

“He will be if you keep talking like that, mister,” she warned. Snape faltered under her gaze, then managed a small smile.

“You’re going to be a brilliant mother, Lils,” he assured her quietly. “That boy is lucky to have you.”

She beamed at him, her other hand still stroking her bump. “I hope so,” she murmured. Then, with what looked like considerable effort, she let go of Snape’s hand and hauled herself to her feet. “I’m getting another slice of cake,” she declared. “Only got a few more weeks with the excuse of eating for two, I’m going to make the most of it!”

Snape watched her go, his hand once more going to his left forearm, his eyes dropping to the hidden Mark with a look of disgust. And then the memory faded, and Harry was sat on the sofa once more.

“I... wow.” He’d learned so much in that one memory, Harry could hardly comprehend it all. Snape’s jaw tightened fractionally. “Thank you for showing me that, Professor. It’s... yeah.” He managed a smile, even as tears trickled down his face. “You kept your promise, though. Mostly.” Snape blinked at him, perplexed. “You did teach me to be good at Potions,” Harry pointed out. “Maybe not how to lie, but how to be better at lying. And you sure as hell put the fear of God into me, several times.”

A beat, and then that rusty laugh again — even more of a foreign noise now. “I suppose you’re right,” Snape admitted, a strange glint in his eyes.

Harry was utterly drained from the emotions he’d experienced in the last few hours, and from the looks of the three men around him, they weren’t far off either. “I think I’m going to bed,” he declared, leaning into Sirius for a hug. “It’s been a long day.”

“Too right,” Sirius agreed, kissing his forehead. “Sleep tight, pup. And the pensieve will be here, if you want to watch more memories another time. You just have to ask.”

Harry knew that one day he would ask for the difficult memories; the times when James was a prick, and Lily hated him. But right now he wanted to ride on the warm fuzzy feeling of the memories he’d been shown so far.

He got up, hugging Remus tightly. Then, gathering his bravery, he hugged Snape, too. “Mum was right,” he whispered, making sure he was looking right at the Slytherin, unflinching. “You’re a good man, Severus Snape,” he echoed her words, watching dark eyes widen.

“I... I try to be. For her. And for you.” His throat bobbed as he swallowed. “For this family.”

Harry stepped back, hands falling from the man’s sides, and after a short nod he turned to leave the room, heading for bed. He wished he could curl up in Draco’s arms, cry it out with someone who didn’t have their own grief to bear for Lily and James Potter. But it was okay; even if he did cry, he knew that when he fell asleep, he would dream of his family. At it would be wonderful.