now they're broke," Ron had sighed.

Later in the day Cedric stopped by and thanked him for saving his life, Chris had been embarrassed, Cedric wouldn't have been in danger in the first place if Voldemort hadn't wanted Chris. Then Cedric had wanted to give Chris the winnings that Fudge had handed him but Chris wanted nothing to do with them.

"No," Chris shook his head. "They're yours."

"Not this again!"

"Well, if you don't want them, what do you say we invest it?" Chris said coming up with an idea.

Chris rolled over on his bed and watched Neville sleeping, he wondered how the next year would be with Voldemort out and about. He took a long time to fall asleep.

--

The black boots hit the ground on a steady pace as he descended the marble steps of Gringotts bank. The day was hot but that didn't seem to bother him in his long black cloak that fell elegantly over the silk black shirt and black pants. A silver clasp, which was a match to the silver top of the cane he was carrying, the only thing holding the cloak. He walked purposely to an empty alley close to the bank and the woman waiting there ran her eyes over him .

She sighed, "To bad you're gay and I'm married, 'cause man, you're hot!"

"I know," he smiled self-satisfied.

"Don't push it, you're not that hot."

"Fine, let's orb back," he grumbled. "I have it."

"Hey, do I look like a cab?"

"It's better than Apparating," Sirius whined and Paige huffed grabbing his arm and orbiting them both away. They had a Horcrux to dispose of.

--

The last week of term went by on a blur. It was mostly trying to catch up to what had happened and trying to avoid the other student's gossip. Fudge had done as they had expected and in the papers there had only been a quick notice about the arrest of two deranged lunatics that thought they would be bringing Voldemort back, but that the population had nothing to worry about. Karkaroff didn't seem to be of that opinion since he had fled as soon as the Dark Mark had been activated, leaving his students behind. Madam Maxime on the other hand seemed to be on her side as Hagrid commented she would be joining him in a job Dumbledore had assigned him. The last night Dumbledore gave a speech telling them about Voldemort's return and the ministry's position. He said he wouldn't be taking that posture and one of his

first measure was putting a teacher escort in the Hogwarts Express which also included the Charmed Ones who had volunteered to go. He also added to all the guests that if they needed they would be welcome back here and hoped the international cooperation that had started during the year would continue.

The next day when saying their goodbyes, both Fleur and Viktor Krum promised to keep in touch and to Chris's surprise, Smith, the bully from Magic School approached him.

"I'm sorry for, you know, any rough time we might have given you. I guess Halliwell was right all along."

Chris had smiled at him and extended his hand, "Just don't give Wyatt a hard time and we'll be fine."

"I'm graduating, won't be seeing him much now that I'm off to College. But if you need our help," he motioned to his friends. "With the bad guys, just holler."

After that Paige, Wyatt and Sam had orbited all Magic Students back to the US and Paige orbited back in time to catch the train. The train ride had been mostly subdued, and the only highlight had been Cedric and Harry cornering Fred and George and giving them their winnings to start their shop with their only condition being for them to buy Ron some decent dress robes. The Weasley twins had been speechless for the first time in their life and had promised to keep the other two as silent partners.

"Really silent though. I don't want to be murdered in my sleep by your mother," Chris warned.

At the platform Sirius and Remus had been waiting chatting seriously with Arthur and Molly Weasley. At seeing them the Charmed Ones had approached to greet them and talk to them about the possibility of having the twins, Ginny and Ron visiting again during the summer. While talking with them Chris looked around and frowned at what he saw. Hadn't anyone

warned them that they didn't have to come? He worried even more as Sirius poked Leo, and he poked Piper and the three happily walked in the direction of the unsuspecting trio.

"Why, hello there Pet! Remember me, Sirius!"

"How are you doing Petunia, I don't think you remember me. I'm Leo, I was Lily's Whitelighter-"

"Sh- what are you thinking, we're in public! People might hear the freakishness," Vernon spluttered looking around at the other occupants of Kings Cross station who weren't paying them any mind.

"Oh, they won't Notice Me Not and Muffliato," Sirius said waving his wand at which the Dursleys' eyes bugged.

"We're awfully sorry we forgot to tell you that my son will be coming back home with us," Piper said in a false cheery voice and then added in a whisper. "You see, you might have not known this but Lily and James adopted him-oh, no-of course you didn't," she chuckled dropping a vial on the floor at which the Dursleys coughed. "Or else you wouldn't have treated him the way you did right."

"We gave that little freak what he deserved, disrupting our lives- we never asked for him- the cupboard under the stairs was more than good for the likes of him- and so what if I thrashed him every now and then- had to stamp the freakishness out of him hadn't I?" Vernon said and his eyes bugged once he realized what he had just admitted.

"Hey, mom and dad always said it was my right to kick him around!"

"And he never went more than four or five days without food, and it was deserved punishment, that's all I needed, another attention seeker like my good for nothing sister. Why does he get to be magical when I'm not-no-no-no- I didn't want to say that!"

"Pet!" Vernon looked horrified at his wife.

"Gotta love a truth potion don't you?" Piper said with a steely gleam in her eyes.

"Unfortunately we might need your useless blood again so I can't permanently harm you. But you know? I just forgot how the antidote to that one goes. See you when Voldie is dead and I can really punish you," she turned around chirpily and the other two smirked evilly at the Dursleys. Oh, yeah. The time would come and by then they'll probably have lost a lot by speaking their mind.

--

A/N- I know everyone was expecting some big revenge on the Dursleys, but even if they don't believe Chris won't need the blood wards I can't have them consciously throwing them away with Voldemort still out. Sorry!

## **Chapter 25- You're all you**

"Are you okay? Need anything?" Piper asked coming into the room.

"No mom, thanks," Chris smiled. "I'm fine."

"Okay," she said tucking him in better.

"Er-mom,"

"Oh, yes, right. Sorry. All grown up. I know" she smiled and kissed his forehead. "Good night peanut."

"Goodnight."

She was about to close the door as she left when he cleared his throat, "Er- can you leave it open."

"Of course," she said and opened the door. When she looked down she saw that a small night lamp she had used when Wyatt was little was plugged.

"S'just the cupboard was dark and- I'm not afraid or anything- I just like to know I can, you know, leave the door open. Have a night lamp."

"Sure," Piper tried to smile but it felt more like a grimace. She was sure he would have never mentioned it if not for the fact that once they orbed home Piper and Leo sat Chris down for a talk about what they had heard from the Dursleys and Chris had admitted about the cupboard, and being punished for anything and sometimes nothing. He hadn't wanted to talk, but Piper and Leo needed him to know that he could and should. He needed to understand that was wrong.

*"I know it was. I mean, when I was little I didn't but once I started going to school. Seeing I was the only one treated like that I knew. I just don't want to talk about it dad, it's done and I'll never go back and I don't need them anymore. I have you and now I know I really have you- I didn't not at first, but now I do. Like when I was in the graveyard. I knew I had to escape but at the same time I also knew that if I hadn't you'd come for me. I never had that before, in the Chamber or with the stone. I thought that was it. If I didn't manage to get out of there I was done - does it make any sense?"*

"Yes son," Leo had pulled him close. "It does."

"You can leave whatever you want on," she said. She walked down the hall towards her bedroom when she saw Leo walking towards her.

"Where are you going this late?" she asked with an amused raised eyebrow.

"Nowhere," he unconvincingly tried to laugh it off. "Just, you know...around"

“Uh,hu,” she smirked. “Don’t keep him up late,” she said kissing him on the cheek and receiving a sheepish smile in return. She watched him head to Chris’s room.

--

“You can come in and check if it’s really me sleeping in here Wyatt,” Chris said from under the covers.

“I wasn’t,” Wyatt tried to play it cool as he strolled in.

“Wanna tuck me in too?” Chris teased. “Mom and dad already did.”

“Ha,ha,” Wyatt said casually sitting on the bed as Chris propped himself on his elbow. He glared at Chris and then shrugged, “S’ just, we’ve been waiting for this day for a long time, and now you’re back home. For good.”

“Well, for the summer, once school starts I’ll be at Hogwarts,” Chris corrected him and Wyatt flinched. He’d already heard his mother say that there was no way she was letting Chris go back to that dangerous school. Leo had tried to convince her that taking him away from all he’s known was not the answer and Voldemort wouldn’t give up that easily but Piper was relentless. Wyatt predicted that there would be a few more shouting matches during the summer.

“Yeah, well, but still, you’re back home and even when you’re in school you’ll be able to orb home when you want to, and, right now it’s just surreal and we have to check we’re not dreaming. Ouch! What was that for?” Wyatt rubbed his arm where Chris had pinched him.

“To show you you’re not dreaming,” Chris said getting back under the covers. “Now go to sleep, I’m tired.”

“Okay,” Wyatt got up and automatically tucked Chris in. Chris smiled and shook his head.

--

Piper, Leo, Wyatt and Chris were eating breakfast when they heard the sound of orbs from the living room. They were about to get up when the kitchen door opened to reveal Sam.

"Hi there. Am I interrupting?"

"No, come in," Leo said. "News?"

"Yes," Sam looked seriously. "Lily Potter chose to move on. She didn't become a Whitelighter."

"What but-" Piper started.

"Let me finish," Sam raised his hands. "Not everyone becomes one. To become a Whitelighter you have to give up your previously life. Accept that you won't see your loved ones in the afterlife. She was married, had a child. She had a lot to give up."

"You're right," Piper looked down. She would have chosen the same, but Lily was their best shot. She looked at Leo who was nodding and realized that even though once Leo had decided to become a Whitelighter if he was given the choice again this time he wouldn't.

"Hey, why the long faces? I didn't say I didn't find anyone," Sam smirked.

"Yes, makes one feel underappreciated doesn't it?" came another voice from the kitchen door. A brunette of around thirty, dressed in casual jeans and a black top sighed, "And here I thought everyone was still mourning me. Those two didn't even recognize their own Aunt!" she said exasperated pointing at Chris and Wyatt who had bewildered looks.

Piper's hand rose to her mouth and she whispered, "Prue."

Leo had a smile that went from ear to ear, "That's why you couldn't come when summoned. It had nothing to do with us accepting your death."

“Yeah, you know, rules,” Prue shrugged rolling her eyes. “But this family always finds good reason to break them,” she nudged Chris winking at him. “I’m offended with your mother,” she said seriously. “You’d think that by now she would have already jumped me, wouldn’t you?”

She turned to Piper and smiled. “How are you doing little sister?”

“Prue,” Piper whispered again and hugged Prue tightly. Prue hugged her back.

“Yeah, me.”

--

There had been a lot of squealing and hugging and fawning over the nephews and nieces once Paige, Phoebe and Victor had been warned that Prue had become a Whitelighter and was there. Paige had been a little awkward, after all, even though now she had more than established she was her own woman and had her own place in the sisterhood, in the beginning she had felt like a replacement for the perfect Prue. She was also afraid Prue wouldn’t accept her, like Piper hadn’t at first but Prue soon shoved that fear away as she pulled her into a hug and cried:

“Oh, I finally get to meet you. I’ve been hearing so much about you in the gossip network!”

“I hope just good things,” Paige said awkwardly.

“Of course,” Prue waved her away and then turned to her other two sisters.

“So, how are we doing this?”

“Well, first we’ll summon Grams and Mom and then see if Grams we’ll be able to summon the past Halliwell’s generations for a power boost,” Phoebe said.

“And we’re going to try and summon James and Lily too,” Piper said watching Chris from the corner of her eyes where Penny had already, once again, attached herself to him and was

explaining all about how her six-year-old birthday party had to be because she'd be a big girl. Chris was nodding in all the appropriate places. "But we should do it now, so Chris has a little time with them before, you know--"

"Remus and Sirius would like a little time with them too," Paige said thoughtfully. "And I think they'd like to be here for when we vanquish the Horcrux."

"Isn't Remus already off to the packs?" Coop asked coming behind Phoebe and snaking an arm around her waist.

"Yeah," Paige nodded. "But I've put those two mutts in my radar a long time ago. And Dumbledore keyed us into Headquarters, so I'll go pick them both up! Hey! Don't worry!" she added at her sisters looks, "I'll be careful and won't blow Remus's cover or anything. Very, very stealthy."

"Okay," Piper said slowly. "While you're at it we'll start summoning."

--

Chris was nervous, Sam had taken his cousins to magic School. Even though classes were out the nursery was still open so there were the teachers in charge of that there and since Victor, Coop and Henry were adamant about staying, saying that the most people who loved Chris there to anchor him the better, and Sam had to come back because if Prue had any problem they wanted another full Whitelighter around to help, that was the only option for the smaller kids. They didn't want them around while they, well, they killed Chris and brought him back.

Now Piper had already put the candles in position and was about to start chanting. He was moments away from meeting famous Grams, who Wyatt had said was a force to be reckoned with and not overly fond of men, Chris really was feeling like he'd be tested. Then there was his grandmother too. But what was making him the most nervous of all were Lily and James.

Would they be angry that he started calling Piper and Leo dad? Would Piper and Leo be angry that he really wanted to see them? He didn't have much more time for introspection as lights started swirling around and four translucent forms materialized in the attic. One of them, the oldest, put her hands in her hips and with a disdainful look sized Chris up, "A lot shorter than I remember," she said as another slapped her arm and said: "Mother!" exasperated. But Chris wasn't paying attention to them. He just had eyes to the couple that stepped out of the candle ring becoming solid and walked to him. The woman touched his face gently and said with a sad smile:

"You're all grown up."

He nodded nervously fidgeting with his hands, "Hi."

"Hi? Hi?" the man asked bewildered. "That's not how you greet your old folks! This is!" and he pulled Chris in a bone crushing hug that was joined by Lily. They stood there for a while until Lily pulled back and smiled when she spied Piper.

"I'm glad he's finally with you, and that we finally get to meet you. Leo only had good things to say about you," she said pulling her into a hug too.

"Leo, old man!" James cried happily clapping Leo on the shoulder. "Uh, now you are old!"

"Hey, I look barely forty!" Leo cried affronted.

"I know, old," James shook his head sadly. As blue lights formed and four forms materialized James cried. "Oh, my God! It's contagious! Padfoot and Moony are also elderly!"

"JAMES!" Lily scolded.

Sirius crossed his arms scowling, "I was going to greet you, and say how I missed you. But now only Lily get's it," he tried to sound stern but the waver in his voice betrayed his emotions and James waved him off pulling him into a hug and then snaking an arm out to pull Remus too.

“Are you taking care of this mutt Moony?”

“I try, but he’s not very well behaved,” Remus sighed and tried to wipe his eyes surreptitiously.

“I’m feeling unloved,” Lily said sadly to Chris but as a strong hand grabbed her and pulled her into the group hug she just yelled, “SIRIUS!”

Chris had chuckled at that but was soon turned around by his Grandmother and Great grandmother for his rounds of hugs.

--

“And he hates me,” Chris’s voice was getting weaker. “He’s always trying to put me in detention for breathing.”

“He’s just jealous. We were friends growing up but then- something happened and we grew apart and I started dating James. Besides, he also has a role to play. We’ve been peeking and I know he’s on your side, even if it doesn’t look like it.”

Chris tried to nod but he was getting too tired to.

They had decided to do it in the attic, because it was the most magic concentrated place in the house and because when they had thought of one of the rooms all Leo could see was future Chris dying on his bed. So instead they made Chris as comfortable as possible in the couch in the attic, Grams summoned the spirits of past Halliwell matriarchs and the rest of the family, with the exception of both sets of parents who were seated around Chris, and Prue and Sam who were just waiting for the right time to orb out, plus Dumbledore who had come with Paige, where in a circle that surrounded them, joining hands and chanting to keep Chris’s spirit’s grounded.

Then, Leo had slashed Chris’s wrists, it would be the fastest way. He had wavered, he knew Chris couldn’t do it himself or else Prue wouldn’t be allowed to heal a self inflicted wound, so

someone had to. But it had cost him to harm his child that way. Wyatt had almost let go of the circle when he'd done it but Phoebe and Paige, who had his hands, held him still.

Now they were waiting, trying to get him to talk so he wouldn't think about what was going on.

"Who else do you have?" James asked. "Old McG? How's she treating you? She loved me," there was a snort from the circle. "Chris?" he asked as he got no answer. Chris had closed his eyes.

"Chris!" Leo said more urgently shaking the boy, he got no response and turned to Prue nodding at her. She orbbed away.

--

Chris appeared at Kings Cross station. He looked down, he wasn't wearing the clothes he had been but a white tunic. He heard a noise and saw what looked like a deformed baby crying on a corner. The deformed baby looked a lot like what Voldemort's body had been like before his resurrection.

"Never mind it Chris. You can't help him."

He turned around and saw his smiling Aunt's face.

"How do we go back?"

"You just take my hand," she said extending her hand and as he took it he felt warm all over and a bright light started shining from their joined hands and soon it was blinding and involving everything.

--

Chris gasped for breath as he opened his eyes. A warm glow was forming over his wrists where Sam had his hand stretched out healing him. Prue reappeared next to them and joined Sam in the healing. Chris watched as his wrists closed and his energy came back.

“So, did it work?”

The Whitelighters in the family all closed their eyes and then smiled as they opened them.

“Yep,” Wyatt grinned. “Now you’re all you.”

“Which also means, I don’t think you’ll be having anymore dreams,” Dumbledore nodded satisfied.

Chris fell back on the couch and Piper hugged him.

## **Chapter 26- Home life**

Chris was happily munching on a cookie and dipping it into his milk at the kitchen table. So yes, he’d done it before at Hogwarts and at the Weasleys but doing it at home was new for him. He watched as both his fathers sat seriously across him. Even though most of the spirits had gone back James and Lily were lingering a little while longer. Catching up with old times with Sirius and Remus, staying with Chris a little. They’d go back that night, and of course they could be summoned again.

They were all still a little high strung from the morning’s events and Chris was, well he was relishing in the feeling of freedom. He had never noticed, as it had always been a part of him, but the dark presence of Voldemort had been oppressing.

“What?” he asked worried at Leo’s and James’ stoic faces.

“Well- see-“ Leo started and looked at James.

“What, I’ve never done this, you have!”

“We agreed we both have to do this!”

“Okay,” James sighed and then smiled tightly at Chris. “Son, as you may have already experienced, there are girls,” he said lifting one hand, “and boys,” lifting the other. “And they are different.’

Chris choked on the cookie he was munching as he had gaping at his fathers and been unaware of air and cookie going down together. Leo and James promptly patted his back until his airways were free.

“WHAT?” he shrieked.

“Well,” Leo said embarrassed. “This is about sex son. We need to talk to you. I’ve already talked with Wyatt-“

“Wyatt talked with me! No need for that!”

“I’m afraid we can’t just rely on what a horny sixteen-year-old told you Chris,” James frowned.

“Hey! Wyatt isn’t horny!” Leo protested and at James’ raised eyebrow he amended, “He’s hormonal, it’s different. Never mind that, the point of this conversation Chris is safe sex,” he finished firmly and Chris whimpered.

--

Chris wobbled white faced into the living room where Piper and Lily had been talking.

“Chris,” Piper asked worried. “Peanut, are you okay?”

“No,” Chris shook his head and fell between the two women who traded knowing looks.

“Lily had something to tell us about your shield,” Piper said trying not to smile at her son’s state.

“Okay,” he said in a small voice.

“It’s just that you’ve used it before. That night, when we died,” Lily said and at Chris’s bewildered look she added, “Dumbledore was right. My sacrifice protected you from the curse but when the house started falling it was your shield that protected you from the debris.”

Chris frowned at that and sat up straighter, “That’s what I don’t get. Your sacrifice. Why not dad’s? And you couldn’t have been the first person to stand between a curse and their child, why didn’t they survive?”

“Because Voldemort gave me a choice and I chose to die for you,” Lily said.

“I heard that, when the Dementors were near. He told you to stand aside but you didn’t.”

“Why would he do that?” Piper asked. “I mean, it’s not like Voldemort has a hard time killing others.”

“Snivellus,” came the sigh from the door. Lily gave her husband a mock glare. “The old Snapey bat asked Voldemort to spare Lily and I guess he was one of Voldie’s favorite so he tried, very flimsily, I might add, to grant him his request.”

“Snape asked for your life?” Chris asked shocked. He’d never imagine Severus Snape of all people asking to spare a muggleborn, or anyone for that matter.

“I told you, Sev and I were friends. I think he felt a little bit more than friendship for me. Unfortunately I never saw him that way, or fortunately for him,” Lily jerked her thumb towards James.

“Sev?” Chris asked disgusted. Oh my God! Snape having feelings! For his mother no less! After the talk he just had that was just too much for him! He groaned and hid his face in one of the couch’s pillow.

--

Wyatt rested his shoulder on the doorframe and looked inside. he shook his head and sighed exasperated.

“See!” he complained. “That’s what you get for bringing up studying with a Headmaster!”

Chris looked up from his desk where he was studying and smirked at Wyatt.

“Just keeping my options open. I have a lot to catch up.”

“But it’s summer!” Wyatt whined.

“Dad thought of that when he drew up my study plan. If you stop whining I’ll be able to finish what I was assigned for today and then I’ll be able to go out to meet your friends,” Chris rolled his eyes. Wyatt had been bugging Chris to go out with him for days now. He wanted to show Chris the city and introduce him to his friends from school. Since they weren’t worrying anymore about who knew and who didn’t Wyatt had been allowed to explain everything to his friends. They had decided that they wouldn’t advertise who Chris was but that didn’t mean they’d keep it a secret anymore. So whenever the Elders found out and gave their little hissy fit, they’d just deal with it. Piper was actually looking forward to it. Chris had caught her rehearsing looks and sneers in front of the mirror as she said the speech she had planned. He found it very amusing.

Wyatt had had to work his parents hard to be allowed this outing. They had been worried about safety but Remus had come to their rescue, “Voldemort is still regrouping and he barely has numbers to deal with England. He certainly can’t afford to come to San Francisco. Remember, Apparating isn’t like orbing, there is a distance limit. As do Portkeys and any other method of travelling the Wizarding world uses. It’s not easy for him to just show up here.”

After promising to orb home and call for help at the first sign of trouble Piper and Leo had allowed them. And now Wyatt was just waiting for Chris to finish his homework. Chris had talked to his parents about his Muggle studies and Leo had managed to draw up a schedule to help bring Chris up-to-date so he could keep up with his studies. He had looked into Magic School and talked to some of the teachers and they had agreed to let Chris study from Hogwarts just orbiting for exams once the school year began. It would be a heavy load, especially since the next year Chris had O.W.L.s too but Chris was willing to do it.

“They’re starting to doubt me. Think I made you up!”

Chris shook his head at his brother’s whining.

--

“Are you sure you know how to do this?” Chris asked as Wyatt was about to turn the ignition on. Wyatt glared at him and Chris added, “Because we could just orb, you know?”

“Do you think they’d give me a driver’s license if I couldn’t?”

“Don’t know, Uncle Vernon always complains that they let anyone drive nowadays,” Chris said flatly.

“Shut up,” Wyatt mumbled and turned the jeep on and it gave a small jerk. “Oops, that wasn’t supposed to happen. No worries. I’ve got it.”

“If you ruin the car, mom will kill you.”

“Relax!” Wyatt grinned as he pulled the jeep out of the driveway. “It could be worse you know? I could be driving dad’s car,” he grinned and Chris covered his eyes with his hands and yelled:

“I’M TOO YOUNG TO DIE!”

From inside the house Leo gently pulled Piper away from the window, "They'll be fine. Wyatt knows what he's doing and the car has airbags."

"Humph, yes, thank god. Unlike the death trap!"

Leo smirked, he still had the car he had bought and rebuilt right before he was frozen by the Angel of Destiny. The same model as the one he learned to drive in. He had taught Wyatt how to drive in that car the previous summer, and the next one he intended to teach Chris. Piper had always affectionately called it 'the death trap'. But she understood why he liked it, after all, ever since they had known each other she had been driving the same car, just exchanging it for the newest model every five years or so.

Wyatt hadn't been able to get his driver's license until they came back from Hogwarts because his birthday was during the school year. The reason why Leo had conceded to his son's pleading and taught him how to drive before he got his learner's permit. He had already known of the plans to be in Hogwarts and there was no way Wyatt would have been able to learn there. Once they returned Wyatt rushed to do everything he needed to get his license and Piper only allowed him to drive the car alone after he had passed her driving test. He smiled as he saw Piper get the cordless phone and put it in her pocket. He shook his head.

--

Chris yawned widely as he rubbed his eyes and made his way downstairs. He loved being able to have breakfast in his pajamas. Aunt Petunia never allowed anyone around in pajamas but Piper didn't mind. She herself only liked to get dressed after her coffee. This month had been different from anything else in his life, he was finally being a part of a family. Not an unwanted burden or a wanted guest, in the Weasleys case, but a member of the family.

He had met Wyatt's friends and they had been nice. Of course, after the novelty of getting to know Wyatt's formerly deceased brother had passed they hadn't been all that thrilled of having a fourteen-year-old cramp their style. But they showed him a nice time.

Wyatt had taken him to see all the places he was used to going, including his mom's restaurant and P3 which they only saw by daylight seeing as Piper was clear that no one underage would be entering the club in working hours. Then Wyatt had taken him to the newspaper where Phoebe worked where Chris had blushed as Phoebe flaunted him around to all her coworkers.

The cover story for his death was that he had been kidnapped by demons, or for mortals, criminals, and that they never had found the body. Piper, Phoebe and Paige had spread enough blood at the "scene of the crime" to make it a foregone conclusion that a baby that young couldn't possibly have survived (but you never know, miracles could happen), so for the mortal world the explanation was that they had found Chris. That the kidnapers had gotten cold feet, or a conscience and had dropped him off at a hospital in another town and Chris had then gone into foster care and been adopted by a British couple who had also been murdered a while afterwards. And thanks to luck, Piper and Leo had been visiting the very exclusive boarding school he was studying at and Piper noted the resemblance between them and her mother's instinct spoke higher and a DNA test later they had their confirmation. Chris had been sure no one would buy such an outrageous story but apparently they were used to having weird things happening to the Halliwells because no one questioned it.

Of course, after that there was no way the Elders wouldn't find out. As it so happened one of the teachers with whom Leo had talked about Chris's schooling, a witch that taught math, had commented with her Whitelighter who had gone and reported the news to his bosses. Chris was very amused when an Elder called Odin banged on their door, Piper had explained to him that the Elders couldn't just orb into the house anymore, and apparently Odin wasn't a favorite of the family. He hadn't been alone, he was followed by a few other Elders including a

female one that unlike the others, who were very poorly concealing their fury, had a very pleased smile on her face and had smiled widely at Chris.

“So that’s him?” Odin had huffed annoyed sizing Chris up as if he was something to be squashed.

“Yes, what a miracle, don’t you think Odin?” Piper asked in a tone that made it clear she was being sarcastic and that everyone in the room knew what had really happened. “PAIGE! COOP!” not two seconds later Coop, Phoebe, Henry and Paige materialized in the living room next to Wyatt, Leo, Chris and Piper.

“That wasn’t necessary,” Odin said with a fake tone. “We were just here to congratulate you on getting young Christopher back.”

Piper flicked her wrist and Odin burst into thousands of lights to cries of outrage from *almost* all the Elders present.

“Oh, shut it. It’s not like he can die,” Piper snorted. “And I’ve been wanting and deserving to do that for fourteen years,” as Odin reformed she looked him straight in the eyes. “Let’s cut the bull shall we? You know we faked his death and you know why. So before you and your cleaner friends get any other funny ideas-”

“It’s not like we can,” the female Elder reminded everyone gently. “Too much has happened to erase the Boy Who Lived, hasn’t it, Odin?” she finished sweetly.

“He has no regards for the rules,” Odin huffed crossing his arms. “I will not excuse myself, we were looking out for the greater good.”

“Yeah, like Gideon was, right?” Leo glared at him. “If you had bothered to get to know him you would have realized that no one took the rules more seriously than Chris did.”

“And anyway, enough chit chat,” Paige waved her hand dismissively. “We’ll have to agree to disagree and you’ll just have to just swallow it, ah, ah, ah,” she lifted a finger as a few Elders made to protest. “Because if any of you even entertain entertaining the idea of touching a finger of Chris’s hair, or anyone else in this family for that matter, you can go look for help somewhere else the next time you need someone to save the world, and that includes the current problem with Voldie.”

“You can’t walk away from your destiny!” one Elder cried outraged. “We’ll-“

“You can’t do anything anymore, and we will,” Piper said. “As a matter of fact,” she pulled a piece of paper from her pocket. “This has just been waiting for you,” she smiled handing the piece of paper to the female Elder, “We want a vow from you. Magically binding. That one to be precise, that the Elders will leave my son, and anyone else in this family alone. That you won’t ever try one of your tricks with us again.”

“We will not be blackmailed by mortals,” an Elder that looked quite pompous and Piper was glad to say she did not know his name thundered trying to intimidate them.

Piper just raised her eyebrow, “Well, you have a choice, it’s either the vow or good luck next time you need to keep demons under control,” she turned to her family, “I imagine that after we let word get out that every single Halliwell is withdrawing from the fight and they are free to do as they please they’ll be quite happy, don’t you?”

The rest of the family had to work hard to bite their laughs as the Elders huffed, turned around and Odin turned back saying.

“We need to convene a council. This isn’t a decision we can make alone.”

“Well, don’t take long, you have till the end of the day.”

They had stalked out the door but not before the female Elder turned to Leo, "I knew you'd find a way Leo," and left. At the end of the day all of the High Council Elders were there taking the vow in name of all the Elders. They weren't stupid and the Halliwells hadn't been sitting idly all these years. They had grown not only as a family but as an influence since they practically ran Magic School. If they publicly announced that they were forsaking the Elders, most of the magical community would too.

All in all it had been a busy month. He pushed the kitchen door open still half asleep and jumped a mile up as the crowded kitchen yelled:

"HAPPY BIRTHDAY!"

### **Chapter 27- Birthday Party**

Okay, first he instinctively orbed out at the scare, coming back soon after and smiling sheepishly and blushing about being on his pajamas with all those people there. Though it helped that all the Halliwells except for Paige, Coop and Prue were on their pajamas as well.

Apparently Paige, Coop and Prue had been the transportation mode for the British guests. The Weasleys were there including Bill, who Chris had learned from Ron, had asked to be transferred to Gringotts at London to help with the war, and according to Ron was getting along very well with Fleur Delacour who had gotten a job at Gringotts to improve her English. Hermione had come and of course Sirius and Remus were there. And they had summoned his Grams, grandma and adoptive parents' spirits again.

What had really surprised Chris was a broody presence in the corner, someone he would never ever had expected to be at his birthday party and he didn't know how to feel about that.

"I wanted to talk to him," Lily whispered in his ear. "So when we had talked about the birthday party the last time we were here I asked Prue. You don't mind do you? It's just that coming

down to earth is a privilege and we can't do it so often, or else I'd asked Piper to summon me some other time."

Chris shook his head, "It's okay mum." He took her hand and walked with her to the man. "Er, Professor. My mum wants to talk with you. If you don't mind, you can talk in my room so no one will bother you. She knows the way."

Snape arched an eyebrow, "I've never known Lily to need to be introduced Potter."

"Oh, Sev! Don't ruin it!" she sighed grabbing his hand and pulling him away. Snape eyed the spirit of James Potter who was talking to Sirius, who were both glaring at them, warily. "Don't mind them. They're okay with this even if they don't look like it."

--

"What?" Wyatt asked "Can I open my eyes already? You know, this is Chris's birthday, he's the one supposed to walk around with his eyes closed."

"Open them," Sirius said as he stopped Wyatt on a specific spot of the front lawn.

Wyatt opened his eyes and his mouth dropped as in front of him was the most beautiful motorcycle.

"We smuggled it with your Uncle Coop. He was very cooperative."

"Can I?"

"No, I don't want to get killed!" Sirius cried aghast. "And neither does your father. What you can do is I can take for a ride. That's what your mum allowed us to do after hours and hours of pleading and begging from your brother. And I had to assure her that I would be very careful and that at the first sign of trouble you would orb out back to safety. Is that clear?"

Wyatt nodded fervently as he ran his hand over the bike.

“So, let’s go.”

“Not now,” Sirius sighed exasperated. “It’s plain daylight! We have to wait till night falls so no one will see us take off.”

“But-”

“Look, at home I just take off and turn the invisibility shield on because we’re secluded. No one will see me disappearing. But here, even if I turned the shield in the garage they would find it strange for the garage door to open and no one come out.”

“No they wouldn’t,” Wyatt smiled. “Come on, help me get this inside.”

--

Little Henry ran as fast as he could but he wasn’t fast enough. Right in front of the garage door he was tackled by five girls.

“HELP!” he cried.

“Give it to me!” little Prue cried and tried to grab the remote control from his hand.

“NO!” he cried but she grabbed his hand and somehow the button was pressed and the garage door started opening.

“OH! See what you did!” he cried. “Now how do you close it?”

Mrs. Nobel, the neighbor, saw the children trying to fix their bundle and took pity on them. She slowly walked towards them, she wasn’t that young anymore, and took the remote.

“Here honeys,” she said pressing the button and the door started closing.

“Thank you Mrs. Nobel,” they all chorused together.

“Now stop picking on Henry,” Mrs. Nobel told the girls sternly and they nodded properly chastised. As she left Mrs. Nobel could swear she felt a breeze pass through her. She never saw the satisfied smirks on the children’s faces.

--

“So, are you just going to stare at me? I’m sure Potter would much rather have you downstairs gushing on him?” Snape said, his arms crossed as he leaned back on the desk.

Lily rolled her eyes from the bed she was sitting on, “Are you talking about Chris or James?”

“Both.”

“Look Sev. I wanted to talk to you. I’m proud of what you’ve been doing. Helping Dumbledore, the Order.”

“Don’t say that!” he hissed. “If not for me-“

“My son would be dead.”

“Voldemort wouldn’t have come after you,” he snapped back.

“Really? You don’t think he had other reasons other than Chris to want us dead? Like for instance, everything we were doing against him? Or that James was funding the Order? We were targets anyway Sev. I’m not going to lie to you. I didn’t approve of what you were doing back then. Becoming. But I do approve of what you’re trying to do to help now,” she got up and put a hand on his crossed arm. “I don’t approve though of this punishing yourself you’ve been doing. Brooding over me forever. You have to move on Sev. I love you, just not the way you wanted me to. I’m sorry, but I never did. I always saw you as my brother, a sibling.”

“You know, that’s exactly what a guy does not want to hear,” he said drily.

“That’s all I can give you,” she shrugged and tapped his nose lightly. “Start enjoying your life Sev, it sometimes can be too short,” he looked down sadly, “And you have to stop hating Chris for being ‘just like his father’ because last time I checked you had nothing against Leo.”

“Yes, well, you fooled everyone didn’t you?”

“And you never saw past the Potter name and saw Chris, you might enjoy what you find,” she smirked at him.

“Hardly.”

She got on the tip of her toes and kissed his cheek, “You’re my best friend. And I expect you to start acting like it. Because, I hate to tell you this, but on the Uncle department, Sirius is way ahead of you. Yup, his brownie points are up there and yours,” she looked down, “Well, they’re on the negative side. And do you really want Sirius Black to come out best?”

He just looked at her as if she was crazy and she shrugged, “Can’t blame a girl for trying.”

He pulled her into a hug and whispered, “I missed you. I’m sorry, so sorry. For everything.”

“I know,” she smiled.

--

“And you could see the whole city from up above and the wind rushing through my face, it was beautiful!” Wyatt sighed dreamily from the dinner table where they were all seated and Chris looked at him eagerly.

“No,” Piper said firmly. “Only after you’re sixteen too.”

Chris looked to the side and was faced with another resolute woman, “Hey, I agree with her.

For me it would be never. I couldn’t believe it when Sirius turned up with that motorcycle. And he was an Auror too! Breaking the law like that!” Lily huffed.

“It was really fun to ride though,” James sighed dreamily resting his elbow on the table and his head in his hand. He looked around as Ron, the twins and Ginny were trying to convince his parents to let them on the bike a little farther away in the room, they weren’t having much luck and there were cries of:

“But Bill just left on it! Sirius even let him ride alone!”

“Well Bill is an adult and it was up to me he wouldn’t have!” Mrs. Weasley had said in a no nonsense tone.

“Where’s Prue?” he asked seeing every member of the family engaged on something or other throughout the living room but not spotting the Whitelighter.

“She went to take Snape home. I think the man had all he could stand of this family for a year,” Henry snorted coming from behind him and taking a seat next to his wife.

“Humph,” Piper huffed and Lily looked at her.

“Thanks for letting him come. I know he’s not your favorite person in the world.”

“Well, he better start watching it because now, I can complain about his attitude.”

“The Wizarding world still doesn’t know,” Remus said as he served himself another piece of cake.

“They could,” Leo shrugged. “Doesn’t make a difference anymore.”

“Yeah, but, let’s just not put it in the papers yet. I don’t need the attention,” Chris winced and the British people in the table flinched.

“What?” Henry asked.

“It’s just,” Hermione sighed from next to Wyatt. “You’re name has been in the paper lately. And not in a good way.”

“None of that. We agreed,” Mrs. Weasley joined the table huffing. “It’s Chris’s birthday.”

“Doesn’t stop what’s going out there Molly,” Arthur said gravely standing behind her. “And Chris should know what he’ll be facing once he goes back to school.”

Piper stiffened at that but said nothing.

“What?” Chris asked. “You said Voldemort is lying low. Regrouping.”

“Yes, he’s also trying to find out what the prophecy says,” Sirius said. Though the Order hadn’t been told the contents of the prophecy they had been told there was one and there had been a discussion whether or not to protect it or not. Sirius also knew that one of the first things Piper and Leo had done after Chris had woken up from the Third Task and said he had realized he was a Horcrux was tell him the prophecy, so he wasn’t worried about talking about the subject here. Chris had also explained, only to the family, that he had sensed Voldemort in Nagini, Voldemort’s pet snake which led them to believe she must be the last Horcrux.

“Dumbledore told us,” Leo nodded. “We’ve told him to let Voldemort get it. It won’t make a difference for us and while he’s busy with that he won’t be attacking anyone.” And it was true, Voldemort already wanted Chris dead, knowing the prophecy wouldn’t change that, unless he figured out he had made Chris into a Horcrux because of the “mark him as his equal” part, but they only thought that he might want to capture Chris instead of kill, either way Chris was a target and spending resources protecting the prophecy was useless. Besides, from what he had learned, only Chris and Voldemort could touch it and Voldemort wasn’t about to waltz in the Ministry of Magic, so while he didn’t find that out, they had time to try to form an attack plan.

The Order had gone back to Little Hangleton but of course Voldemort had not stayed there.

They did find a house that belonged to the Riddle family and realized that must be where Voldemort had been the whole year. Leo had shivered once he realized how close Sirius and

Remus had been from Voldemort when getting the ring Horcrux, Sirius had told them they'd seen the house from the shack where the ring was.

"Also, since Fudge has been trying to refute Voldemort being back, he is taking advantage of that to work under the radar, which is why we believe he hasn't done anything yet. But our current problem is that Fudge is doing so by discrediting you and Dumbledore," Remus added. "Which hinders our chances of getting people ready to fight Voldemort once he decides to attack."

"But the Aurors saw Voldemort!" Victor who had seen the gathering around the table said as he approached.

"He's claiming it was either someone under Polyjuice or that most probably the Aurors were mistaken. He's saying it was dark, the person Disappeared fast. And since no one wants the war back those arguments are gaining force. The only two witnesses that could be more reliable are Chris, who was there for long enough, and Dumbledore, who knew Voldemort well enough to be able to recognize him in those conditions. All the other ones there had never known Voldemort so well. Voldemort always liked causing his terror from his throne. Very few actually came face to face with him in a battle. He usually just sent his men," Remus explained.

"So, by discrediting the two biggest witnesses he discredits the story," Arthur finished. "He already managed to get Dumbledore deposed from his seat as head of the Wizengamot. And he made sure Pettigrew's and Crouch Jr.'s trial were swift and closed. So all the public knows was what Fudge let the Daily Prophet print. That two delusional Death Eaters tried to kill Chris and for that were sent to Azkaban. They both got the kiss too."

"Because of their crimes?" Wyatt asked.

"Their crimes were enough for the Kiss," Sirius nodded. "But they probably got it to shut them up."

“And now the Daily Prophet is feeding on what Rita Skeeter wrote in her last article to discredit Chris. They’re making you out as an attention seeker liar or that you’re plain delusional,” Ron winced at Chris’ incredulous look at his words.

“And to top it all, Fudge managed to infiltrate Hogwarts. Dumbledore had offered me the Defense Against Dark Arts post, since I had been an Auror but Fudge cut it saying that the abysmal record of Defense Against Dark Arts teachers Hogwarts has had warrants the Ministry to take action and appoint their own teacher,” Sirius said grimly.

“So you kids have to be prepared. That teacher will be there to do Fudge’s biddings and look for anything she can to take Dumbledore out,” Remus looked seriously at the teenagers and they nodded. “Don’t let them goad you. Especially you Chris, she’ll do everything she can to discredit you. And Dolores Umbridge is not a nice woman. She especially despises half-breeds, which means she’ll use our relationship against you and if she knows you’re half-Elder she’ll probably use that too.”

“I don’t think they know,” Arthur shook his head. “Ever since the schools left it’s like you’ve never been there. No one is even mentioning that the Charmed Ones helped much less trying to find out what’s going on this side of the pond.”

“Still,” Remus said. “No need to give the woman ammunition.”

“Maybe if she knows he has parents looking out for him she won’t be as quick to target him,” Piper said shrewdly.

Remus snorted, “Umbridge thinks she’s above everything. She’s the one who passed that nasty legislation last year that makes it impossible for me to get any job in Britain. She won’t mind that he has parents, actually she’ll think you lesser citizens because you are not only not from the Wizarding World but not even from England.”

“Besides,” Phoebe leaned in with a positively evil smile, “if she doesn’t know Chris has parents she might get careless.”

“What are you saying Aunt Phoebe?” Wyatt asked smirking with her. She looked at Chris and said:

“Maybe you should play along with her, give her some rope. See what’s she’s capable of, who knows? We might be able to get rid of her. If she thinks herself above the law, who knows to what measures she might resort? And that she thinks she is, doesn’t actually mean she is.”

Everyone looked at Phoebe speculatively and Lily was saying she’d make a good Slytherin when James nudged Sirius and Sirius shook his head.

“What?” Chris asked seeing the exchange.

“They’re letting something out,” James said flatly.

“Nothing happened.” Sirius said.

“Spill,” Paige said.

“We weren’t there. We’ve been living at Grimmauld but,” Remus said. “We heard that two rogue Dementors were found roaming close to our cottage. They weren’t able to get near, probably because of the wards, but they almost kissed someone from the village close buy. The luck was that a wizard had been shopping there. It’s mostly Muggle you see, and he ran the Dementors off, but we can’t stop thinking it’s too much of a coincidence, after all, for all purposes, that’s where Chris is supposed to be living.”

“So you think Voldemort sent them?” Leo asked.

“We don’t know. But Fudge has been on a snit about that, it was a scandal. He keeps saying the Dementors are under the Ministry’s control but that would mean that someone at the

Ministry sent them, and then he goes back to saying they were rogue and contradicts himself. He tried to muffle it, as usual. But the wizard that ran the Dementors away wasn't just anybody, he was a Wizengamot member that didn't like that no one can account for those Dementors. He's demanding an investigation, and since Fudge has been stonewalling every attempt Madam Bones and Scrimgeour have tried to make to prepare against Voldemort they're both more than happy to oblige the request. Tonks, that's my cousin, said Fudge is furious because they are interrogating every member of the Ministry. Even the ones who didn't have access," Sirius explained.

"Yes," Arthur chuckled. "I was interrogated too. I think Amelia's tactic is, you annoy me I'll annoy you right back."

"But that still doesn't change the fact that instead of arresting known Death Eaters and protecting public places such as Diagon Alley and Hogsmead, the Aurors are wasting time annoying Fudge's secretary," Remus sighed, and then winced as he remembered Fudge's secretary was Percy, who had had a row with his parents because of Dumbledore and Fudge.

"Tonks told me that Scrimgeour and Amelia have asked the Aurors to do it off the record if they can, on their spare time. So they're keeping the working hours of those who are willing at a minimum so they can have the time to patrol off record," Sirius said.

"Isn't that interfering with the Order," Phoebe asked. "Aren't some of them in the Order?"

"Dumbledore wants the same so we've managed the schedules in a way that the Aurors are free to help patrol," Molly explained reluctantly. And Chris knew she really didn't like them knowing this. He saw her glance at his cousins, who were all entertained with a video game many times, and his Empathy let him know she wished that he and the other teens were there instead of listening in this conversation.

"Yeah," James said. "But I just thought of something. You see, we can't peek on everyone; we can only peek on the lives of people who we love. It's a drawback to being spirits, or else we'd make great spies. But anyway, like everyone, I'd been thinking Voldemort. But Phoebe made me think, what if it wasn't him? What if it was someone else that also wanted to shut Chris up?"

"Umbridge?" Coop asked worried.

"Why not?" Paige asked. "She certainly has the access."

"I'll try to find out if she was already questioned," Arthur said. "I doubt it. As Undersecretary to Fudge she may be under his personal protection. But I'll see."

"If you're right," Remus said worried. "Getting her out of Hogwarts is of paramount importance."

"For that, we need dirt," Henry nodded seriously and looked at Chris who nodded back.

--

"It's your birthday, not ours," Hermione said eying Chris who was extending a gift for her and Ron in each hand.

"Come on, please. This isn't a gift. It's a necessity."

They took them and opened them and Hermione gushed and awed as Ron looked perplexed.

"What's this mate?"

"It's a mobile, he smiled and at Ron's still perplexed look Chris took it and opened it showing to him. He dialed the number of the Halliwells and the phone rang. "It's a mobile phone. And it runs off magic so it will work at Hogwarts. My parents had adapted theirs last year so they could talk to the people here. Since I'm not connected to the floo I thought this would be a

good way to stay in touch. And Hermione can talk to her parents and whoever else she might want to too.”

He said not wanting to mention Wyatt. She had seen them both go to Wyatt’s room to talk and had been a little miffed as his brother had dimmed the bond. He had been training with Phoebe too. But on the other hand he really didn’t want to know what was going on there. After they came back they had seemed okay but they weren’t holding hands anymore and Chris got worried.

Hermione looked at him shrewdly, “Sorry, I won’t be becoming Mrs. Halliwell. We broke up.”

“You did,” Ron asked interestedly and realizing he sounded to chipper he cleared his throat, “I mean, what a bummer.”

Hermione eyed him suspiciously, “Yes, well. We’re still friends. We just realized that with me in England and him here- I mean, since I’ve been at Headquarters under a Fidelius all summer we barely even talked. It wasn’t working out. It’s better this way, so we don’t get frustrated with each other.”

“Hum hum,” Chris could just nod. He could feel Hermione wasn’t at all disappointed and from what he had felt before from both her and Wyatt they were just having fun. Besides, he did feel the flutter Hermione felt when Ron showed so much relief at her relationship with Wyatt ending, so he wasn’t worried. And since he hadn’t felt anything bad from his brother he’d decided to just let it go. After all, Hermione and Wyatt seemed to be okay with it, why wouldn’t he be?

“Anyway,” Chris said nudging the phone in her hand. “This way, even under a Fidelius we’ll be able to talk. I’ve already put the Manor’s number, my parents, Wyatt’s, mine,” he said pulling the cell phone his parents had given him as soon as they had gotten home from Hogwarts and waving it. When that happened Wyatt had remarked that his parents liked to know exactly

where they were at all times. “Hermione’s parents, all my Aunts and Uncles if you need, and the ones we got for Sirius and Remus. After all, we only had two two-way mirrors and now people are a lot more spread out. Oh, and my mom got one for my Aunt Prue. Can you believe she hadn’t had one all these years as a Whitelighter? My Aunt tried to tell her she didn’t need one but my mom rebutted that there are occasions when our Whitelighter senses are blocked and it might come in handy. Her number is there too.”

“By the way, she hasn’t come back yet,” Hermione frowned. “Should we be worried?”

“She was probably called by some charge. Mum gets annoyed at that. She frequently has to leave in the middle of stuff because of a charge. Dad said that that was his and mom’s biggest problem when he was a Whitelighter. That she celebrates the day he decided to become mortal every year. She calls it the jingle free day!”

He snickered and the other two laughed.

--

Leo tapped the thick envelope to his hand worried as he walked to his son’s room. He walked in and found Chris playing a video game. Chris looked up and smiled.

“Hey dad! Wanna play?”

“Not now. This just arrived for you,” he said extending the letter.

“Oh, my Hogwarts’ letter,” Chris said getting up and ripping the letter open. He scanned it and looked up. “Can we orb to Diagon Alley sometime this week? I’ve got to get my new books.

And I think I might need new robes, mine are a little small.”

“Yeah,” Leo winced. “About that. We might have a little bit of a problem.”

## **Chapter 28- Hogwarts**

“No, no and no!’ Piper glared at the trio of males. “Not after last year and especially not after what we heard at your party, with that Umbridge woman.”

“That’s exactly why I have to go! Don’t we want her out of there? And what about my education? Do you just want to throw away the last four years?” Chris asked bewildered and Wyatt looked at him appraisingly, yes, Chris was seconds away from his first shouting match with his mother.

“I’ve been researching, there are good Wizarding schools here in the-“

“I LOVE HOGWARTS! YOU CAN’T DO THAT TO ME!”

“I’M TRYING TO PROTECT YOU!”

“MY FRIENDS ARE THERE!”

“You can still keep in touch with them,” she said firmly.

“It’s not the same!” Chris cried frustrated grabbing his hair and looked at his father desperately.

“Piper,” Leo said calmly, “He’s right. You can’t take him away from all he’s known. We talked about this last year before we went to Hogwarts, and you agreed.”

“That was before he almost got killed!”

“I almost get killed every year! What’s different now?” Chris cried and Leo and Wyatt cringed.

“That didn’t help your argument dude,” Wyatt shook his head trying to pull Chris to one side while Leo pulled Piper to the other. Leo took Piper’s face with both his hands.

“He knows Hogwarts, his friends are there and Dumbledore is there as well as Order Members. Any other school you chose in the US won’t have that protection. And while Voldemort hasn’t been able to come here yet, doesn’t mean he won’t. Piper, I hate this as much as you do, but

there is no changing it, Chris is a part of this war and he needs to get trained in Wizarding magic because that is the magic Voldemort uses. We'll be an orb away and Sirius is in England acting as his official guardian. Things have changed, he is more protected than he was before."

Piper crossed her arms and glared at Leo not saying anything. Her eyes were wet. She didn't want to send Chris away but she knew she had to, if she didn't want him to hate her. If she wanted him to be prepared for what was to come.

"I'll still have to orb to Magic School once a week to deliver my assignments anyway mom," Chris pleaded. "You'll see me, and I promise, I promise that at the first sign of trouble I'll let Wyatt know through the bond. Please mom, Hogwarts was my first home. I have one here now too, but Hogwarts will always be important to me. Please."

Piper inhaled deeply and looked at those begging green eyes. He wasn't shouting anymore. She knew he'd do what she decided but he'd never forgive her. And she really didn't have the right to take away something that had been so important to him. She nodded and Chris whooped in joy and hugged her. She hugged him back not wanting to let go of her baby but knowing she had to.

--

"Excuse me, I believe I misunderstood you," Piper said calmly looking at her oldest sister from across Phoebe's kitchen's table. Phoebe and Paige were also gaping at her with the ice cream spoons dangling from their mouths.

"Well, he's a very interesting man. And it's not like he's my charge or anything. And besides, thanks to that little vow you had the Elders take they can't really recycle me now can they?"

"BUT SNAPE!" Piper cried aghast.

"We talked, and then we met again, and again," Prue shrugged.

"You do realize he is awful to your nephew?" Piper said icily.

Prue looked at her and simply said, "I do, and if he does it again he knows my pacifist side will go out the window," then she shrugged and looked up pensively tapping the spoon to her mouth, "Actually, I'm not sure I really ever got in touch with that side I supposedly have as a Whitelighter."

Phoebe and Paige both stuffed spoonfuls of ice cream in their mouth to muffle their chuckles so Piper, who was still glaring at Prue, wouldn't kill them.

--

*So, why was it that he had wanted to be back here so badly?* Chris wondered as he listened to Umbridge's deluded speeches. How the hell would they learn to defend themselves without practicing? Chris was already realizing that Defense Against Dark Arts classes would be long ones. He sighed letting his mind wonder as he pretended to read the first chapter of their book. He remembered the shock of his first Potions class. He hadn't noticed at the feast but up close with Snape there had been no way of not noticing. He, like most of the students, had goggled at Snape.

He couldn't manage to keep something so, so...he didn't have words for it, to himself and opened the link with his brother with a mental yell. To say Wyatt hadn't been pleased at being so rudely awoken when he had classes later in the day was nothing to the shock the poor blond boy had when Chris sent him a mental image of what he was seeing.

*"But, how? He...is he sick or something?"* Wyatt had asked.

*"Don't know,"* Chris had answered mentally and continued to stare bewildered at his Potions teacher whose long hair was flowing elegantly next to his face, with soft curves instead of hanging greasily. Had the man finally been introduced to shampoo?

Of course, the clean hair was the only difference, Snape had been his usually nasty self and seemed particularly annoyed with the fact that Chris had presented him a perfect potion. When hearing about Chris's difficulty in potions the previous year, Piper had jumped at the chance of helping him with his homework and he had improved a lot, especially after he and Piper had brewed most of the potions during summer to practice and she explained to him why stirring one way or the other made a difference. Snape hadn't like it one bit and had glared at him, but surprisingly that was the extent of his nastiness.

Then there were all the students that once again were against him because they believed the Daily Prophet. At least this time around he had a good grasp on his Empathy and was able to block out most of the antagonizing feelings, especially since this time around one of his dorm mates was also among those who didn't believe him. And he had Hermione and Ron by his side which helped a lot. He also had a good grasp on his Invisibility, which he had trained a lot during the summer, and his father James had been oh so jealous about *"Imagine the pranks I could have done! Not worrying if my feet would stick out of the cloak!"* Chris had smiled at that, he still kept his cloak, it had sentimental value and if he wanted to make Hermione and Ron invisible too he'd need it. He had thought that maybe touching them would be enough, since his clothes and wand had disappeared, but it hadn't been. His father Leo had theorized that maybe it was because to a certain level his clothes and wand were an extension of himself so they were included in his power. Anyway, becoming invisible to escape the taunts and glares was quite handy, Hermione wasn't overly fond of it though.

And then they had finally arrived at Defense Against the Dark Arts where at first Umbridge had treated them like five-year-olds, actually, no, he was sure that if he talked to Penny like that he'd be dead in two seconds, and then she proceeded to tell them how this class was going to be all theoretical and to read chapter 1 of the book.

“Yes,” he heard Umbridge ask sweetly and turned around to see Hermione with her hand up.

“Did you want to ask something about the chapter dear?”

Well, Chris really didn't have words to explain what happened next, Hermione, Hermione of all people, started questioning *a teacher* and the others joined, and Umbridge tried to badmouth Remus and Dean defended him, which made Chris extremely happy and then, when Umbridge started trying to make it look like he and Dumbledore were lying and kept insisting they only needed the theory and Chris just couldn't help himself, he jumped in too and of course, Voldemort came into the conversation and well, that earned him a detention.

“Maybe yelling at Umbridge might have been a little overboard, but honestly, the woman was dangerous! If people don't prepare themselves they'll be slaughtered!”

“Yes, Mr. Potter,” McGonagall said calmly looking at Chris, who had just finished his defense speech, from over her glasses and the note Umbridge had made him bring to her in her office.

“And as passionate about the subject as you might be, misbehaving in Dolores Umbridge's class could cost you much more than house points and a detention.”

“I know, I was informed of it,” Chris mumbled.

“Then you shall present yourself for all of the detentions she's assigned you. Every evening this week.”

“What! But-“

“No buts Mr. Potter!” McGonagall said sternly. “And,” she continued, “I shall be informing your guardian of your detentions, just as I do with all students. I believe he won't be as unresponsive as your Aunt has been so far.”

“You what?”

"I always do Mr. Potter," she said calmly. "Your Aunt just never even takes the letters, I believe Sirius is more acquainted with owl mail, no worries there."

There were lots of worries there, because Sirius would tell his parents, and then, he'd be in trouble. Because somehow, Chris was sure that giving Umbridge rope did not include yelling at her. Chris gulped.

--

Chris looked as the words he had obviously just slashed in his hands healed leaving the place where seconds before the words "I must not tell lies" had been carved into his own skin redder than the rest of the skin but smooth once again. He looked up at Umbridge and glared, how dare that woman use a cursed quill to slash his skin as he wrote? He closed his eyes briefly concentrating and then put the quill down and crossed his arms over the desk and on top of the parchment. He silently watched Umbridge who was scribbling on her desk. At the silence she lifted her head and asked sweetly:

"Problems Mr. Potter?"

"No," he said but didn't move.

"Then you should continue."

He didn't move.

"Mr. Potter," she said sweetly but Chris could hear the irritation in her voice. "What are you doing?"

"Waiting," he answered simply.

"If I were you, I'd start you're lines again before you get into even more trouble," she said venomously standing up and walking over her desk and to the front of his desk.

“Ah, but you see *Professor*,” he stressed her title and gave her his own placid smile, “I don’t believe my parents would agree with you there.”

“Your parents are dead, Mr. Potter,” she answered with a sick smile and with quite some satisfaction that Chris could feel through his empathy.

“You’d like that, wouldn’t you?” Chris asked smiling.

“Enough of your lies Mr. Potter! Write your lines,” she said grabbing the quill and extending her hand towards him. Chris didn’t take the offered quill, he just mentally counted down to one, he hadn’t really made it that far before the door to her office exploded in a million splinters and Umbridge raised her hands to cover her face as Chris raised his shield to protect himself from the splinters and then let it fall as Dumbledore, Piper, Leo, Wyatt, Auror Shacklebolt and another Auror Chris never met came bursting through the door. Shacklebolt went straight to Umbridge, who was still disoriented, and plucked the offending quill and her wand from her hands bagging them with a look of disgust.

“What is the meaning of this?” Umbridge shrieked.

“You don’t think I’d allow anyone to hurt my son do you?” Piper asked through gritted teeth raising her hands again but Leo gently brought them down as Shacklebolt whispered a spell that brought the bewildered Umbridge’s hands to her back and bound them together.

“Madam Umbridge, you are under arrest for possession of an illegal object and use of said object on a minor. You have the right -“

“You can’t do that! I am Undersecretary to the Minis-“

“And you’re bound by the same laws as anyone else,” Shacklebolt said firmly. “As a matter of fact, as a member of the government you are held to a higher standard and should be an example to the population and abide by the law even more so than others!” his voice was coldly

professional as he continued, "And I would shut up now if I were you because as Mr. Potter has been legally reclaimed by his birth parents he is also an American citizen and I'm pretty sure the last thing your beloved Minister would want is a Diplomatic incident wouldn't he? As I was saying, you have are under arrest..." the rest they didn't really hear as Shackbolt forcibly pushed Umbridge out of the room.

Dumbledore looked at Chris with pride and motioned for the other Auror to come closer to Chris who was currently being inspected by his parents and brother, "This is Auror Tonks and I believe she needs to take your statement Chris."

"You're Sirius's cousin right?" he asked as Wyatt healed his hand that was still irritated from the earlier cut.

"Yes," she said happily. "Call me Tonks," she extended her hand and he shook it.

"Are you sure she didn't do anything else?" Leo asked worried.

"Nope," Chris shook his head. "And I kept my promise, see? At the first sign of trouble I called Wyatt through the bond."

"Yes," Piper said happily and hugged him, then as if remembering something she straightened, "That does not excuse your behavior Mister. I heard you yelled at a teacher."

"Oh, oh," Chris thought unhappily.

--

"Hello class, as you know, your former professor is a little detained, as in; in jail so I'll be her replacement for the rest of the year! For those of you who don't know me, my name is Siriu-yes, Mr. er," he looked down at the attendance list, "Thomas."

"Aren't you married to Professor Lupin or something like that?"

“Yes, but that has nothing- yes. Mr. Thomas?” he sighed as the boy shot his hand up once again.

“Can’t he come teach us instead?”

“No, he’s busy,” came the curt reply.

“But he was the best we ever had!” Dean Thomas whined and the other students all gave nods and sounds of agreement.

“Well,” Sirius said through gritted teeth, “*The best* will be acquainted with *the couch* so he can’t come. If you have any more complaints take them up with Professor Snape, after all, it’s his fault anyway! Now! As I was saying, my name is Sirius Black and I was an Auror, war veteran not to mention the only known man to ever escape Azkaban without any help! That good enough for you?”

Chris couldn’t help it, he buried his head in his arms to try and muffle the laughter coming out of him.

Umbridge had been arrested and Dumbledore had made sure everyone knew by using Rita Skeeter to report it in the Quibbler. Chris had the idea when they were discussing the fact that Fudge would probably try to burry this too. He had remembered Luna telling him at the Yule Ball about her dad’s paper and he had asked her to help, and of course informed the Headmaster of Skeeter’s a little secret.

Skeeter, of course, wrote it just as they had told her too, unfortunately, seeing as the story had gone out and Fudge could do nothing about it, another reporter, who had found out about Chris being a Halliwell when Umbridge was escorted to the Ministry, didn’t see any problem in printing it, and the Daily Prophet’s headline was all about how the Boy-Who-Lived was also the

Halliwell's lost son. Apparently, even being a pariah of society, gossip about his life still sold. Suffice to say the pointing and staring increased.

Piper and Leo had given him a stern lecture about respecting his elders, but since it had been Umbridge who he yelled at they left it at that.

Dumbledore had then asked Sirius to take over the Defense job since the board of governors and the Wizengamot had been astounded as to what the Minister's undersecretary had done to one of the students, voiding the new decree about the Ministry interfering at Hogwarts.

Although Fudge had managed to come out without any criminal charges against him, as Umbridge confessed to be acting alone, the public rage did make him lose his post overnight and Madam Bones was voted Interim Ministry in an emergency vote. The Wizarding world took child abuse seriously, being such a small community they treasured their children. Even Sirius confessed that as nasty as his parents were they were never physical.

Since she was caught in the act, she was given Veritaserum and Umbridge also confessed to having sent the Dementors after Chris too. Her trial had been quite swift and she had been sent to Azkaban.

Madam Bones' first order of business was to announce the return of Voldemort and what had happened in that graveyard and remove the Dementors from Azkaban. She had also called all the Death Eaters named for questioning, unfortunately they had no solid proof of their participation aside from Chris's testimony and the Polyjuice defense worked to free them, that didn't mean Bones didn't keep a very close eye on them.

--

"Sirius Black, stop right there Mister!"

Oh, Sirius knew that voice and that tone. He had learned to dread that voice and that tone. He turned around chanting in his head, *"I am not a student anymore, I am not a student anymore."*

"Did you or did you not tell your students to "take it up with Snape"?" Minerva McGonagall asked Sirius with pinched lips. Sirius looked around the hall for some help but unfortunately they were alone.

"I might have, maybe," he said feebly.

"Mr. Black, you are now a teacher and as such must provide an example! You are neither to antagonize *Professor* Snape nor to encourage students to do so!"

"But they were being annoying!" Sirius whined, "Wanting Moony instead of me!"

"Just because your ego was bruised you might not take it out on *Professor* Snape, am I clear? Mr. Black!" she warned.

"Yes," he mumbled like a reprimanded child. She nodded satisfied and turned a glare at him when he muttered, "But they were being mean."

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The door swung open violently and the man glided in at an incredible speed. His black robes flying behind him. He dropped the mask he was carrying on the table and looked at the shocked face of the headmaster who was seated behind it.

"We have a problem," Severus said firmly.

## **Chapter 29- The Ministry of Magic**

"So, why is this prophecy so important?" Wyatt asked lazily running a finger through the wood of the shelf.

“Haven’t your parents told you?” came the amused response, “Or hasn’t Dumbledore shared his knowledge with them?”

Wyatt shrugged uncaringly and turned around dangling Excalibur lazily around. The other man looked at it enthralled, “The sword of the king,” he extended his hand as if to touch it but Wyatt brought it up and rested it in his shoulder.

“Na,na,na. That’s mine. That’s not in our deal, Chris is.”

The man looked at Wyatt appraisingly, “Oh, yes. Your brother. Quite a nuisance isn’t he?”

“Can be,” Wyatt shrugged.

“Of course,” the man said, “After I saw him in the graveyard, he looked familiar. I had missed it when he was eleven, he was probably too young then, but at almost fifteen he looks much more like his adult self,” Voldemort smiled. “From there to have my Death Eaters asking around and finding out why was it that your parents faked his death, and why I remembered him defying me when he wasn’t even supposed to be born yet, was quite easy actually.

Apparently your brother was quite remembered in the Underworld and with quite an amount of fear attached to him,” he walked to Wyatt. “It must be so frustrating, all those people thinking so little of you. Thinking that your former greatness was because of some trauma and not because you, as I did, saw the truth, that there is no such thing as good and evil, there’s power and those too afraid to seek it.”

“I know,” Wyatt smirked. “But I can’t very well go around saying it now, can I? Thanks to my brother everyone keeps a close eye on me this time around.”

“That’s where this comes into play,” Voldemort said taking an orb from the shelf and shattering it in the floor. It broke and the smoky form of professor Trelawney formed reciting a prophecy.

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"Oh, I've missed this so much! The excitement, the rush. You know, just counseling the witches can get bori-oh, okay, I'll shut up," Prue grumbled at the glare she received. Her companion waved his wand at a lock.

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"So, that's it?" Wyatt asked unimpressed. "Didn't we already know that?"

Voldemort looked at him and he could swear there was a rush of irritation in that glare. He said nothing though.

"It is of no consequence," he waved a hand dismissively. "We'll be done with the boy tonight, and then you may go conquer the United States while I conquer Europe."

"Sounds good to me," Wyatt looked excited and stroked Excalibur gently.

"I was about your age when I performed my first kill," Voldemort said fondly. "Please call your brother. Remember, he needs to believe you're in pain."

"Of course," Wyatt smirked and closed his eyes as Voldemort motioned for a group of dark robed men to be prepared and hide in the shadows.

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The sword had swished down and the great beast stood motionless. Prue looked at it and frowned her lips.

"Little anti-climatic, wasn't it?"

"No," Snape answered her. "I preferred having no one here."

She looked around the luxurious manor, "Do you think they have a Jacuzzi?" she wiggled her eyebrows suggestively.

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"Ah, Mr. Potter," Lucius Malfoy's voice came from the darkness and walked up to where Chris was standing with Ron and Hermione. "Or should I say Mr. Halliwell. So good of you to join us."

"Malfoy?" Chris asked shocked. "Where's Voldemort? Where's my brother?"

"Oh, they're waiting for you, my Lord thought the Death Chamber would be more appropriate," he said smiling.

"If you hurt my brother-" Chris snarled.

"No worries there boy," Malfoy said pointing his wand at Chris and motioning for the other Death Eaters to surround the children. "Now, if you'd be so nice as to follow us. It was very nice of you not to warn an adult. My Lord was quite sure you wouldn't, something about not trusting adults. Oh, and just so you know, we've put anti-orbing wards up."

"Of course," Chris said through gritted teeth. They were outnumbered and they knew they wouldn't stand a chance in such closed quarters as the Hall of Prophecies, besides, they needed to find Wyatt. He gave Hermione and Ron a serious nod and walked with them.

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"Ah, Harry- oh sorry, Christopher," Voldemort said invitingly as the Death Eaters pushed the teenagers down the benches and towards Voldemort. Voldemort was standing there with Wyatt who was seated lazily at a podium that had some kind of arch on it with a veil that was slightly billowing back and forth.

"Wyatt!" Chris cried. "Did he hurt you?"

“Of course not,” Voldemort said and as Chris looked at Wyatt and then at Voldemort.

Voldemort smiled, “Oh, I love this, the moment of realization. When you realize that I did not kidnap your brother. I approached him with an offer, to kill you, so you wouldn’t be on his way.”

“Wyatt would never-” Chris started saying through gritted teeth.

“Oh, but he would,” Voldemort interrupted him delighted. “And now, we have the perfect opportunity and stage to kill you. To be honest, I wasn’t thrilled about using the Ministry but your brother and Lucius brought up a very good point. Killing you here will not only show you’re powerless but the Ministry is as well.”

“Or,” Wyatt said slowly and Voldemort’s face slackened as he saw Chris smile. “It would make having the Aurors here that much easier,” he finished as his features changed into Piper and with a flick of her wrist she tried to blow Voldemort up. That was enough to make him stagger back and burn his chest, but just that. Apparently the Horcruxes weren’t the only protection Voldemort had cast on himself, but it was enough to make him stumble as Aurors and Order Members came barreling in through the various doors of the chamber and engaging in a fight with the Death Eaters. Hermione and Ron quickly morphed into Paige and Phoebe and from one of the doors the real Wyatt Halliwell came running with Excalibur fighting his way to them.

Curses started flying left and right as the Aurors and Death Eaters battled. Voldemort pointed his wand at Chris and was immediately hit by yet another bursting power, this time coming from Wyatt.

“You can’t kill me!” Voldemort laughed as he staggered again and tried to regain his composure as Wyatt joined Chris, Piper, Page and Phoebe who had huddled together.

“We’ll see about that,” Paige sneered pulling out a piece of paper. They had to be quick, the element of surprise here was their best chance. They started chanting as Voldemort sneered at

their spell crying, "A spell won't stop me!" and once again pointed his wand at them but this time it was Chris who instinctively raised his hand and shot a bright lightning bolt incinerating the wand. Chris looked at his hand surprised but quickly rejoined the chanting of the last line of the spell.

*"Vanquish this evil from this life."*

Suddenly the veil in the arch started billowing violently and a wind started roaring inside the chamber. The Halliwells huddled together afraid of the wind that was making the Death Eaters and Voldemort fly, worrying because there was nowhere to hold on, but it was Sirius, who had just been saved from a killing curse by Lucius Malfoy, who noticed that the Death Eaters and Voldemort were the only ones flying around the room and yelled it to the others. And not all Death Eaters were flying either, a couple of them had dropped their wands as soon as the wind began and raised their hands in surrender as they watched their Lord and colleagues be swallowed by the arch and the screaming they were doing die.

"Wasn't expecting that!" Phoebe nodded as the wind suddenly stopped.

"I guess it only took the Death Eaters that were loyal to him," Wyatt said as he spotted the three Death Eaters still there. One was Lucius Malfoy and the other two who were being arrested were identified as Avery and Goyle Sr.

As Rufus Scrimgeour came to arrest Lucius Malfoy, Malfoy smirked at Sirius, "Don't forget to let them know who convinced the Dark Lord to have almost every man here instead of at my manor."

"You're a self serving bastard Malfoy," Sirius grunted.

"Yes, but you're alive because of me," he smirked. "I'd like a nice cell while I await release Mr. Scrimgeour," Malfoy said sweetly to Scrimgeour as the other man pulled him along.

"Where are the others?" Piper asked Sirius as he came close.

"Spread out in case Voldemort ran, we had various groups throughout the Ministry. We didn't expect the spell would work so...er...I was expecting a little bit more action."

"Yeah, we had to have some advantage to not using magic for personal gain," Paige rolled her eyes patting Sirius in the arm. "I guess our spells pack more punch."

The others laughed and Piper grabbed each son by the arm bringing them close to her and leading them to meet the rest of the Order.

--

"So, Snape told us that when he found out why my future self had come to the past, Voldemort decided to gang up with Wyatt. That maybe Wyatt could be swayed back to evil and agree to kill me."

"Bet your parents loved that," Hermione snorted.

"Mom almost chewed Snape's head off," Chris snickered. "Said Wyatt was good and even evil Wyatt had never tried to kill me so Voldemort was nuts. That future Chris had told her that even when he was torturing the whole world Wyatt wouldn't let anyone touch him. Snape went on about how he was just the messenger. Anyway, that's when they decided to fake it. Make it look as if Voldemort had done it. Because Voldemort doesn't understand that kind of love so he would fall for it. So everyone started researching a spell strong enough to get rid of him, because after interpreting the prophecy they figured that a Charmed Vanquish was what was needed, and they thought that Wyatt and I boosting the Power of Three would be enough. So Mom was posing as Wyatt for weeks before someone approached, and then she went to talk to Voldemort and she had to gain his confidence, pretend he was right. Those were a few other weeks. Then finally Voldemort came up with the plan to kill me, but he was adamant

about hearing the prophecy first, in case there was something there. So my mom, as Wyatt, gave him the idea of trapping me at the Ministry. That it would be like a statement of his power. So Malfoy convinced him that if they were going to the Ministry they needed all their men there and the best day would be today, Halloween, you know, another statement.”

“And where does Snape enter?” Ron asked.

“Voldemort wanted me to go alone and he needed to believe I had, so Snape was supposed to make the teachers such as McGonagall, Dumbledore and Sirius, you know, the ones I might ask for help, leave.”

“So that was the commotion at the feast?” Hermione asked. Snape had come and whispered something to Dumbledore. Dumbledore had then gotten up and announced that there was an attack in Diagon Alley and they were going to go help. That the students were to go to their dorms. Then he had asked Chris to send his mother and Aunts to Diagon Alley.

“That was in case Voldemort was in touch with one of the Death Eater’s offspring so they’d let him know Snape did do as he was told to. So Snape alerted Voldemort he’d done it and pretended to go with the teachers, they wouldn’t find anything but by then I’d be gone because Wyatt would have tricked me into believing he was being tortured by Voldemort in the Ministry. Except mom can’t communicate with me like that so after the teacher’s left I asked you to hide and went with them and hid in the Ministry till I got word from Snape.”

“And since everyone would be busy you’d go alone,” Hermione nodded.

“Yeah, meanwhile Snape and my Aunt Prue took Gryffindor’s sword that Dumbledore gave them to an almost empty Malfoy Manor, Narcissa Malfoy let them in and they got rid of the last Horcrux, Nagini, Voldemort’s snake, and let me know through a Patronus, so when we met Voldemort he had nothing to keep him from dying and the teachers joined the group that was waiting hidden at the Ministry. They had separated and spread throughout the Ministry in case

Voldemort and the Death Eaters tried to escape. Most of them didn't even enter in the fight such as Dumbledore and Remus because they had been in other parts of the Ministry where the fight never arrived. Dumbledore had been with the team in the atrium, in case they tried to reach the Apparition point."

"So Voldemort had been staying at Malfoy Manor?" Ron asked.

"Yes, and apparently the Malfoys were not exactly ecstatic about their guest. When I told Shacklebolt about what I felt from Malfoy at the graveyard, that he didn't want Voldemort back, Snape approached him cautiously."

"And he was eager to help get rid of Voldemort?" Ron asked dubiously.

"For immunity," Chris said simply. "He's also the one who assured Voldemort he'd make sure they could enter the Ministry unnoticed, so Voldemort never suspected the ease in which they entered. He thought Malfoy had greased the right hands."

"So, he's gone?" Hermione asked.

"He's gone," Chris answered smiling. "Before he had time to regroup and cause any disaster. We avoided the war."

"Good, 'cause I didn't want one," Ron said simply and a pillow came flying to his head from the direction of one of the other beds. Chris turned around from where he was lying with his stomach on his head, facing Ron and Hermione who had been mirroring his position, and laughed as Dean, Seamus and Neville, who had been listening to the whole story, rolled their eyes at Ron.

"As if he was the only one!" Seamus cried.

Chris smiled and dropped on the bed, now he'd finally be just a normal boy enjoying his education, no more Dark Lords waiting to kill him.

## Chapter 30- Epilogue

“So, how was it?” Chris asked as Wyatt rematerialized in the living room of the manor in bright white and yellow lights. He had been sitting back on the couch, relaxed and waiting for his brother to return from the past.

“Got my powers back,” twenty-six year-old Wyatt grinned. “And I managed it without letting it slip that you were with us,” he said proudly.

“Yeah, you just told Aunt Phoebe about Uncle Coop,” Chris snorted.

“Hey! That was, er, an accident. He caught me by surprise.”

“You went to the past Wyatt! How was meeting the people you’ve known you’d have to see for years a surprise?” Chris asked baffled.

“Yeah, well, it was,” Wyatt tried defending himself as his brother laughed. “Anyway, mom and the Aunts saved the future I mean present, ah well, you get it,” he said frustrated dropping next to Chris.

“I know,” Chris wiped his eyes, “Mom stopped by to get something she forgot and when she asked what I was doing and I told her you’d lost your powers she went all, oh, that was today? They could’ve been more specific! Honestly those were easy demons we were fighting but imagine they hadn’t been,” Chris huffed.

“Well, we knew the gist of what had happened and everything worked out, though I did play my part pretending I didn’t quite well actually.”

“Proud of yourself?” Chris asked his preening brother.

“Very.” Wyatt said pleased and he wrinkled his nose, “I have a lot more appreciation though for the time you spent there. I was bursting to tell them everything, get them to get you away from the Dursleys then.”

Chris smiled, “I know, but in the end everything worked out well. Now,” he said getting up. “I have to get ready.”

“Why?”

“Got a date. She likes my accent,” he preened. “She says it makes me sound cultured and sophisticated.”

“Don’t get so full of yourself, anyone could do it,” Wyatt said faking an accent.

“Was that supposed to be British? Cause it sounded like you had stomach cramps.”

“Hey! It was so British! Besides, the Brits loved my accent!” Wyatt smirked.

“Name one.”

“Hermione.”

“The fact that she’s currently married to Ron argues against you,” Chris said ducking a swat from Wyatt and running upstairs followed by his brother.

Chris had graduated from Hogwarts and then taken his parents suggestion to try a Muggle college for a while before he decided what to do. He went to Berkley and he had realized that he liked it more in the Muggle world. Magic was still a part of his life but he could be just Chris here unlike in the Wizarding world where his fame never abated and just grew as he was now known as the defeater of Voldemort, even if he had done it with his family’s help. They didn’t just let him be. That is not to say that he left that world completely, he was always orbiting there to see his friends and family and a friendly game of Quidditch. He remembered fondly

the first game of Quidditch his mother saw, they had come to the first game of the season in fifth year invited by Dumbledore and Piper almost had a heart attack.

Sirius was still teaching at Hogwarts and Remus at Magic School which made seeing both Marauders frequently quite easy. Sirius had finally managed to overcome Remus' popularity and become the most popular teacher at Hogwarts. He never failed to remind everyone of that, he was still sore about that first class. Magic School and Hogwarts had also kept collaboration throughout the years which was helped by the fact that since Sirius had to board at Hogwarts Remus was living there with him and was able to bring messages back and forth with ease.

That was just one aspect of the measures taken for a war that never happened that ended up helping them. For instance, Madam Bones had taken the Dementors away from Azkaban and had never brought them back, all the negotiations Remus had started with the Werewolf packs had been continued and were the beginning to what was now known as the Magical Being Liaison Office in the Ministry that deals with the rights of many Magical creatures such as werewolves, goblins, house-elves, etc. They had managed to attain many rights and ban many of the prejudicial laws such as the one Umbridge had passed about werewolves and employment. They weren't perfect yet, and there was a lot to fight for still, but they were in the right path.

Another one of her actions was to give more importance to Muggle relations, she created a whole department that included from preparing Muggleborn children to what they should expect at Hogwarts and preparing them so they didn't enter school at a disadvantage to incorporating the technological advances from the Muggle world to the Wizarding World. She had asked Arthur Weasley to head the department while his Assistant, Perkins, received his old job and now the Misuse of Muggle Artifacts Office was part of the Muggle Liaison Office.

Ron, to everyone's surprise, or not much, since Chris knew that once he had his confidence he was really good, had become a Quidditch player and was now responsible for the Cannon's first chance at a championship in many many years. He still grumbled about Percy sometimes, who had taken his sweet time to admit he had been wrong, but in the end did so after he was demoted at the Ministry and had been assigned to the position of Perkins's assistant.

Apparently having to deal with the damage wrongly charmed Muggle objects could inflict gave him a better understanding of his father and the work he had done so far. He, of course, had been accepted back in the fold, but his siblings didn't let him forget what he had done.

Hermione had gone into law and now worked at the Magical Beings Liaison Office. She and Ron had married last year and Chris had been best man. He orbbed to their house for a standing dinner invitation every Friday.

Another surprise was the fact that Snape and Prue were still going strong. Snape had stopped teaching and started his own private potions lab. Chris honestly thought the man seemed happier, though it was difficult to tell the happy sneer apart from the derogatory one. He's Aunt Prue liked him to call Snape Uncle Sev, but Chris didn't like it nor did he think Snape appreciated it. He was sure that was exactly why Prue insisted on it.

He had to agree that their relationship had improved, they might be considered friendly enemies today but they'd never be buddy buddies.

And speaking of enemies, the Malfoy's of course landed on their feet, and even managed to shed a bit of their Dark Wizards reputation as Lucius's role in helping the Order was made public. Chris hoped Lucius Malfoy endeavored in keeping it that way by not reverting to his old ways once more.

Wyatt was finishing Med School, which he knew made his parents happy, not only because he was following his dad's footsteps but because there was nothing farther from evil ruler than saving lives.

Chris had ended up majoring in Management and had started working with his mother at the restaurant. Piper had loved it, especially since she had admitted that Chris was an excellent cook and helped her not only manage but as a chef too.

And of course, he and Wyatt had started taking the mantle for the Charmed Ones in keeping the world's peace against demons. All in all he was quite happy with his life as a Charmed Wizard.

The End

A/N- I want to thank you all for your support throughout this story. I hope you enjoyed it!