

strong as always, holding Remus up, never faltering. He had to be just as exhausted — more so, even, after the magic he'd expended keeping Harry alive.

"Where's Sirius?" he asked absently, arm winding around Severus' leg.

"Spreading the word amongst the Weasleys," Severus replied. "He promised he would not go off on his own in search of revenge. Let's hope he has not persuaded one of those red-headed idiots to do so on his behalf."

Remus snorted weakly. He opened his mouth to reply, but his breath caught in his throat.

Harry's hand had tightened around his, just a bit.

He sat up, eyes intently on his cub, looking for signs of wakefulness or distress or *anything*. "Harry? Harry, love, can you hear me?" Beside him, Severus tensed. The pair of them waited — Harry shifted ever so slightly, his lips curling in a faintly pained expression. Remus ignored his partner casting diagnostic spells, gaze fixed hopefully on the closed eyelids behind wire-framed glasses, watching them twitch until they eventually fluttered open, revealing confused green eyes.

He saw the moment of panic, felt Harry's hand clench around his. "It's okay," he soothed. "You're safe. You're home. We've got you, cub."

Harry's gaze flicked towards him, tension draining from his shoulders. "Hurts," he said, grimacing.

"Yes, I'd imagine it does. Drink this," Severus instructed, pulling a vial from his pocket and holding it to Harry's lips. The Gryffindor boy drank without hesitation, the pain potion flooding his system and bringing a relieved smile to his lips.

"Thanks, Sev," he murmured, and Remus hid a smile at the faintly taken-aback look on his lover's face — hardly anyone dared call him Sev, these days. "What happened?"

"We were rather hoping you'd tell us, actually," Remus said, thumb stroking the back of Harry's hand. "Neville called Sirius on the mirror yesterday morning — he said no one had seen you since the night before, and they were worried. He knew you weren't in the castle, so we searched everywhere; every known residence of Dumbledore's, every connection we could think of, every lead we dared follow with the Ministry under Voldemort's control."

"You apparated in to the wardline just before eight this morning, told us that Dumbledore wanted you dead, and passed out," Severus revealed. "You'd splinched yourself in eight different places, you foolish boy."

Harry grimaced again. "Explains why I feel like I've been sent through a wood chipper." He craned his neck, looking down at himself. "I was only gone a day, then? Good. That's— that's good."

Remus' stomach clenched; how long had he thought it had been. "Cub," he started softly. "Can you... will you tell us what happened? What he did to you?" The longer he sat there