

Voldemort was living at Malfoy Manor. *Voldemort was in Draco's home.* When he'd first read the letter, everything within him had urged for him to go to Malfoy Manor and stage a rescue, but he knew that would be foolish. Draco had given no reason for anyone to believe he wasn't as loyal as his father, and Narcissa would die before she let anything happen to her son. They both knew where Seren Du was, and knew they were always welcome.

That didn't stop Harry from worrying. He kept the letter on his bedside table, picking it up every now and then to re-read the last two words, his heart giving a little skip each time. *Yours, Draco.* It was nothing he hadn't said in person, but... it felt like more.

One quiet dinner, three nights after the prophecy revelation, Remus cleared his throat. "Harry," he started, and Harry immediately knew he wasn't going to like what the man had to say. "Dumbledore has given me a mission. I'm to visit a werewolf pack in the New Forest and try and convince them to side with us instead of Voldemort."

Harry definitely didn't like it. "How long will you be gone?"

"I don't know. Hopefully not more than a week," Remus assured. "The moon and the few days either side of it. But... Sirius won't be able to get away from headquarters all that often. It'll just be you and Severus in the house. And Ceri, of course."

Harry glanced over at the Potions Master, who was keeping his gaze to his plate. Harry hadn't spoken much to him since he'd learned the truth, and it was starting to wear on both of them. Snape's mouth was tight in the corners, and every time he did catch Harry's eyes he looked sad. Remus was worse, but Snape clearly wasn't enjoying the silence either.

Eighteen months ago, Snape would have *begged* to not have to speak to or interact with Harry Potter. Eighteen months ago, Harry never would've thought seeing Snape sad would tear at that hole in his heart.

"That's okay," he said eventually, before taking a deep breath. It was time he tried some words, whether they fell in an orderly fashion or not. "I don't blame you, sir. For my parents. I'm sorry if I made you feel like I did. It was just a lot to take in, and the horcrux, and—there's a prophecy about me, and people died because of it, but you couldn't have known that. I just don't *understand*. Why me. Why you? Why were you even a bloody Death Eater to *begin with*, when Remus loves you so much and I know, *I know* you love him, I can see it, I'm not blind. How could things get so bad that you could still go to *him*? You all just say things were complicated back then, and I get that, and I probably don't have the right to ask for the truth for any of it. I just don't understand how you could go to Voldemort and how Pettigrew could go to Voldemort when both of you had people you loved! People who loved you! He still managed to get you, and his soul is in me and what if he gets me too? He said we were alike, in the diary, when I was younger, and he was right, he was *so right*, I'm just like him and I can feel it sometimes and it *hurts* and I don't want to be like him but what if I am and what if all of this is for nothing and what if his soul and my soul are the same thing now? And what if I hurt people — what if I hurt *you* — what if this power I'm supposed to kill him with actually just makes me worse than he is and Dumbledore was right to bind it all along and I—"