

“There were other ways to get in contact with me! Hell, last time I couldn’t write to anyone, Ron and the twins showed up at my window! What’s the matter; couldn’t find your way without a flying car?” he retorted.

“The Order were watching you. They said you were fine.” Ron seemed unconcerned, too busy stuffing his face

Harry stilled. “What do you mean, the Order were watching me?” He wanted to know exactly what constituted ‘watching’. Especially after what happened to Dudley.

“Dumbledore assigned you guards, of course,” Mrs Weasley informed him, bringing more gravy to the table. “After that awful business with the tournament, surely you didn’t expect him to leave you alone all summer; anything could’ve happened to you!”

“And none of these *guards* seemed concerned that I never left the house?” Out of the corner of his eye, he saw Sirius wince at his icy tone.

“Well,” Mrs Weasley faltered. “After what happened with the poor Diggory boy... we rather suspected you just needed time to process.”

“We were there to keep you safe,” Tonks piped up hesitantly. “We didn’t want to intrude.”

“Keep me safe, right. And I bet you all thought I was locked in my room to *keep me safe*, too. Two bathroom breaks a day, meals through the cat flap. A list of chores twice my height to keep me *safe*.” He mentally scolded himself; he hadn’t meant to say that much. Beside him, Sirius stiffened.

There was an awkward beat of silence. “I’m sure your aunt and uncle were just trying to give you space, dear. It’s difficult to know how to help someone grieve.” Mrs Weasley finally took a seat beside her husband.

“The last thing they want is to give me *space*; I might get up to something *unnatural*,” Harry drawled. “Seriously — I had people watching me twenty-four-seven, and none of you thought it was strange that I didn’t so much as go in the garden?”

There were several uncomfortable faces at the dinner table. Harry didn’t feel sorry for them — if not for the intervention of Sirius and Remus and Snape, the summer he was pretending to have had would have been a very real possibility; worse, even. He wouldn’t have been able to use Silencing charms at Privet Drive — if Vernon had been woken up by his nightmares, Harry would have been belted raw.

“Great. Good to know people only care what happens to me when it involves Voldemort.” Several people flinched at the name. “Would Dumbledore’s supposed protections have told you if I’d died? If I needed help?”

“We wouldn’t have let any Death Eaters get in the house, Potter,” Moody snapped, his electric blue eye whizzing around its socket.