

“You’re making a mistake, Harry,” the headmaster insisted, charming the curtain ties to try and wrap around Harry’s wrists. Harry burnt them to cinders, snarling. “You must accept the sacrifice you’re destined to make. For the sake of your loved ones, if nothing else. Whatever Tom has promised you, he’s lying.”

Harry couldn’t believe Dumbledore was still so stuck on the idea of Harry being warped by the horcrux in his head, having some sort of *alliance* with Voldemort because of it. Was he so arrogant, so blinded by his own actions, that he truly thought the only way Harry would turn against him was if he’d gone Dark? Not just because he was pissed the man had been *controlling him* since he was a baby? Had left him with the Dursleys, tried to separate him from the few people who genuinely loved him?

Dumbledore might have been a great man, once, back when he’d first fought Grindelwald. But he’d lost that long ago, in his search for *more*.

“He hasn’t promised me anything,” Harry spat, edging closer to the door. The Marauder’s Map, entirely blank, was on a table nearby, and he whipped out a hand to grab it. “But I’ve promised *him* death, and I can’t do that if you kill me for nothing. The horcrux is gone — all the horcruxes are gone. Barring one or two.” He didn’t need Dumbledore knowing the specifics, lest he do something foolish. “I’ve done more for this war in the last year than you’ve done in the last *decade*, and I will end this. And then I’ll end you, too. Everyone will know the truth of what a manipulative, selfish, *dangerous* person you really are. Your legacy will be nothing but ashes and spite.”

He grinned at the rage in the headmaster’s blue eyes, dodging the spell fired his way — straight towards the door, which opened under another strong blast of his magic, so strong it almost made his head spin.

Severus always told him that fury was a person’s worst enemy. It made them sloppy, impulsive. It seemed even the glorious Albus Dumbledore was not immune to such flaws.

Harry ran through the open door, stumbling on weak legs, clumsy as the adrenaline burning through him finally began to run out. His magic was barely a sputtering flame within him. But as he crossed the line of the wards around the property, felt them tingle on his skin, he hoped it was enough. He thought of home, turning on his heel, and with a sensation like being turned inside out and a crack as loud as a gunshot he was gone.

He hit grass, and fell to his knees. It was dark, but a faint sliver of sunshine brushed the trees around him — sunrise. He’d been gone more than twenty-four hours.

There was a shout, his name maybe, and footsteps. A hand on his shoulder, amber eyes glowing in the low light. Harry smiled. “Remus,” he rasped, reaching up to grasp the man’s cardigan. His shoulder burned with the effort. “Was Dumbledore. Got me. Wants me dead.”

“Harry, what happened? Are you hurt?” Remus knelt in front of him, but Harry’s brain finally decided it had had enough.

The world turned sideways, and Harry was out before his head hit the ground.