

Draco's heart squeezed painfully, tight with the strength of his love for this woman. His awe of her strength. "Thank you," he rasped, and her eyes softened lovingly.

"Do not thank me, my darling; I'm only doing what a mother should. And quite frankly, it's about time the name Malfoy had someone truly *worthy* to uphold it. Really, with the amount of influence your father held, it's quite ridiculous how little he really did with it." That devious smirk returned. "His loss."

Draco blinked at her, not entirely sure he wanted to know what else his mother was planning.

Sirius was right; Black women were *terrifying*.

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Seren Du was empty when Harry and Remus returned — Ceri reported that Snape had been summoned to a Death Eater meeting not more than half an hour ago. Remus cursed quietly, and Harry squeezed his shoulder. "Come on. Let's go work on my schedule for the summer; Snape can go over it with us when he gets back."

Eager for the distraction, Remus agreed, and soon the pair of them were holed up in the living room with tea and scones, a piece of parchment on the table between them.

"We're adding apparition lessons," Remus said first, writing that at the top of the page. Harry brightened up.

"Really?"

"It shouldn't take too long. I imagine you'll get the hang of it quite quickly — you certainly seem to with everything else," Remus added, making Harry blush.

Duelling was of course added to the list, though Remus admitted that would mostly rely on when other people would be around to help. "After watching you at the Ministry, it's clear you can hold your own. We just need to make sure you're ready to face Him as well as his minions." The werewolf's eyes crinkled as he smiled proudly. "You really were marvellous, you know. Your friends too, of course, but seeing how well you fought against Malfoy and the Lestranges, and Death Eaters that have brought down experienced aurors... you're remarkable, Harry."

Harry's cheeks burned hot, and he ducked his head. "Only because of what you've all taught me," he insisted.

"Teaching conditions can only go so far in preparation for the real thing," Remus retorted. "Be proud of yourself, Harry. You're doing incredible things for your age."

Harry cleared his throat awkwardly. "So what else do we need to work on this summer?" He couldn't sit there and just let Remus compliment him. Besides, there had to be plenty more for him to learn.

"Honestly, a lot of it will just depend on how the summer plays out. Between the Pottery and everything else, you may be busier than usual."