

Dumbledore, meanwhile, was doing something daft and flashy with one of his silver instruments, clearly trying to make Harry curious as he muttered to himself and waved his wand through a puff of smoke shaped like a rearing snake's head. But Harry didn't care; he knew more than Dumbledore thought he did, more than perhaps Dumbledore himself, and he just wanted to make sure Mr Weasley was okay before he went and passed out again. He was *exhausted*, utterly drained of energy, head pounding.

After what felt like an age, the two painted ex-heads returned to their portraits. The man assured that Mr Weasley had been found, and soon after the woman relayed his arrival at St Mungo's — in quite an awful state, from the sounds of it. Ron shuddered violently, and Dumbledore pursed his lips.

"Right, then. Minerva, if you would please wake the rest of the Weasley children and bring them here..."

"Of course." With one last worried look at Harry, McGonagall hurried to the door. She paused in the threshold. "Headmaster, what about Molly?"

Ron let out a quiet moan, and Dumbledore's face drew tighter. "I will send Fawkes, once he has returned from keeping watch. Though she may already know, with that excellent clock of hers..."

McGonagall left, and Dumbledore began to rummage through a cupboard until he found an old tea kettle. That kettle became a portkey in short order, and Harry was vaguely aware of the headmaster shouting for Phineas Nigellus Black, his resident painted spy in Grimmauld Place. A weak smile twitched at his lips; was the man's portrait even still in the house, after Sirius' decorating spree?

His hands clenched over the arms of the chair like it was the only thing keeping him upright. Harry had done his bit, he'd raised the alarm, now he just wanted to *sleep*. But he didn't think Dumbledore was going to let him go back to Gryffindor Tower.

At least it sounded like he would be seeing Sirius, soon.

McGonagall returned with Ginny and the twins, all dressed in pyjamas and pale with fear. Dumbledore explained what had happened in a very vague and unhelpful sort of way. Harry knew he'd be giving a proper explanation when they were alone, but they didn't seem to be able to focus on anything past the fact that their dad was hurt, regardless.

There would be time for explanations once Mr Weasley was okay.

Fawkes flashed in with a warning that was apparently about Umbridge, and McGonagall was off again. Dumbledore bid them all gather around the portkey, and Harry did so, his body aching with every movement.

Then the headmaster called his name, and instinctively Harry looked up. Green eyes met blue, dead on, and he only had a brief moment to panic — but instead of the prod of Legilimency, Harry merely felt a wave of *hatred*, and suddenly he had fangs once more and would very much like to sink them into Dumbledore's neck, and his scar was on fire—