

“Not really,” Harry shrugged. “I’ll meditate before bed, I’ve got my wardstone.” It wouldn’t stop him being dragged into a dream if Voldemort was determined, but maybe it would be one of the nicer ones — that mysterious endless corridor instead of Voldemort torturing his servants.

“If you need Dreamless Sleep, call Ceri. Severus has some in the medicine cabinet at home.”

“Thanks, Moony.” Harry managed a smile that was mostly genuine, if a little strained. The werewolf smoothed Harry’s messy hair down.

“I’ll see you in the morning, cub. Sleep well.”

He left, and Harry looked expectantly at Sirius; his godfather looked like he had something to say.

“I’ll never forgive myself for going after that rat bastard instead of making sure you were okay,” he said eventually, voice shaking. Harry’s heart clenched.

“Sirius, no, it’s not your fault!”

“If I’d protected you like I was supposed to, you never would have gone to them!” Sirius argued. There were tears in his grey eyes, his face pale. “But I can’t undo what I did. All I can do is promise to be better in future. You’re always my first priority, pup, no matter what. I swear. I’ll be a better godfather to you.”

“You’re the best godfather,” Harry assured him, shuffling closer for a hug. “Let’s face it, Dumbledore probably would have found a way to get you out of the picture somehow. He needed me to grow up thinking I was worthless.” Sirius flinched at that. “It all worked out in the end, and you’re here now. Please, let’s just draw a line under that part of my life, yeah? It doesn’t matter anymore.”

Sirius sighed, his head tilting to lean against Harry’s. “If you say so, kid. But if you ever want to talk. Or... don’t tell Moony, but if you ever want them to pay for what they did to you... I’ve already served twelve years in Azkaban. I figured I’ve got some room to do a few things to make it actually worth it.” There was a darkness in his stormy gaze — not like the darkness of Voldemort and his people, torturing for fun; more like the darkness in Narcissa Malfoy’s when someone threatened her son. A reminder that Sirius was raised a dark wizard, and knew all the things a dark wizard knew. And he wasn’t above using them.

“They aren’t worth it, Siri,” Harry insisted. “What happened to Dudley is enough.” He’d done enough damage to that family with his existence. He was too tired to want vengeance. He just wanted it all to be over.

“I suppose. But the offer stands.” Sirius winked, kissing Harry’s forehead and getting to his feet. “I’ll leave you to settle in. I’m in the room at the far end of the hall if you need me for anything. Molly and Arthur are upstairs, and the kids are all on the floor below — you should be pretty undisturbed in here.”

“Thanks, Pads. I’ll see you in the morning, yeah?”