

the best he could; between all of them they were making good headway into the project, and she was attacking it with true Hufflepuff determination. The only person he told about what happened to his cousin was Neville, promising to give his friend the whole story when they were back at school. He spent a little time with Buckbeak, went for one last fly by himself, and made cookies with Ceri to try and cheer himself up.

By Wednesday evening, all he had left to do was repack his trunk for school. The decision of which books to bring with him seemed even harder this year; not only because his exams were approaching, but because he had so many things he wanted to learn before he was thrown into his next near-death experience.

“Severus has copies of most of those in his quarters.” Harry whipped around, seeing Remus in the doorway. The werewolf was the only other adult who had been around since the dementor attack; the Order were around too much for Sirius to get away, and Dumbledore had errands for Snape to run. Most of the time, Harry had been alone. “If there’s anything you need in them, I’m sure he’ll let you borrow them.”

Harry looked down at the set of Defence texts in his lap. “That’s good to know.” He eased them back on the shelf, looking at the rest of his pile. “Do you know if I’ll be able to train during school time?”

“Harry, it’s your OWL year, you’ll be busy,” Remus started, but Harry rolled his eyes.

“I think training is a bit more important than some exams, Moony,” he reasoned. “Besides, you’ve all said I know enough to do well. I’m not worried about my exams.” That was the truth. He’d come on in leaps and bounds since having his magic unblocked, and was at least a year ahead of himself in most subjects.

“You’ll still have lots of homework, though, and quidditch.”

Harry levelled the werewolf with a determined expression. After a few moments, Remus sighed. “If you insist, I’m sure Severus will find the time. As long as you’re able to keep Dumbledore oblivious. It might not be safe.”

Harry hadn’t thought about it like that. The last thing he wanted was for Dumbledore to get suspicious of any interactions between Harry and the Potions Master. “Okay. But I can still work on things alone.” He was making good progress with his animagus transformation, and he didn’t want to let his duelling skills get rusty. It could cost lives otherwise.

“Just remember, you’re still only fifteen,” Remus reminded, carding a hand through Harry’s messy hair. “A powerful fifteen, but fifteen all the same. Let the adults do their jobs in protecting you, the best we can.”

“That doesn’t always work out too well in practice,” Harry pointed out. Still, he leant into the touch. “I’ll try, Moony.”

“You’ve got a lot on your plate this year, cub.” Remus cracked a faint smile. “Just focus on your classwork and your government takeover, let us work on the rest, alright?”