

So much for things being secret. How many other people knew? He hoped they were all as good at Occlumency as Neville assured him they must be. “There are more important houses than just Hogwarts ones,” he said eventually.

“And more important enemies than each other,” Zabini said quietly, his dark eyes knowing. Harry’s jaw tightened. Was he talking about Voldemort, or Dumbledore?

They parted ways without another word, and Harry returned to the Gryffindor common room — just in time to hear another explosion from Ron about Crookshanks going after Scabbers.

Honestly, the sooner that rat died, the better it would be for everyone. They could finally get some peace and quiet.

.-.-.

Harry should’ve known better than to expect quidditch to brighten his spirits, the way his term was going so far.

He hardly thought it was necessary to keep him in the hospital wing for the whole weekend, but he didn’t argue too hard — it kept him away from prying eyes, at least. And once Neville brought him some books, it wasn’t too bad. He appreciated the attempt at cheering him up, at least.

He hadn’t told anyone about the Grim, yet. He was pretty sure he was actually imagining things. One thing he definitely wasn’t imagining was the voices he’d heard right before he’d passed out, the voices the dementors had brought into his memories. He’d known already, deep down, but now he really *knew*. That was his mother he was hearing — her last words, as she begged Voldemort to spare him. Her dying screams.

Weeks ago, he would’ve given anything to hear his mother’s voice. Now, he’d give anything to make it stop. It was all he could think about, echoing in his ears every time he tried to sleep. The visitors were a nice distraction, but every time he was left alone, the voice returned.

“Potter, are you, uh, alright?” He was snapped from his thoughts by an unfamiliar voice, and looked up into the cautious face of Cedric Diggory, the Hufflepuff seeker.

“Diggory,” he greeted, confusion clear in his tone. Diggory edged closer.

“Hi. Uh, I brought you this. From dinner. Madam Pomfrey never lets me have sweets when I’m in the hospital wing, so I thought you’d like it.” The Hufflepuff awkwardly thrust out a napkin-wrapped bundle, which turned out to be a slightly misshapen slice of treacle tart. “I asked the twins, they said it’s your favourite.”

“Oh, yeah. Thanks.” He took the treat, still entirely baffled by the other seeker’s presence.

“Look, Potter, I just wanted to come say I’m sorry. I didn’t notice what was happening until it was too late— I’d never have caught the snitch if I’d known.”