

back then. It's too late, now. We just let Severus keep giving you potions and let you bluster on past it."

"You knew about the potions?" Harry blurted. Sirius cracked a wry smile.

"You think Ceri wouldn't tell me that healing and nutrition potions were being left in my godson's room? Hell, you think old Snape could keep a secret like that from his Moony-love?"

Remus' cheeks went pink, but he didn't falter. "Severus said it was up to you to deal with things how you preferred, and we should give you the space to do so. Considering his... experience in the matter, I followed his advice. But Harry, if you need to talk about it — any of it. We're here to listen."

"I'm over it, really," Harry insisted. "Mostly." He would never *truly* be past it all. He would always be the boy in the cupboard under the stairs, at least at heart. But he was growing despite that. "A lot of what I said I was just saying for effect down there. But that doesn't make it a lie, or exaggeration. Vernon really would have tried to kill me if he knew the truth about Dudley. And... the way I described the summer, the food through the cat flap and two bathroom breaks a day and the chores — that's how things were, before. After the incident with the bars on my window." He'd told them about that, he remembered. That should've given them enough of an idea even back then.

"And the scars?" Sirius asked softly, moving from the desk to the bed beside Remus.

"Are long since healed, and I'm fine," Harry insisted, squeezing his eyes shut. "You— Moony, you said I'd never have to go back there. Anything else doesn't matter."

"And I meant it," Remus promised. "Whatever happens, you'll never have to lay eyes on those awful people again, we'll make sure of it. But... if you ever want to talk about what they did to you. Or if you want to get rid of some old wounds. Even if you can't talk to us — I have it on very good authority that Severus is an excellent listener, and even better with Scar Reducing Cream," he added with a half-smile. "Any one of the three of us will do whatever we can."

"We aren't exactly the poster children for happy families, either," Sirius pointed out roughly. "Moony's parents treated him like a monster, mine tried to *make* me a monster, and I don't know the details of Snape's but it has to have been bad to make him such a miserable little git so young— ow, Moony!" The werewolf was unrepentant as Sirius rubbed where he'd just been hit on the shoulder. "My point is, we aren't as rose-tinted as the Weasleys. We can handle it, if you want to tell us."

Harry appreciated the thought, truly. But knowing they'd had crappy childhoods didn't make him any more eager to recount his own.

"I know, Pads," he said eventually. "I just... I just need to get some sleep, I think."

"It's been a long day," Remus agreed. He leaned in, pressing a kiss to Harry's forehead, frowning when he saw the inflamed scar. "Is it bothering you again?"