

“Dudley? Is he...?” He didn’t need to finish. Snape’s face said it all. “He’s been kissed, hasn’t he?” His stomach lurched.

“I’m afraid so. I wish there was time to explain, but you need to be back in your bedroom before anyone comes to find you.”

“We won’t leave you there long, cub,” Remus assured, wrapping an unresponsive Harry in a tight hug. “I promise.”

Harry couldn’t do anything more than splutter out a few weak agreements, before Ceri appeared with huge worried eyes and took him by the hand. In an instant, the duelling room of Seren Du was replaced by his old bedroom at Privet Drive.

He’d been back a few times, to sit at the window so that his watchers didn’t worry he was dead. The Dursleys had no idea about any of it.

Faintly, he could hear the TV on downstairs; some singing competition show that Petunia liked to watch. His heart thudded in his ears. Did they know yet? Were they even there?

A moment later, Ceri reappeared with his school trunk, and a few other things she settled around the room to make it look like he’d been living there. Harry almost laughed; no one who looked at this room could imagine he was comfortable there, regardless of how much of his stuff was lying about.

“The door is being unlocked, Master Harry,” she assured quietly, wringing her hands. “Call for Ceri if you be needing anythings.” With a short bow, she disappeared, and Harry was alone.

He stood, in the middle of the room, feeling utterly bereft.

What had just happened??

He didn’t have time to think for long. The doorbell rang through the house, and he swallowed as his throat suddenly grew dry. Carefully, he crept towards the door, cracking open the cat flap at the bottom and crouching to press his ear to the gap.

“Hello, Officer. Is everything alright?” Petunia had answered the door. She had the tone she used when anticipating a juicy bit of gossip. Harry almost gagged.

“Are you Petunia Dursley?” It was a female voice, barely audible over the TV from the living room. “I’m sorry, is your husband home?”

“What’s this all about? Vernon! Vernon, it’s the police!” Petunia’s shrill call rang out. Harry heard the creak and grunt of Vernon levering himself off the sofa, and the TV suddenly went silent.

“What?” Heavy footsteps; Vernon joining Petunia in the hall. “What do you want at this time of night?”

“My apologies, Mr Dursley. I’m afraid it’s about your son.”