

It wasn't much, but it was enough. Harry's shoulders relaxed, ever so slightly, and he shot a quick smile at his housemistress.

"You know, Mr Potter," she said, coming to a stop outside her office, "from everything I've heard, you would make an excellent teacher," and then she smiled — not wide, but bigger than anything he'd seen from the reserved woman. "Once you're done taking the quidditch league by storm, of course."

Harry grinned at her. "I'll certainly think about it, Professor." He'd heard worse ideas.

"You do that." She accepted her bag and cloak back, opening her office door. "I look forward to seeing your OWL results, Potter."

"I hope they're worth the anticipation," he joked. To his surprise, McGonagall placed a gentle hand on his shoulder.

"I can guarantee, Mr Potter, that whatever is in those results will be something you should be proud of. Something your godfather and Professor Lupin will be proud of. Your parents certainly would be, were they here to see it." A quick squeeze. "I am proud, to have you as my student. Both for what you have done at the Ministry, and everything you have done for your fellow students during the course of this last year." She narrowed her eyes knowingly. "Don't think I don't know where those care spells for those wretched Blood Quill wounds began circulating."

Ducking his head to hide his blush, Harry had to swallow against the lump in his throat. "I— thank you, Professor. That means a lot to hear."

She pat his shoulder once more, then stepped into her office. "Oh, and do try and stay out of trouble for the rest of the week, Potter," she added wryly. "I may be back on my feet, but that is an extra stress I do not need."

Harry laughed, offering his most innocent smile. "I'll try my best, Professor."

Yes, there was definitely hope for Minerva McGonagall yet.

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Harry still didn't have his own subscription to the *Prophet*, but he was thinking about getting one, and when Wednesday's headline stared him in the face across the breakfast table that morning, he almost spit out his tea.

*'Not As Black As He Seems? Death Eater Captured At Ministry Is Confirmed Peter Pettigrew: Sirius Black Case To Be Re-Opened'*

"Hey, can I borrow that?" Harry requested. Alicia shrugged, handing the paper over.

He read the article quickly — evidently one of the still-masked Death Eaters they had subdued during the battle in the DoM had been Pettigrew all along, and he was now in Ministry custody awaiting questioning by Veritaserum. They were asking members of the