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Of all the people to knock on the door of his office in the middle of a school day, Severus would not have placed Neville Longbottom high on the list.

The boy was lucky Severus wasn't teaching — and that he hadn't interrupted anything important.

Then again, looking at the determined set of the Gryffindor's jaw, Severus wondered if that might be half the problem. "Harry Potter is missing," the boy declared, not a hint of the usual trembling stutter he spoke to Severus with.

The Slytherin's heart stopped.

"And why should I care?" he drawled dispassionately, stepping back and beckoning the boy inside. Longbottom hesitated only for a moment, but screwed up his courage and followed his most hated professor, only whimpering a little when Severus shut and locked the door.

Gryffindors, honestly.

"I— Lord Black told me to come here. Said I could trust you," Longbottom said, hands screwed into fists at his sides. "Harry's missing, I don't know how long for. He wasn't in the dorm, wasn't at breakfast. I... I know he's not in the castle." The boy's gaze dropped evasively.

"The wards confirmed that?"

Hazel eyes widened. "You know about the wards?" Severus nodded impatiently, and Longbottom seemed to bolster. "Then, yeah. The castle is worried. If he were here, I'd know about it. And— I asked Luna and Hannah, at breakfast. They can't feel him anywhere, either."

That was... concerning, to say the least. Thinking quickly, Severus scrawled a note on a piece of paper, tapping it with his wand. It vanished in a flash of silver light. "Can Hogwarts show you what happened?" Severus wasn't sure what the heirs' connection with the castle was like, but he knew Harry had talked about being *shown* things before.

Longbottom closed his eyes, face screwing up in concentration. "It's... foggy. Distorted. And dark. I can tell where he is — in the seventh floor corridor, not far from the Room of Requirement. But I can't properly see what happened. It's like— it's like I'm being blocked, or something."

Severus pinched the bridge of his nose — that did not bode well for any of them.

A knock on the door startled both of them. Gesturing for Longbottom to stand out of view, just in case, Severus dropped his wards and went to open it. Luckily, it was just Draco. His godson's face was pale, his lip slightly swollen where he'd been worrying it between his teeth. "Is this about Harry?" he asked urgently.