

Part Eighteen and a Half *Decembers*

Remus, December 1967

It's the quietest Christmas Remus can remember. All the necessary Christmas accessories are there, the tree and a few winking lights and the ornaments from earlier childhood, and his mother is cooking a goose, and the few presents have drawn close about the scent of pine. He surveys the morning, finding that even the biggest ornaments are somehow dwarfed and chipped by his own perspective, and they no longer hold the mystery of bright colors and globed immodesty.

His parents, standing in the doorway, watch him eagerly. For the first time he is aware of an obligation to perform, a duty, no longer an instinct.

It isn't because he's a werewolf.

James, December 1970

James is enveloped in perfumed embrace. A bosom is trying to suffocate him. The pillow of fabric over mounds of relative flesh surround him, until he is drowning in his Aunt Eunice. These are the staples of the holidays: self-warming socks from his grandparents, strange pudding creations from Uncle Barry, now in the midst of attending an experimental Parisian Wizarding Culinary School, and Aunt Eunice's tremendous quaking bosom, as well as Aunt Eunice's charmed lipstick marks all over his nose for the next three weeks.

James can't wait until he has Christmases of his own. For one thing, there won't be any socks. "Socks" isn't at all what Christmas is about.

Peter, December 1968

The Pettigrew Tree is made of plastic, and smells like lemons. Peter looks at it warily from across the sparkling sitting room, eating a cinnamon cookie over his cupped palm, very careful not to make a single crumb. In the kitchen it smells of a hundred spices, while everywhere else is a foreign and hostile territory for a boy of eight, offering no excuses for muddy feet or careless fingerprints.

Certainly not for cinnamon crumbs.

What Peter really wants for Christmas, he thinks idly as he licks his fingers immaculately clean, if not a bit sticky, is a whole herd of reindeer. With mud in their hooves.

And ticks on *everything*.

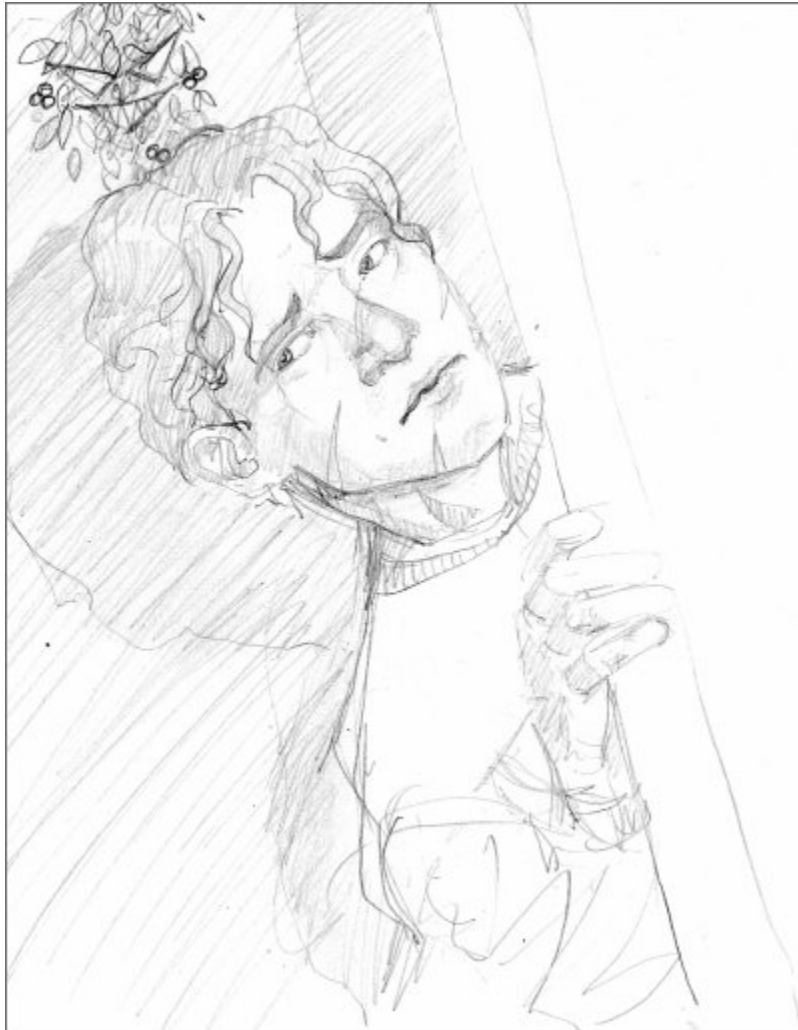
Sirius, December 1963

Mrs. Black is holding an earring the color of the sea up to her cheek, dark hair swept away from her tight face. Sirius lingers in the doorway, watching this process. He sees only his father's back, and the front of his best holiday robes in the mirror, an uncertain reflection as distant and clouded as the jewels that dance around his mother's neck.

Downstairs, the house elves have set the dining room table to perfection. It smells of hot ciders and the Black family's best silver, of three nesting spoons, and of a tradition Sirius cannot trace to its origin in his life, much less the lives of his ancestors.

Photographic evidence best left to memory from Christmas, 1976.





Cowritten by [dorkorific](#) and [ladyjaida](#).

[dorkorific](#) specializes in Sirius; [ladyjaida](#) specializes in Remus.

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The handwriting of Remus J. Lupin, Severus Snape and James Potter is done by [ladyjaida](#).

The handwriting of Sirius Black, Peter Pettigrew and Lily Evans is done by [dorkorific](#).

Don't worry; Peter won't be stupidified. **Trust us** on that one.

We would like to take a moment to thank [windjinn](#) for leaping down the stairs with [ladyjaida](#)'s bra on his head.

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