

imagining it, the worse it got in his mind.

Pain flickered across Harry's face. "Help me sit up," he requested. Eagerly, Remus did so, piling up the pillows and bracing Harry as he shuffled up the bed. "I... I was out of it for most of the day, I'll be honest. But I'll tell you what I remember. And— and then I need to go back to school."

"Harry, you need to rest—"

"I need to see my friends," Harry insisted stubbornly. "I need them to know I'm okay. I'm fine, I'm just tired and a bit sore. I can rest at school." He reached up a hand to rub at his face. "I need to go back, Moony. I—I can't let him win."

His heart clenched fiercely in his chest. This boy... he'd already dealt with so much, and he still got up fighting.

Lily and James would be so very proud of their son.

"Once you have told us everything," Severus drawled, "then we shall see if you can remain awake long enough to get dressed. *Then* we will consider returning you to school."

Harry grinned at them both, and Remus knew then that he would absolutely be escorting the determined little idiot back to school before the day was up.

God, what he wouldn't give for his cub to just get a *break*, for five minutes.

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As soon as Harry let go of Ceri's hand when they arrived in Snape's office, he was crushed in a tight hug, the scent of Draco's aftershave tickling his nose and turning him to jelly in his boyfriend's arms. "Don't you dare scare me like that again, Scarhead," Draco growled, lips pressed to his temple. "Fuck. I thought you were dead!"

Harry swallowed tightly — he'd thought the same, for a while there. "I'm okay," he promised instead, pulling back to give Draco a soft, tender kiss. "I'm back. It's fine."

"It's *not* fine." Harry's head snapped up in surprise — Neville was there too, glaring at him. "Do you have any idea how worried we all were?" The tall Gryffindor squeezed his way past Draco, giving Harry a brief hug of his own. "Swear to Merlin, you're not allowed to go anywhere on your own anymore." The relief in his hazel eyes was clear, and Harry chuckled lightly.

"If you want to wait outside the Room of Requirement while I'm with Draco, by all means, be my guest," he drawled teasingly. "But people will talk."

Neville snorted. "Git." He squeezed Harry's shoulder. "Are you okay? Are we taking you to the Hospital Wing?"

A look of disgust flashed across Harry's features. "Merlin no. Dinner's still going, right?" It had taken him long enough to convince the two overbearing fusspots he called his godfathers