

“Can you remove them?” He especially didn’t like the idea of Dumbledore being able to check his location at any time.

“Of course.” Snape did some complicated-looking wandwork, and when he scanned Harry again, his chest glowed white. “You’re clear. I do wonder, though...” He turned his wand on Remus, raising an eyebrow. After a nod of consent, he performed the same spell he had on Harry. Remus glowed black, then purple. Snape swore loudly. “The same Tracking spell, and an incredibly rare spell designed to target dual-natured creatures. I haven’t seen it in years; The Dark Lord used to use it on the werewolves who had displeased them, to cut them off from their wolf halves; it would drive them insane, eventually.”

“Moony,” Remus breathed, looking heartbroken. “Severus, do— do you know how long that spell has been present?”

“By the looks of it, since you were a child. Perhaps since Hogwarts, maybe even before then.”

Remus’ expression was devastated. “I always wondered why it felt like my wolf and my human mind were always fighting each other,” he said softly. “I thought that was just how it was to be a werewolf. That it was normal to be scratching myself to pieces every moon.”

“That one will take work to remove,” Snape said. “But I can do it, if you give me time.” He met Remus’ gaze, and Harry looked away suddenly, his cheeks heating. It felt like he was watching something he shouldn’t.

Eventually, Remus cleared his throat. “Well,” he said, a little flustered. “That was... unexpected.”

“Dumbledore must be stopped,” Sirius growled, dropping back onto the sofa next to Harry. A quick wave of Snape’s wand showed the dog animagus glowing black; also a victim of the passive Tracking spell.

“We’re all in agreement there,” Snape said, scowling at the results. “But until we know exactly what his plan is, we must stay quiet and play his game.”

“I won’t let his *game* stop me from raising my godson as my heir,” Sirius retorted. “Harry needs to know his place in the world.”

“Neville’s been helping me,” Harry piped up tentatively. “And— others.” He wasn’t quite ready to tell the truth about Draco Malfoy just yet. “Most of the heirs at school don’t like Dumbledore either. Neville got me learning Occlumency, so I can keep my secrets better.”

“Longbottom, really?” Snape was skeptical. “I’ll test your shields tomorrow, see how far you’ve come. It is vital that you’re able to keep all this hidden once you return to school, amongst anyone who might be in Dumbledore’s pocket — yes, that includes your precious Weasleys, and the Granger girl. Trust no one until proven otherwise. Until we know what we’re dealing with, you must be Dumbledore’s Golden Boy.”