

“And Dumbledore put the block on my power, no doubt thinking that the explosion of its release could be the *power the Dark Lord knows not*,” Harry realised bitterly.

“Indeed.” Snape was solemn, thoughtful. “This knowledge changes very little of our plans, in all honesty. It does not suggest the number of horcruxes, or where they might be hidden. It is as vague and useless as most Divination.”

He was right, except the Prophecy wasn’t useless at all; it was worse than that, because so much damage had come from it.

“Business as usual, then?” Harry said, injecting false cheer into his voice. Remus and Snape both nodded.

“Business as usual.”

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As instructed, first thing after breakfast the next morning Harry headed down to Snape’s quarters — once again neatly dodging Dumbledore’s attempt to talk to him. Sirius was waiting there, and the animagus pulled Harry into a rib-crushing hug.

“I know we’re on a tight schedule here, and we can talk properly in the summer, but I am *so* enormously proud of you, pup,” he murmured, making Harry’s heart clench. Then, Sirius looked up at Snape. “If we’re not back in an hour, you know what to do.”

The Slytherin nodded, and then they were gone.

For the second time in three days Harry found himself unexpectedly travelling by portkey. This time was easier, though, as he had Sirius’ arms securely around him. They landed in Sirius’ bedroom at Grimmauld Place.

“I thought we were going to the Pottery?” Harry queried, and Sirius nodded.

“We are, but this is just in case anyone traces the portkey. We’re going to apparate the rest of the way, alright?”

Harry, whose eyes had caught on t-shirt draped on the end of the bed that he was fairly certain belonged to Charlie, snapped back to attention and nodded. Sirius held him tight again, and then they were spinning.

“Here we are, Harry,” Sirius said, his voice soft and oddly choked. “The Pottery. Your ancestral home.”

Harry looked up at the huge wrought iron gates in front of them. They held the Potter crest, and the magic emanating from them felt so *familiar* Harry thought for a moment he might cry. Sirius nudged him forward gently. “Go on. They’re blood-warded, they’ll know you.”

Harry did as bid, stepping up to the gates and placing a hand on the lock. Instantly something pricked his finger, and then warmth flooded his body. The Potter magic searching him, twining with the family magic of his own core. It felt *happy*.