

anything, you can find it if you know what you're looking for. It basically involves the caster using an act of cold-blooded murder — the worst evil a person can commit — and taking the energy from it to rip a piece of their soul free from the rest. That soul fragment is then stored, usually inside an object, so that even if the caster should die, their soul remains on earth, unable to move on until it is whole. It's the closest to immortality that magic has ever been able to grant."

There was a long, tense silence in the office. Even Gorrak looked deeply troubled.

"Usually inside an object," Harry repeated, a slow sense of dread building within him, "but sometimes inside a person. My scar is one, isn't it?" Part of Voldemort's soul was inside his body. It made sense — his visions, his claim to the Slytherin seat, his parseltongue abilities. If he'd housed part of another wizard's soul for most of his life, that would include some of his magic, too.

Remus reached across to grip Harry's hand tightly, his face pale. "Is that even possible?"

"I haven't found any literature on it," Bill replied. "But like I said, there's not much on horcruxes out there. If someone has used a living being as one before, it's no longer documented."

"How do we get it out?" Harry asked; he didn't much care how it got there, he just wanted it *gone*. Bill's expression told him it wasn't going to be that easy.

"Usually, a horcrux can be destroyed by damaging it beyond all magical repair. Fiendfyre, basilisk venom, some extremely caustic potions, the Killing curse. That's fine when it's housed within an inanimate object."

"Less fine when it's housed within my living body," Harry finished for him, his lips a thin line. Things were slowly starting to make sense. "Dumbledore knows." Both men blinked at him, confused. "He's got to. It's why he's done all this; put the block on my magic, kept me away from anyone who might care about me. He knows that I have to die in order for Voldemort to properly die, so he's leading me into that. Teaching me to sacrifice myself for the greater good. The block was probably a failsafe; if I refused, he could just wait until I turned seventeen and obliterated myself and those around me."

"*You are not going to die!*" The words were growled from Remus quite unexpectedly, his eyes glowing gold as he stared Harry down. He blinked, the wolf retreating, but there was still fire in his gaze. "Bill, is there any way to move the soul fragment outside of its container? Or from one container to another?" he asked, as if they were talking about repotting a mandrake and not removing soul pieces from Harry's literal body.

"I haven't found anything yet, but I've barely started looking," Bill admitted. "If there's a way, we'll find it."

"Mr Weasley is one of the finest curse-breakers employed by this bank, Mr Potter," Gorrak said, speaking up for the first time since he'd greeted them. "And Gringotts has far more resources than most wizards are aware of. Rest assured, if it is at all possible, we will find a solution."