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**Whispers in the Dark**

by **NeuroWriter14**

**Summary**

Enough is enough for Harry Potter, Boy Who Lived. One can only take murder attempts so many times in their life before it gets to be too much. So Harry does something stupid and reckless, as per the usual Gryffindor stereotype. However, the reaction he gets is nothing like what he expected.

**Notes**

Ok so I couldn’t help it. There are a lot of Dark Harry fics within this fandom and I thought, "Why not jump on this bandwagon? It will certainly not break my heart to write something else on top of my several other uncompleted fics. What’s the harm?" So here it is, my Dark Tomarry fic.

Enjoy.

As always, I do not own any rights to Harry Potter.
Stupid and Reckless: The Gryffindor Way

Chapter Notes

Sorry this first chapter is so short but it's really more of a tester chapter.

Voldemort paced inside the manor he was currently inhabiting. To say he loathed the manor was an understatement. It had belonged to his retched Muggle father and his horrid, filthy parents. He passed by the table where they had their last meal and a sly smile flitted across his face. He remembered every second of it, relished every second of it. Not at first though, he remembered that day very clearly.

Tom stepped inside the lavish manor, eyeing the walls as if they were diseased. He had never been inside a Muggle manor before and had yet to see portrait, real portraits, that didn't move. But these didn't move. They didn't do anything but sat there, cold and unmoving. Finding the dining room where the current inhabitants of the house were sitting down for dinner was easy. He merely walked inside the house and made a right into the obnoxiously large room. It shouldn't have nauseated him as it did for he had been to Hogwarts. The whole manor could fit inside the second floor alone. But alas there he was, gazing in disgust at the manor around him. It was slightly dusty but no surprise seeing and none of the three inhabitants could be bothered to lift a finger to do anything. Tom thought for certain that they didn't even make the meal which steamed in front of them. Not like Tom made many meals either. That's what the house elves at Hogwarts were for, but during the summer...Tom mentally shook himself as he gazed at the three occupants of the dining room, one of which looked almost identical to him.

Tom Riddle Senior was a handsome man with short, wavy chestnut brown hair and striking deep blue eyes which reminded most of the ocean at night. Down to the high cheek bones and sharp chin, his face was everything his son had. Their pale skin even matched, something Tom gazed upon with hatred. Tom Marvolo Riddle, however, was much more lithe than his father, his wrists thinner and his fingers longer, perfect for playing the piano. They stood at the same height, considerably taller than Merope Gaunt had been. Next to him were two aging but still undeniably attractive people. It was easy for Tom to see where exactly his looks had come from. It certainly wasn't from the family which had spawned his troll of an uncle. Tom subconsciously gripped the stole wand a little harder as he held his arms at his side, staring.

Riddle Senior was the first to react, standing swiftly and staring at the boy near him. Tom himself couldn't have been more than fifteen at the time yet he still held himself with the same grace his father, a well off man at least in his thirties, did. For a moment, Tom wavered. For a moment, he took the surprise he saw in his father's eyes as a good sign. For a moment, Tom thought he might be welcomed home.

That moment vanished in an instant. It was replaced by a cold recognition as Tom Riddle Senior recognized the boy in front of him. The twist in his face was so similar to that of his son, it could almost have looked like, for a moment, there was a mirror placed in the room and two of the same person stared at one another.

"I know who you are." Riddle Senior's voice was much deeper and huskier than his sons. "You're Merope's brat. Leave here, you devil. I want nothing to do with you just like I wanted nothing to do
with that freak of a mother of yours. You and your whole family are vermin. Leave now."

Any hesitation Tom had was gone the moment the word devil entered his ears. He politely waited for Riddle Senior to finish before giving him a grin that would have been at home on the face of the devil. "But of course, Father." He sneered right before the emerald light erupted from his wand and Riddle Senior slumped over, falling on to the food in front of him. Screams erupted from his parents and were quickly silenced by two more jets of emerald light. The Riddles were dead, and Tom Marvolo Riddle with them.

Voldemort relished that day. Any regret he had was quickly quashed by the words freak, devil, and vermin. He continued to pace, knowing that eventually he'd wear into the rug beneath him, but he could hardly care. Not for the first time, his mind was reeling over the anomaly that was Harry James Potter.

Harry James Potter.

Tom Marvolo Riddle.

How ironic it was to him. They both shared their father's name and Voldemort had killed both of their fathers. He knew, or at least he thought he knew, everything there was to know about Harry Potter.

Born on July 31st, exactly six months away from his own birth—an occasion he rarely ever recognized—and the very epitome of everything good. Even at eleven years old, Harry Potter had been stubborn boy, vehemently refusing the chance that others would have jumped at. To say the Potter boy was infuriating was entirely an understatement. He was perplexing. And now, he had vanished. He was no where to be found. Voldemort had snatchers looking for him night and day. Admittedly the snatchers weren't the smartest of people but they had their uses. And the boy was one of a few who were actually brave enough to say his name, which is why he thought for certain the taboo would work. But somehow, Harry Potter knew, he had learned and he was evading him via pure dumb luck again.

The lion and the snake spun a web of hatred between the two of them and anyone who got caught in it never came out the same. Harry's parents were only one example of the victims of their twisted web. The longest relationship Harry had had with anyone was Voldemort and ironically, it was quite the same in reverse. Nearly 20 years the two of them had been the central focus of one another. It was definitely interesting when one looked at it from the outside. If anyone knew Harry Potter well, it was Voldemort but sadly that meant that if anyone knew Voldemort, it was Harry Potter.

So he figured that at some point, Harry Potter would do something stupid. Something reckless. Something **Gryffindor.** As Voldemort paced he realized something, something he could never have pictured himself realizing before. He was going to need his soul back.

Harry was lying inside the tent with the horcrux hanging around his neck. The cold metal held bit against his skin. His mind was whirling as he thought. Ron and Hermione were huddled close together, talking. Harry could tell that they liked each other, and part of him just felt like the third wheel. But he also knew that they would do anything for him and honestly it irked them. Shouldn't they have more sense than that? Well no, technically, because they were Gryffindors. But this, this was outrageous. They had come on a journey for months without seeing their family and not even being in able to sleep in a real bed at night. Instead they were stuck inside this stupid tent, with him. Because of **him.** He couldn't do this anymore, he wouldn't do this any more.

They would be worried, he knew that. But at least with him out of the way, they would be safe.
Harry waited, waited, and waited. Eventually Ron and Hermione fell asleep, Ron's hand reaching toward her. Harry knew what he was about to do was probably the most stupid thing he had ever done again. And this was not going to be pleasant. He grabbed his stuff, holding the pouch that Hagrid had given him against himself and taking a deep breath. He took one last look around as he grabbed the horcrux around his neck debating about leaving it in the tent but eventually decided against it. Something made him want to keep it with him. He couldn't quite determine what, but it almost felt like he would lose something if he left it.

So instead he took one more calming breath and stepped out into the cold.

It was definitely winter time, or at least nearing it because the night was biting. Harry wrapped his cloak around himself and started trudging off into the snow. He waited until he was just outside all of the protections that they had set up and he could no longer see the tent. He knew were the tent was as he looked back that general direction and took in one more breath before the familiar sense of apparation pulled at his navel.

He didn't know exactly what drew him back to Grimmauld Place. He just knew that suddenly he was there again. There was no one watching around the front step anymore like they had been, probably assuming that he, Ron, and Hermione no longer stayed there. He turned the handle of the door stepping inside and immediately accosted by the apparition of Dumbledore that moved swiftly toward him. "I didn't kill you." He mumbled and the apparition exploded into dust. Harry was alone in the hallway. Instead of doing much more to assure that he was alone, he trudged up the stairs into Sirius's room. Quickly he threw off his shoes and collapsed on the bed which, while musty, still smelt of his godfather.

"Sirius?" Harry looked at the picture against the wall of Sirius, Remus, Pettigrew...and his father. "What am I going to do now?"

What was he doing inside this house?

Harry's sleep was fitful and honestly he didn't know if it was much worse than being awake. At one point, he felt like he was Voldemort and Voldemort was him. They had felt like one in the same and it had been the strangest feeling ever. He was used to going inside Voldemort's head, but before he could still distinguish that those thoughts, even in hindsight, weren't his own. He could see in the aftermath. But now, it was like he was Voldemort and he couldn't tell the difference now. Had that been Voldemort? Or had that been him? Where was the line? Where did Harry Potter end and Voldemort begin? Where they even two different people?

Voldemort paced around again. Any more pacing and he would eventually burn a hole in the rug, not that he minded. But now he was surrounded by three pieces of his soul: the Cup, the Diadem, and Nagini and it had seemed as though suddenly he had found another one. Perhaps it was the closeness of the pieces of his soul that suddenly allowed him to be drawn to the next piece of his soul but it was suddenly as though he had been looking at two versions of himself. One was emanating from the locket, which hung around Harry Potter's neck, and the other was coming from Harry Potter himself. The which seemed like it was projecting from the locket looked like Tom when he was about 20 years old or so. Right after he had gotten it from Hepzibah Smith. His cheeks were slightly more hallowed and his hair slightly longer. The locket had been the second horcrux he made, the first being his diary which was lost to him. Lucius had paid dearly for that one.

The locket horcrux blinked at him before looking down at the sleeping form of Harry Potter. Harry's hair was scattered all over the pillow on the red and gold sheets. The locket itself glinted up at him...
and for some inane reason, he couldn't help but wonder exactly how Harry would look in Slytherin green. His horcrux looked back at him, a feral grin stretching across his face.

"I've seen his heart." He told himself, the younger version's eyes glinting. He reached a hand out and slid it over Harry's head, Harry himself shifting and almost arching into a hand he couldn't feel. "It's so easily broken. He feels lost, alone. Like he's the cause of everyone else's problems." Voldemort himself raised an eyebrow looking from his younger self to the rather young looking Harry Potter. He looked less fierce and determined that he did awake. Instead he looked young and vulnerable.

"He could be ours, you know?" Voldemort's younger self said to him.

"I doubt that, he's a patron of the light. He will never change sides." Voldemort scoffed.

"You don't know that. Have you heard his every thought recently? Have you seen his heart? I have. I could show you, if you'd like." Voldemort eyed his younger self, curious. He knew himself better than anyone else, knowing that he would want something in return.

"What do you want?" He asked himself, knowing that in any other case, this would have been quite weird.

"Him." Tom gestured to the boy between them.

"Why?" Tom's answer was a feral smile again.

"You'll see."

Voldemort sighed and was suddenly sucked inside the mind of Harry James Potter. Instantly he noticed that it mirrored his own, just as complex and filled with magic to the brim much like himself. His magical signature was almost identical to his own and suddenly he was pulled into memories.

Memory after memory, he watched and suddenly it was if he were watching his own life and suddenly he got more and more angry. This is what he wanted to prevent, magical children being abused by nonmagical guardians.

"Do you see why I want him now?" His own voice bordered on seductive. "He would be the crown jewel of our kingdom." He couldn't see himself but his own voice echoed around him. "He's powerful. He's determined. With him by our side the war would be lost for the light. Without their stag to lead them, you will succeed. Get most of your soul back and Harry will hand you the last piece. Leave the piece of you with him that you have. He'll hold a piece of you. He'll deliver me and himself right to you."

"How can you be so sure?" Voldemort demanded.

"Because, I will make certain of it." Suddenly they were looking down at Harry's sleeping form again. Tom ran his hand over Harry's face, fondly. "You'll see."

Now that Voldemort was awake, he knew how foolish it had been to agree to let Harry come to him. It was a huge risk and admittedly a huge investment, but also a huge risk. Then again, he was talking about himself in this, and if he were to trust anything to anyone, it would be to himself.

Harry remembered the dream. There had been two of Voldemort, talking about him as if he were a prize but for some reason, it had been only comforting to have someone want him. Even if it was just a dream. Though ironically the one that wanted him was Voldemort. Of course it wasn't true. The only people who wanted him he had left in the forest. And now he was going to have to go again
before Hermione and Ron caught up with him.

*You could go to him.*

What?

*You could go to him. You know he wants you.*

But it's *Voldemort.*

*But he wants you. You know that he understands what you're going through. He'd love you. That's what you want isn't it? To be loved.*

Yes but once again, it's *Voldemort.*

*So? Does it matter in the end?*

Harry's head dropped as he looked at himself in the mirror. He was tired. He knew that much. Would Voldemort really except him? Would he stop trying to kill him?

*Yesssss.*

The voice was a hiss in his ear.

I'm going to Voldemort aren't I?

*Yes, you are.*

Damnit.

Harry inhaled sharply wondering whether it was from a lack of sleep or maybe this itself was a dream, but honestly he couldn't bring himself to care. Instead he steeled him. He knew this was going to be a horrible idea. This was the worst idea he had ever had. Yet he was going to do it. He knew he was going to regret it, but he was doing it anyway.

He stepped outside, outside the wards around the house and grabbed the horcrux, holding it tightly in his fist. Again for what felt like the millionth time, he took a deep breath and walked away from the house which had been his safe haven before, and again last night. Instead he walked down the street. When he felt like he was far enough away he ducked into an alley and looked around to make certain he was alone before he said the one word which had caused him so much grief.

"Voldemort."

---

Voldemort was surprised that the snatchers brought him Harry Potter so quickly. He thought for certain that it would take himself much longer to get Harry Potter to come to him. Yet here he was, not even 24 hours later being dragged by snatchers and looking throughly disgruntled. Voldemort dismissed the snatchers quickly, not even letting them collect their bounty before he extend his hand to Harry.

"Welcome, Mr. Potter. I've been expecting you."
"Welcome Mr. Potter. I've been expecting you."

Harry's heart thundered in his ears and his throat suddenly felt very dry. He didn't know why, but something possessed him to grab the locket hanging around his chest. The horcrux, as always, was a bitter cold but for some reason it seemed to warm at his touch. Voldemort's eyes followed his movement, giving him a shark-like grin before spinning on his heal and waving his hand, beckoning Harry to follow him. Throat still incredibly dry, but feeling more and more calm as time passed, Harry followed Lord Voldemort. He had no idea where he was, the manor was unlike anything he had seen before: large, lavish, and a bit too gaudy for his tastes. As if Voldemort could read his mind, and he probably could, he responded to Harry's internal babbling.

"Malfoy Manor." Harry started at the words only to see a wicked gleam in the red eyes gazing down at him. "And I agree, it is rather gaudy. Unnecessary." Voldemort walked outside with Harry trailing at his heals, past the entrance where he had been dragged before. The ivory peacocks stared at them but did nothing else. "That is why we're not staying here." Harry's hand tightened on the horcrux around his neck.

"Where are we going then?" Harry's voice sounded stronger than he felt. Fear rocketed through his veins but he wasn't foolish enough to let it show, he never let it show. The horcrux seemed to pound in his hand like a heart.

Don't be afraid. I won't hurt you. Either of me.

The voice echoed through his head and suddenly Harry wasn't as worried anymore. Something about having the locket calmed him, made him feel safe, which was probably the most dangerous thing that could ever happen; Harry Potter feeling safe in the arms of Lord Voldemort. Once outside the gates and wards surrounding Malfoy Manor, Voldemort stopped and extended his hand to Harry.

"We're going somewhere only I know." Harry swallowed thickly and looked up at Voldemort, examining the snake-like man in front of him. Here, Voldemort looked strong and powerful. Harry could feel the magic swirling around him, thick and intoxicating.

Just know that if you do this, there is no going back.

The voice in his head made him pause for a moment and examine the man in front of him even harder. There was no malicious glare to his red eyes, there was no sneer in his words. Instead Voldemort was talking to him, not even like he talked to his own followers. Harry knew how he sneered at even them. No, this was something entirely different. What did Voldemort want from him? Why was he being...cordial? Voldemort waited patiently as Harry had an internal war with himself, part of himself being goaded by Tom.

"What will you do if I come with you?" Harry's voice was quiet but Voldemort could hear it.

"What will I do?" Harry gave a slight nod. "If you come with me, death and pain will never touch you, Harry Potter. Not even by me."

Harry swallowed thickly and raised his hand, placing it Voldemort's larger one. The familiar, unpleasant pull of apparation pulled as his gut as he felt like he was folded into an envelope and
shoved through a tube. They landed just outside a much smaller manor than Malfoy Manor. It was less grand and lavish but for some reason, it seemed to fit Voldemort. Though he was known to be quite dramatic, the manor seemed to fit him. Harry's mind whirled as they walked up the stone path and inside the door. The carpets were red and gold, much to Harry's surprise, and there were no portraits, magical or Muggle, on the walls. Instead it was covered with a red and green pattern which surprisingly seemed to work. Harry could tell that they were on the ground floor as they passed a staircase which led both upward and downward. Harry idly wondered what exactly the downward spiral of the staircase led to before he watched Voldemort turn into what appeared to be a study. Harry followed, not knowing exactly what to do.

Standing in the doorway, Harry shifted idly looking around the room. Next to the now lit fireplace, two chairs appeared and Voldemort gestured toward the chair with his free hand, the other still clutching the Yew wand. Harry moved toward it, taking the chair opposite the one Voldemort settled himself into. Neither talked, instead they just looked at one another, Voldemort's red eyes gazing at him critically.

"That wasn't a dream, was it?" Harry asked finally, breaking the silence between them. Instead of answering, Voldemort raised an eyebrow. "Last night. I saw you and your younger self talking. You looked like how you did when you visited Hepzibah Smith." Harry swallowed thickly, hoping he didn't overstep his bounds.

"No, that was not a dream. Though I'm assuming you're wondering why exactly you were able to see it?" Harry nodded and Voldemort continued, "I'm assuming by this point you know what a horcrux is, considering you're clutching one so tightly." Harry looked down at his hand which was still grasping the locket as if it were a life raft and he were going to drown. Harry forced himself to release the locket and set his hand down at his side before looking back at Voldemort and nodding. "Good. Then this will be less troublesome to explain. I'm certain for a long time you've wondered what exactly it that connects us. Besides our similar pasts, our wands, and our...looks." Harry nodded again. "It appears, Harry Potter, you were my unintentional horcrux."


"Forgive me for not forgetting that once you offered to feed me to the snake and that I saw her attack..." Voldemort's voice was low. "But for now you may...keep it safe for me." Was that a seductive note in his voice? No. No, it couldn't be. But Harry nodded weakly anyway, forcing himself to keep from grasping the locket. "I will need my locket back eventually." Voldemort's voice was low. "But for now you may...keep it safe for me." Was that a seductive note in his voice? No. No, it couldn't be. But Harry nodded weakly anyway, forcing himself to keep from grasping the locket. "If you'll excuse me, I have some work to attend to. Feel free to make yourself comfortable." Voldemort's voice was low. "Last night. I saw you and your younger self talking. You looked like how you did when you visited Hepzibah Smith." Harry swallowed thickly, hoping he didn't overstep his bounds.

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Harry looked back to Voldemort, about to ask how it was possible when the realization dawned on him. Voldemort's soul must have been unstable as it was, enough that when the killing curse rebounded because of his mother's love, a piece of Voldemort's soul latched itself to Harry after being split off from Voldemort himself. Again, as if Voldemort could read his mind, a wicked smile came across his face. "Very good, Potter. You're smarter than people give you credit for." Why his heart fluttered at the compliment, Harry had no idea. He would probably deny it for the rest of his life, that for some reason he enjoyed the compliment by Voldemort. It was Voldemort.

Says the same boy who noted my looks every time you saw me.

It took all of Harry's self control to keep his face from flushing red. "I need my locket back eventually." Voldemort's voice was low. "But for now you may...keep it safe for me." Was that a seductive note in his voice? No. No, it couldn't be. But Harry nodded weakly anyway, forcing himself to keep from grasping the locket. "If you'll excuse me, I have some work to attend to. Feel free to make yourself comfortable." Voldemort's voice was low. "Last night. I saw you and your younger self talking. You looked like how you did when you visited Hepzibah Smith." Harry swallowed thickly, hoping he didn't overstep his bounds.

"Nagini will not hurt you." Voldemort said, though he sounded distracted.

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Arthur Weasley. I don't forget how dangerous she is." Harry muttered bitterly only to receive a laugh from Voldemort.

"It is a good strategy to respect the danger of anything, whether or not it's on your side. Perhaps that is why the light lost you. They don't respect you. They expect you to die for them. Apparently you are more Slytherin than expected." Harry looked back at Voldemort who was eyeing him curiously.

"The Hat wanted to put me in Slytherin." Harry answered quietly before leaving the room.

"I told you so." The voice of his younger self echoed next to him, as suddenly the apparition of a twenty year old Tom Riddle appeared next to his chair. Nagini raised her head curiously from her position in front of the fireplace and lowered it again once she recognized that it was still her master talking. "Harry Potter isn't easily manipulated, but soon he will come to realize how much he was truly manipulated by the light. He'll seek comfort elsewhere. It appears that comfort is already being sought in us."

"Manipulated how?" Voldemort asked himself, not looking up from the papers he was reading. The Daily Prophet while sometimes annoying, was an interesting way to get information. Since Voldemort controlled the Ministry and the Ministry controlled the Prophet there would be nothing in there too unappealing. It was still interesting though.

"You said it already. They expected Harry to die for them. I'm willing to bet Dumbledore knew about the horcrux and he knew the only way for Harry to assure your downfall was to have you kill the horcrux yourself. Thus assuring your downfall. The prophesy was self fulfilling as it was. Dumbledore admitted that to Harry directly. Had you not decided to collect yourself again, no doubt Harry would have found all the horcruxes with those obnoxious friends of his and destroyed them all, knocking you down more and more as it went. The ring is lost to you, as is the diary, but even with the diadem, the cup, Nagini, and myself, it will be enough. And as long as Harry Potter lives, you cannot die."

"Then Harry Potter cannot die." Voldemort declared, finally looking at himself.

"I agree. But how exactly do we make him immortal? You know as well as I do that the boy will never be dark enough to make a horcrux. Even if he is dark enough to murder."

"I am Lord Voldemort. I will find a way."

"So you are. So you are."

Harry found himself in the kitchen were he was greeted by a number of house elves. It was definitely not something he was expecting but he wasn't about to start questioning it. The elves swarmed him upon his entry and the smell of the kitchen suddenly made his stomach let out a rather loud grumble. Would Voldemort be upset if he got some food? He stomach gave a particularly loud grumble again. Eat, Harry Potter.

The voice, who he was slowly recognizing as Tom's voice, echoed in his mind and he gave in, asking for a sandwich in which the elves returned with a plate full of them. Harry sat himself down at the table in the center of the kitchen, noting its similarity to Hogwarts' own kitchen, before he started devouring sandwich after sandwich. He hadn't realized how hungry he had been until he finished off the whole plate. Part of him felt guilty. Here he was, warm and well fed, while his friends were presumably in the cold and surviving off of little food. Yet part of him felt a vicious victory. For
once, he wasn't the one starving.

Pushing the thoughts out of his mind, he left the kitchen, thanking the elves, and wandered around more before finding himself in a rather large library. It rivaled Hogwarts' own library and part of Harry wondered if Voldemort had actually read every book in there.

"Yes." The answer came from behind him and he turned around to find Voldemort leaning against the doorway, looking amused. "Though you'll find there is plenty of time of time to accomplish things when you are immortal." Harry swallowed thickly and nodded again. Why was Voldemort making it so damn hard for him to speak? Because he was talking to him as an equal, not like an enemy or a child. "Top of the stairs, third room on the left is yours. I'm assuming you'll want some sleep eventually." Harry was stunned to hear that declaration when he looked toward a window and saw it was completely dark outside. Had it really taken him all day to explore the whole place?

"Thank you." Harry muttered, not certain of what else to say.

"You're welcome. Now get some rest." Voldemort swept away before Harry could say more.

He found himself in a room that could have fit the entire Dursley house in it with room to spare. This manor did not nearly look this big on the outside. But Harry could hardly bring himself to care because of what was in the middle of the room. It was the largest bed he had ever seen and easily could have fit himself and a small army. Yet he didn't want to share this bed at all. Instead he climbed into the bed, not even bothering to take off his clothes seeing as he had very little clothing with him. He settled into the bed, feeling warm and comfortable and for the first time ever, safe. It was weird. Harry Potter was safe in the clutches of Lord Voldemort. What an interesting turn of events.

Harry didn't know if he was awake or not when he opened his eyes to see Tom Riddle lying next to him on the bed. Once again looking like he had when he visited Hepzibah, he had his legs crossed and his arms tucked behind his head. He was just lounging there in the bed next to Harry and Harry felt his breath catch in his throat. Tom really was handsome, even moreso than when he had been a school boy. The sunken in cheeks which accentuated his high cheek bones made him look just slightly more dangerous and his longer hair was much more fitting.

"Hello Harry Potter." Tom turned to look at him and a smile spread across his handsome face. "Sleep well?" Harry swallowed thickly.

"Is this a dream?" Tom shrugged and looked back up at the ceiling.

"Do you want it to be?"

"I don't know."

It was within seconds that he finished speaking that Tom suddenly moved, straddling Harry and pinning him under the blanket. "If this were a dream," Tom began, his eyes glinting, "Then it wouldn't matter what I do to you, would it?" Tom leaned down so that he was right next to Harry's ear. "It won't matter what we do." Harry shivered at the seductive note that was clearly there in Tom's voice.

"We've known each other for a long time, Harry Potter. I know you better than anyone. You know that." Tom's lips trailed over his ear, hot breath fanning his skin. "I won't hurt you. But let me show you." Harry's mind flashed back to the diary using a similar phrase. *I can show you.* Tom's body started grinding on his through the blanket that pinned him and Harry could barely resist the moan that threatened to rip itself from his throat. "Just give in Harry." Tom purred. Give in? Give in to
what? "Give in to me." Tom's lips brushed along his jaw as he spoke. "You know you want to, Harry." Harry's breath caught as the parseltongue filled him, coiling around him like the words were snakes themselves. Parseltongue always sounded better when spoken by Tom himself and when it held that seductive hint to it, it was hard not to drown in it. "Just give in, Harry."

"Yes." Harry hadn't even realized he had spoken in parseltongue to respond, all he knew was that Tom's lips suddenly came crashing down on his own. He was on fire. He had been kissed before, of course, by Cho and then again by Ginny later but those were nothing compared to the sinful mouth of Tom Riddle. Harry found himself arching upward to continue the kiss as Riddle started to pull away, only making Riddle let out a laugh.

"Eager pet. Don't worry. We'll have plenty of time for everything." Harry blinked up at him as Tom moved the heavy blanket down and covered Harry's body with his own again. "I don't know why I didn't think of this years ago." Tom muttered, mostly to himself.

"Think of what?" Harry asked.

"This." Tom rocked his hips against Harry's, earning himself a throaty moan from Harry. "So, my lion," Tom leaned closer again, "What should I do with you?" Harry couldn't even answer because Tom's lips were on his own again and whatever thoughts he had were quickly pushed aside. Tom's tongue slid along his lips, demanding access to Harry's mouth which Harry eagerly let him have. Their tongues tangled and Harry was suddenly filled with pleasure as if the contact had ignited his nerves. Harry wound his arms around Tom's broad shoulders as Tom slid one arm under Harry, the other moving so his hand could up the back of Harry's head, angling it so he could have better access to Harry's mouth. When the need for air separated them Tom immediately attached himself to Harry's neck, biting and sucking at the sensitive flesh there prompting another moan to escape from Harry's mouth. Harry turned his head to the side to give Tom better access which he took full advantage of.

Once he was satisfied with the marks he left on Harry's neck, he quickly pulled off Harry's shirt, the locket bouncing against his chest. "You look beautiful in green." Tom wrapped his fingers around the locket and pulled Harry into a sitting position using the chain. "You should wear it more."

Harry and Tom's lips were just about to meet again when a loud pop echoed through the room.

Harry's eyes shot open and he sat upright. His vision was blurry without his glasses but he could make out the vague shape of a house elf.

"Master Potter, sir. Master requests your presence. He says there's new clothes in the wardrobe and that you should join him immediately." Harry only had time to nod before the elf popped away.

Quickly Harry slid out of bed only to notice that he was no longer wearing his shirt. Quickly, he slid on his glasses and went to the mirror across the room only to see a series of purple marks lining his throat. As he watched, the marks began to fade as if they had never been there at all. Harry looked down at the locket which hung against his chest then back up to himself, rubbing his eyes. Had he been seeing things? Was that really a dream?

Harry shook himself mentally and walked over to the wardrobe opening it to find the widest assortment of clothing he had ever seen in his life and surprisingly, all of it looked like it would fit him, which was strange. However, he had no idea how exactly to fit himself in wizarding robes. He had a lot to learn, he realized.

You look beautiful in green.

Tom's words echoed through his head and Harry looked at the robes again, deciding for a pair of
black slacks, green shirt and robe, silver belt, and black dragon hide boots. The only unfortunate	hing was that the clothing left nothing to the imagination. It fit him so perfectly that every lean
muscle on him seemed to be exposed. The locket hung around his neck against his chest, which was
almost too exposed for his liking. As much as he attempted to tame his hair, it didn't seem to want to
cooperate, as always. That would probably never change. The robe hung around him, not quite the
type that would close which then made it easier for it to billow behind him as he walked. Harry had a
fleeting thought about looking like Snape when he exited his room and realized he had no idea
where he was supposed to be going.

Study.

Tom's voice whispered to him and Harry obliged, following the familiar path to the study. Inside he
found Voldemort seated at his desk, a plate of food untouched in front of him and another plate in
front of the chair across from him. However, this was not the same Voldemort he was used to. This
Voldemort had hair...and a nose. If Harry had to guess, he would say he was about 30. His cheeks
were sunken, making his high cheekbones more than obvious. Idly Harry thought that they looked
sharp enough to cut something on. His hair was a deep chestnut brown and a lone curl hung over his
forehead as he looked down at the papers in front of him. His shoulders were broad and his form
lithe, very much like an older version of himself in the diary. Age suited Tom Riddle well. As Harry
gawked, Voldemort raised his head and suddenly Harry was pierced under his crimson stare.

"Are you just going to stand there or are you going to eat?" He gestured to the plate in front of him.
"You must be hungry." Harry nodded, not trusting his voice and moved to sit down across from
Voldemort, eyeing the man again before he began to eat. Voldemort looked away from the papers he
was reading to eat his own meal. The two sat in silence until finished and Harry looked back at
Voldemort again, who was eyeing him curiously.

"Sleep well?" Harry felt his face flush as he looked away, giving a half hearted shrug as he did. He
could swear he saw a smile pull at the corners of his mouth before he leaned back in his chair.

"I'm sure you're aware that I've had several people out looking for you. No one knows that you are
here. For the time being, it will remain that way. I'm not entirely certain I can trust my Death Eaters
to be gentle with you." There was a hardness to Voldemort's voice that Harry couldn't quite place
and honestly didn't want to. Instead he nodded yet again. "You may explore the grounds, but stay on
the property."

"Alright." Harry wasn't about to argue right now. Honestly this whole situation was crazy enough as
it was, he didn't want to run the risk of angering Voldemort. He did say death would not come to
him, but he never said anything about not being tortured and Harry was really not in the mood for the
Cruciatus curse. "There will be people coming in and out all day. They will only be entering my
study. There will be a chime when they enter. As I said, I do not want them to come in contact with
you yet, so please refrain from doing something rather," He paused and lowered his eyes, leveling
Harry, "Gryffindor."

Harry gave a small smile before looking down at his hands. He desperately wanted to ask why
Voldemort now looked the way he did, but he wasn't going to run the risk of stepping over his
bounds. Instead he just watched Voldemort as he rearranged his papers and folded his hands in front
of him. "So, Harry," It took enormous self control not to shiver when Voldemort said his name.
"What do you want?"

For some reason, Harry was floored by the question, probably because it wasn't one he had ever
been asked before. "Wh-what do you mean?" Harry stuttered out as his mind started to whirl in all
the possibilities.
"What do you want?" Voldemort repeated, leaning forward and resting more on the desk. "With this war? With your life? What do you want?" Harry cocked his head and evaluated the man in front of him. What was Voldemort up to?

"I want to live." Harry muttered after a moment, his voice low yet Voldemort seemed to hear him.

"Good." Voldemort's now much deeper voice purred, sending shivers down his spine. It was one thing to have an enemy who looked like a snake with a voice like glass but it was a whole other beast to have an enemy ally with a beautiful face and a deep silken voice. "You know now that the light will not protect you. I will never lie to you Harry. I will never send you off to your death without telling you. Judging from your reaction yesterday, you had never been told you that were in fact a horcrux. I'm certain this is just one of many things the light has never told you. But I will not lie to you. All I ask in return is that you join me. Of course I will understand if you choose to opt out of this war altogether, but I cannot be honest with you in that case." Voldemort paused and looked at Harry again. "I will give you some time to think it over." Harry understood that now he was being dismissed but he didn't leave.

"I don't think I'm really the type to sit out of anything." His voice was stronger than it had been before. "I can't just sit this war out. I never could." Harry paused for a moment, thinking. "If there's a war, I'm going to be in it. I guess it never really mattered what side I was on, I'm always going to fight. But I don't agree with everything." To his surprise, Voldemort chuckled.

"I would be worried if you did. Let me guess, the pureblood's running everything with the Muggleborns' Muggleborns? "At the bottom?" Harry couldn't help but nod but he was stunned. "Purebloods are easy to manipulate Harry. As I said, I will be honest with you. Keep in mind, what I tell you, only you will know. Are we understood?" Of course Harry understood, he was good at keeping secrets, unfortunately. The Death Eaters wouldn't know, and Harry would not risk ruining whatever was budding between him and Voldemort.

"I understand."

It was an hour later before Harry left Voldemort's study. Voldemort watched the door close behind him before he turned to the his younger doppelgänger. "Do you think he's really going to follow us?"

In return, his 20 year old self smiled back. "Of course he will. You just gave him exactly what he wanted. The truth. And with your new...look, you'll be irresistible to him. You may not even need to have me back, it seems like me being with him will keep him with us."

Voldemort shook his head. "No. I think he's here of his own choice, which means that the more he's around, the more likely he will stay here. And I'll need you, you know him better than I do."

"Which is saying something because you know him quite well."

"Indeed."

"So how will you get me from around his neck?"

"I think you know how exactly to get me."

His younger self's sly smile was enough to know exactly what he was planning.
Harry was standing outside on the balcony overlooking the property, Voldemort's words circling his mind as they had been for the last month. Instead of worrying about them too much, however, he found himself getting wrapped up in the breeze, letting it rustle through his hair. It was cooling. Idly Harry wondered where exactly he was, since it wasn't exactly cold but it wasn't warm either. Though the wards around the manor could have been helping that since Harry could see snow in the distance. However, he didn't feel the cold. He felt perfectly fine, and it surprised him that he wasn't wanting warmer weather. He stretched himself, leaning against the railing in front of him.

"Enjoying the weather?" A voice came from behind him and Harry turned to see Voldemort himself standing behind him. The two had rarely come in contact over the previous month since Harry had walked out of Voldemort's study after their conversation. Harry had no idea that when he walked out of Voldemort's study that day would be the last time he really saw him. Until now. Harry couldn't help the smile that pulled at the edge of his lips.

"Yes. It is rather nice out here." Voldemort walked up next to him, leaning on the banister as well, looking out over the edge of the property. Voldemort's shoulders were tense and his eyes sharp and focused. "You seem tense." Harry stated quietly, prompting Voldemort to look over at him.

"I suppose because I am." Harry turned to face Voldemort, a silent question for more. "We still have not found your friends." Voldemort sneered the last word. Harry found himself shrugging. The last month had been quite a change for him. He had spent most of the time in the library of all places reading up on dark magic. It was surprisingly interesting to read and Harry found himself practicing it. Of course Tom himself had been helping him. But still, for some reason, he found himself wanting Voldemort's company the longer it took for him to come back into his life again. Why was he craving Voldemort's company? It wasn't because of his dreams or anything, no no no. The dreams had been getting more and more erotic as the month had gone on and last night it had almost gotten to a point where Harry would have lost his virginity to Tom if he hadn't woken up right then.

"You not finding Ron and Hermione is that much of a weight on your shoulders?" Harry pressed, cocking his head. Voldemort smiled, and it appeared to be a genuine smiled.

"No, Harry. It is not." Harry waited for Voldemort to continue, which after a pause, he did. "The locket. I'm going to need it." Harry's heart froze in his chest.

"It's alright pet. You'll get me back soon.

After a moment, Harry nodded moving to lift it off of his neck, suddenly feeling very cold and empty without it. He placed it in Voldemort's outstretched hand. Voldemort looked him quizzically before giving him a nod. "You'll get the locket back." Harry's head shot up, this time it was his turn to look at the other quizzically. Voldemort leaned in and suddenly Harry was very aware of everything around him, including the lithe, firm body now leaning toward him. "I think you look beautiful in green."

Voldemort had swept away before Harry could even begin to process what had just happened.

"Poor Harry. He thinks I'll be gone forever." Tom's doppelgänger muttered to him. "He's gifted you know. I'm not surprised that Defense Against the Dark Arts is his best subject. He's incredibly good with dark magic. With the proper teacher he will be as powerful as we are."
"I'm aware that you've been teaching him."

"Yes, I have. Though he could do with a much better teacher. One who knows him perfectly, from the deepest desires in his heart to the inner workings of his mind." Voldemort felt a surge of possessiveness rise through him. Harry Potter was his. Only he realized after a second that the person who was laying claim to him was himself.

"Easy there, snake. Harry is yours. Easily wrapped around our finger and once you have all of my memories, it will be easier for you to get him by your side, forever. Not like Harry is planning on going anywhere as it is." Voldemort was walking down the stairs toward the basement now, his younger self floating behind him. "You'll see."

Voldemort had no choice but to trust himself on this. After all, he else could he trust?

*Harry Potter.*

Harry was working on a spell that he had read just recently. Without Tom there to guide him the spell became much harder. He had managed to fashion a dummy in the library where he could practice the spells immediately after working on them. Now though, he was distracted by the lack of the weight of the locket around his neck. He felt simultaneously lighter and heavier at the same time and honestly, it was a feeling Harry did not like. He twirled his wrist on his wand arm, sighing to himself.

"Come on Harry, you can get this." He focused back on the dummy again, muttering the spell, when a hard body pressed against his back and a hand caught his wrist.

"Little less flourish there pet." Harry suppressed the shudder at the name Tom had seemed to enjoy calling him, as well as the unwanted reaction to Voldemort pressing against him. Voldemort guided his hand and the dummy suddenly exploded in a shower of spark. "Very good." Voldemort purred. Before Harry could answer, the familiar weight of the locket fell around his neck. "I did tell you, you would get it back, did I not?" Harry merely nodded, his breath coming rapidly. With the combination of the pleasure dark magic produced and the nearness of Voldemort, Harry was almost overwhelmed. It took everything he had not to lean back into the weight behind him. It would have been so easy.

*Give in to me.*

The echo of Tom's voice fell through his mind before he could even stop it. Harry swallowed the lump that was forming in his throat and was ready to step away when a possessive arm wrapped around his waist.

"You should practice on actual people. Dummies can only do so much for a budding dark wizard. The only real way to know is to test it on a live being."

Harry snorted. "Got anyone in mind?" He meant it jokingly. The only people who were in the manor were himself and Voldemort and Harry knew there was no way Voldemort would ever let him practice any curse on him.

"As a matter of fact," Voldemort spun Harry around and pressed Harry's body against his own, "I do." Harry was stunned at the sight he saw. It was almost as if he could see Tom Riddle, his Tom Riddle in Voldemort's features. The thirty year old face seemed to also reflect the twenty year old face Harry had come to know over the last month. To say that he was probably developing feelings for Tom was a bit of an understatement. Seeing Tom made his entire day worth it and Tom's little
antics at night made the days pass much quicker. And here he was again, but this time he was palpable. Harry's heart thundered in his chest as Voldemort leaned down next to his ear. "So, my lion," Harry froze entirely, Tom called him that. Somehow, did Voldemort reabsorb that piece of his soul? Was his Tom Riddle now alive within Voldemort? Suddenly, Harry remembered the dreams all over again and he could feel embarrassment creep through his body. He didn't have time to recognize it though, because Tom-Voldemort had begun to speak again. "Are you ready to try?"

Tom's seductive parseltongue. Harry knew he was lost then. "Yessss." He found himself answering, the hiss of the yes in parseltongue being drawn out as he felt Voldemort's arm trail around his waist.

"Good. Then come." Voldemort stepped back and motioned for Harry to follow him. He did, wondering where exactly they were going until they started to descend the stairs into the only part of the manor Harry had not ventured.

The cells of the dungeon were rotting and dirty, definitely not suitable for human life. Harry followed Voldemort into the last cell and was just about to question what was going on when a lump shifted in the corner. A squealing was heard, almost inhuman, as the lump shifted in it's chains. The person turned, eventually facing the other two occupants of the cell at the moment and suddenly Harry's blood began to boil with hatred. Peter Pettigrew.

"Now," Voldemort purred, looking at Harry. "Shall we begin?"

Screams echoed through the manor as Harry let out curse after curse on Pettigrew. To him, there would never be a punishment enough for him. It was because of him that his parents were dead. It was because of him that he was in this situation to begin with. It was because of him, technically, that Sirius was dead. Had Pettigrew not betrayed his parents, none of this would have happened. He at least would have grown up with a family that loved him. He at least would have been in a place instead of here, questioning everything that had ever been said to him by those he had considered friends, considered family. Pettigrew was a whimpering mass on the floor as Harry's veins pulsed with dark magic.

Voldemort could sense it, every second he continued a curse, his perfectly pure aura began to twist and morph. The magical aura of Harry Potter was turning dark. It was nothing short of beautiful.

Harry glared down at Peter, attempting to think of the next best curse to inflict upon him when suddenly Voldemort's voice was in his ear. "You know the spell Harry. You've got to mean it. He deserves it." Voldemort's breath fanned down Harry's neck and Harry felt himself shiver, but not in the way anyone else would have expected. Instead the movement was snake-like, mirroring Voldemort's own mannerisms. His eyes closed momentarily and when they opened again, they were a brilliant emerald green. The exact color of the killing curse. Harry raised his ever faithful wand again, aiming it at Pettigrew.

Voldemort didn't expect the curse to work the first time. He had never trained someone who successfully used the killing curse their first try. But as always, Harry Potter seemed to surprise him.

"Avada kedavra." Harry's voice was barely above a whisper, but a green jet of light shot out, hitting Pettigrew directly in the chest. He stopped moving instantly. Harry slowly lowered his wand, the gravity of the situation not yet sinking in. Instead, he felt the magic rush through his veins, pounding and pulsing, dark and intoxicating. He closed his eyes again, letting the feel of the magic wash over him. It was easy to see how one could become addicted to the sensations that dark magic brought. People like Bellatrix Lestrange were easily caught in it's seductive grasp. Yet Harry Potter was much stronger willed than her. When he opened his eyes again, the color of his eyes had dimmed back to their normal, yet still vibrant green. He looked over at Voldemort, who was smirking at him from the
doorway to the cell.

"Intoxicating isn't it? To feel all that power rushing through your veins. To know that you hold another's life in your hands and that it's yours to take at any moment." Voldemort was moving closer now. "It's empowering isn't it?" Now Voldemort was in front of him, their bodies inches apart.

"Yes." Harry's voice was barely above a whisper, but with their close proximity, Voldemort could hear it clearly. The Dark Lord's own powerful, dark aura was swirling, Harry could feel it. He could feel the power the emanated from him. Little did he know that was the Dark Lord's magic, reacting to his own, seeking out it's equal. It didn't take much to turn Harry's aura dark, which was interesting, but after a month of being fully immersed in dark magic, it shouldn't have been that surprising. Harry and Voldemort stood inches apart, both of them breathing heavily and their magic swirling chaotically. Neither knew who leaned in first, and neither could really be bothered to care.

Their lips crashed together and whatever intensity Harry thought he had had with Tom in his dream was eclipsed by this new intensity of the kiss with Voldemort. Harry's arms wrapped around Voldemort's shoulders as Voldemort's own arms came around his waist. Their bodies were pressed close together and their magic intertwined. Honestly, dark magic itself was no where near as intoxicating as this kiss with Voldemort. Harry found it nearly impossible not to grip him harder and suddenly he felt his back pressed against the wall behind him. It was only a few seconds later that suddenly one of Voldemort's hands was guiding Harry's leg upward and Harry wasted no time responding, wrapping both his legs around the other's waist. Harry was pushed up the wall, the dead body in the cell with them all but forgotten. Breathing between kisses, Harry found he had unobstructed access to Voldemort's hair, which Harry wasted no time in tangling his hand in, absentmindedly admiring its softness before Voldemort distracted him again by trailing kisses across his jaw and down onto his neck. One of Voldemort's hands moved to Harry's own chaotic hair, pulling his head to the side which Harry happily obliged to as Voldemort's teeth bit into his neck and the sharp sting was quickly overcome by the soothing of Voldemort's tongue. Satisfied with the purple mark he left on Harry's neck, officially claiming him for himself, Voldemort moved back to Harry's lips ready to deepen the kiss further when a chime echoed through the manor.

Voldemort pulled away with a feral sounding snarl, glancing over his shoulder with his red eyes flashing. Slowly, almost reluctantly, he lowered Harry who regained his footing. Harry almost felt worry for the person who had interrupted them. Almost. Had it been left to him, Harry would have made certain the person endured a Cruciatux curse or two. Having followed his train of though, Voldemort let out a dark chuckle. "Easy there pet." Voldemort cupped the back of Harry's head, pulling him in for another kiss, though this one was more chaste than the ones he'd received before. Though that did nothing to stop Harry's head from spinning.

"Let's go see who our guest is." Voldemort moved but Harry was stunned.

"You want me to come with you?"

Voldemort grinned, an animalistic grin, back at him. "Yes. Let's see the reaction of one Severus Snape when he finds you at my side." Wicked glee rushed through Harry's veins as he cast a quick cleaning charm on himself to get rid of the grime from the wall. Ignoring the fallen body of Pettigrew, Harry followed Voldemort out of the dungeons and up the stairs. "Stay behind me for a moment." Voldemort muttered as he opened the door to his study.

Snape was standing near the fireplace with his hands folded behind his back. "My lord." Snape bowed his head as Voldemort walked in, not seeing the trailing Harry Potter. "Severus." Voldemort's voice was near the glass like hiss Harry had been used to for a long time. Had Voldemort been using his real voice with Harry only? In a move that only Harry could see, Voldemort motioned for him to
step out from behind him. Harry almost wished for a camera because the surprise on Snape's face was priceless.

"Professor." Harry sneered, falling in step just to Voldemort's right as Voldemort swept around his desk. Harry stood at his side, staring his former professor down. Snape had regained his composure by this time and moved toward the seat in front of Voldemort's desk, sitting only when Voldemort gestured for him to do so. Harry glared at his former professor, the man who had made his life hell for years simply because he looked like the father he never knew. The remnants of dark magic surged in Harry's veins, making his eyes brighten into the color of the killing curse once again.

Voldemort watched it all, a gleeful smirk on his face as yet another emotion was drawn from the cold mask of Severus Snape at the sight of Harry's glowing eyes. Harry's wand had been stored back in his pocket before the interaction with Voldemort down in the dungeons and Voldemort could easily tell that Harry was itching to use it now. "Calm yourself pet." Voldemort muttered, listening as Harry took in a deep breath and glowing in his eyes was reduced, but still present. Voldemort turned to look at Snape again. "So Severus, what news have you?"

If anyone had told him that he would be giving a briefing of the latest news in the war to Voldemort with Harry Potter at his side, Severus Snape would have told them they were nuts. As it were, there was Voldemort, strong and powerful and surprisingly young looking, with an equally strong and powerful Harry at his side. Potter's magical aura was nearly as intoxicating as Voldemort's was, which was saying something. Harry Potter was as light as they came, or so Snape had thought. Only now here he was, suddenly wrapped and reeking of dark magic.

What would Lily think if she knew her son was suddenly at the side of the man who killed her? How was he going to tell Dumbledore this?

Snape had defected to the light side what felt like a lifetime ago. It was right after Lily had been killed that he swore to stay by Dumbledore's side and protect the child that Lily and James Potter left behind. At first, Snape had been determined not to hate Harry. He wouldn't show him any special treatment, but he wouldn't hate him either, no matter the house he was sorted into. However, the first moment he saw him in the Great Hall, he was immediately reminded of James Potter and the animosity for him spiked once again, only to be transmitted onto Harry Potter. The moment Harry was sorted into Gryffindor, Snape thought for certain he would be exactly like his father and labeled him as such since then. If he really thought about it, James and Harry were rather different. In fact, Harry and Lily were more alike than Snape wished, because sometimes seeing the sincerity or pain in those eyes, Lily's eyes, had been too much for him. Now, however, there was no Lily or James to be seen in Harry Potter.

Certainly his look resembled that of the late James Potter in the wild hair and glasses, but that it seemed, was where the similarities ended. Even his eyes, Lily's eyes, were no longer there. Instead they were a vibrant, pulsating green like the killing curse. Since the last time Snape had seen him, Harry had filled out, lean muscles stretching across his body and he had grown a little more. As Harry rolled his shoulders back, he looked everything a sophisticated half-blood should look like. Green robes clung to his body, showing every curve and roll of his lithe form, and much to Snape's surprise and chagrin, a dark purple mark on the right side of his neck. Harry's glare, which Snape endured, probably rivaled that of a basilisk and if looks could kill, Snape would have been struck dead.

Snape noticed as he was dismissed that Voldemort wasn't even paying that much attention to him. Instead, he started to turn his attention back to Harry, his gaze shamelessly roaming over Harry's body. The last thing Snape thought as he heard the door close behind him was, *how-oh how-am I*
going to tell Dumbledore?
Harry watched the billowing robes of Severus Snape slide out of view behind the large door of Voldemort's study. Harry could feel Voldemort's eyes on him, shameless roaming over him as if he was more than eager to finish where they had left off before. Of course he would never say anything. Voldemort was much too stubborn for that. Instead, he wanted Harry to make the first move, unlike in the dungeons where the stain of dark magic was thick and chaotic. It hadn't mattered then who leaned in first, only that they were absorbed in each other. Now, however, it was a game of cat and mouse, and the mouse was just as dangerous at the cat. Instead of moving away, Harry stood, still at Voldemort's side. He could feel those crimsons eyes roaming over his body, hot and desiring.

"What now?" Harry asked, his voice low.

"What do you want pet?" Voldemort's voice was laced with seduction and honestly it took everything in Harry's body not to give in. Voldemort's magic swirled around them. Harry's own magic was ready and waiting to join his, their bodies drawing closer and closer, almost on reflex.

"What does the great Harry Potter want?" Voldemort's deep voice swirled around him, enveloping him.

"I want you not to hurt Ron and Hermione." The thought came out of nowhere and it escaped his lips before he could stop it. Harry finally turned to face Voldemort head on, his face blank but his eyes blazing.

"Not do hurt your friends?" Harry nodded. Had this been a motive of his from the beginning, waiting until the right moment to strike? Probably. Sometimes, Harry was more Slytherin than he cared to admit. However, he knew he had struck at the right moment, because Voldemort's chaotic aura was still swarming him possessively. If he wanted Harry Potter, really wanted him, he would spare Ron and Hermione. Voldemort looked at him, observing him, looking for the crack in his mask that would reveal what else Harry wanted, but Harry kept his mind focused on one thing, saving his friends. Part, a very small yet not so quiet part, wanted Voldemort to say yes already so that Harry could stop pretending. He was having a hard enough time not giving in, but Voldemort watching him with those lustful red eyes and that beautiful face-Tom Riddle was a beautiful man and if Harry weren't lying to himself as much, he would admit that the moment Voldemort's appearance changed, his sex appeal went up immensely-and he was holding him in place.

"Very well, Harry Potter, I will spare your friends." But Harry wasn't going to give in so easily.

"And you're not going to let any of your Death Eaters touch them either. I want them unharmed."

Voldemort cocked his head at him, "Even though it means you will be on opposite sides and they might kill you given the chance."

"They won't touch me and I won't touch them."

"I suppose you're going to negotiate for the rest of the Weasley family while you're at it. As well as the Grangers so they can come back from their isolation in Australia." Harry didn't have to ask how
Voldemort knew that, Tom had been in his mind, he knew everything.

"Yes."

Would Voldemort give him this as well? How far did the self control of Tom Riddle go? Was Harry worth that much to him that he would give up some of Dumbledore's greatest supporters?

"I will not touch them." Voldemort said quietly. "However, if they should attack first, I cannot fault my Death Eaters for defending themselves. They will live, but I cannot say they will be unharmed. That is the best I can guarantee you." Harry stood for a moment, contemplating. He had already saved Ron and Hermione's lives, and secured the Weasley's a life, though they might not make it there unharmed. However, Harry knew he couldn't push his luck with Voldemort. Voldemort had given him this much, he couldn't risk asking for more. Instead, he focused his gaze on Voldemort's.

"Deal."

"The question is," Voldemort's voice became a purr as he settled back in his chair, "What will you give me in return, Harry?" Harry did shutter then at how Voldemort said his name. "What are your friends and their families lives worth to the Boy Who Lived? My Chosen One?" Voldemort's fingers drummed on the arm of the throne-like chair and Harry suddenly had several very bad thoughts cross his mind. He didn't act on any of them, however.

"What do you want?" How interesting game they were playing was. "What does the great Dark Lord want?" Voldemort's eyes narrowed slightly at Harry turning his own words against him only to cloud with lust once more. Oh Harry knew exactly what he wanted, though could he draw it out of him? Could he make him say it? Or was Voldemort expecting complete submission by Harry Potter, something that no one had ever accomplished. As a matter of fact, Harry hadn't even been fully subservient to Dumbledore, still managing to find ways to do things how he wanted them despite what Dumbledore wanted. And now here he was, face to face with Voldemort but instead of a death match, as Dumbledore seemed to want, it was a battle of wills to see who would succumb to their lust first.

Harry was doing a remarkable job keeping himself contained considering whom he was staring at. Tom had been right, if Harry had a lustful urge for, it was Voldemort himself. Those piercing red eyes, his curly chestnut hair, his tall, lithe form; his high and rather exposed cheekbones, and even that deep velvety voice of his had Harry wrapped around his finger. Had he ever thought it would come to this? Had either of them? Just two months ago, they were warheads aimed at one another, poised and ready to kill, destroying everything in their path to destroy one another. And now? What were they now? Warheads on the same side? Though Harry had to admit, there was one thought nagging at his mind that he knew even a month ago he wouldn't have ever thought.

Was Voldemort his as much as he was Voldemort's?

Lucius Malfoy was a proud man, he always had been. There was no denying that, he was raised that way. As a child, he had often gotten grief over his hair and it's pure blonde color but as an adult, it seemed that people were afraid of even the sight of his long, platinum blonde hair. However, his pride was nothing compared to the might of Lord Voldemort. Lucius Malfoy, the proud head of the Malfoy family, was brought to his knees by the Dark Lord time and time again. The very thought of Voldemort made him shake slightly, though he tried to hide it. He tried to hide the way his voice cracked when confronted with arguably the most powerful dark wizard of all time. Recently, in the last three months, Lucius had been put on a rather taxing assignment. Find Harry Potter.
Of course the boy had managed the perfect disappearing act. No doubt the Order had been behind that one. Though, it seemed as not even the precious Order of the Phoenix knew where their Chosen One was. If that side didn't have him, they would soon crumble and by the time the Potter brat resurfaced, there would be no home for him to go to. The Dark Lord would rule it all and Harry would meet his end. Or so Lucius thought.

Lucius arrived at the Dark Lord's manor. It was much smaller than his own but Lucius had to admit he was much happier with the Dark Lord here in his own manor than staying with them at Malfoy Manor. It was tense enough to have Bellatrix there. Lucius had a love-hate relationship with Bellatrix Lestrange. Together they were an unstoppable force, but honestly Bellatrix took everything to the extreme. Lucius shouldn't have been surprised though. Anyone with eyes could tell that she was completely and utterly devoted to the Dark Lord. She would do anything for him because she was in love with him, even after he came back resembling a snake more than a man. However, he didn't have time to focus on such things right now. Instead, he was here to tell Voldemort that he was still failing in his quest to find the Potter boy. With how illusive the boy was, one might get it into their head that Harry Potter was a snake in lion's clothing, something not entirely good for the Potter heir.

Lucius entered the manor and heard the typical chime which indicated someone had entered. It had been nearly a month since he had seen his lord last. Voldemort had looked quite different than he had at his...rebirthing. Now he looked more like a man than a snake. It was obvious which was more effective at gain and keeping followers. Oh yes, the snake form was perfect for striking fear into the hearts of men, but people were more likely to follow around the demon with an angel's face than the demon who looked like it crawled out of Hell itself. Even Lucifer had been beautiful, and only a fool wouldn't admit that Tom Riddle, AKA Voldemort, was a good looking man. Idly, Lucius wondered how exactly Bellatrix had reacted to seeing her master as he was now.

"Come in, Lucius." He almost preferred the high, sharp voice of Voldemort before. This low, velvet tone sounded much more dangerous. Lucius entered Voldemort's study with his eyes downcast, not looking at his lord, only bowing and waiting to be addressed.

"Lucius. Come. Take a seat."

Lucius raised his eyes and suddenly, his entire world stopped. Standing at Voldemort's side was none other than the boy he had been hunting for three months now. His eyes shone with a vindictive glee, as though seeing Lucius Malfoy utterly speechless at the sight of him was a most wonderful sight. His hands were folded behind his back and a green shirt clung tightly to his chest surrounded by a velvety green robe. Harry Potter, even with his wild hair, looked sophisticated and powerful and the man next to him was even more so. Voldemort sat in his throne of chair, his face carefully blank but his eyes shining with the same vindictive glee Harry radiated. Harry merely stood there, unmoving, his eyes focused entirely on the form of Lucius Malfoy. Had his eyes always had that glow to it? Eventually, Lucius realized that he had been staring, dumbstruck.

He looked down at his feet as he crossed the room, sitting down in the chair across from Lord Voldemort and Harry Potter. Harry stood perfectly still, his eyes fixed on Lucius as though he were some kind of living statue. Perhaps he was, and that was why he was suddenly at the Dark Lord's side, but some part of Lucius very much doubted that. He choose not to focus on Harry Potter, looking at Voldemort sitting in front of him instead.

"My Lord." Lucius bowed his head one more time. Voldemort waved his hand dismissively, indicating for Lucius to continue. He knew he could leave out the part about being unable to find Harry Potter seeing as Harry Potter himself was looking like he wanted to eat Lucius for lunch. How had such a change come about in the Potter boy? He was as light as it got just like his obnoxious parents before him.
Once Lucius finished his report, he looked down at the desk in front of him. It seemed like it acted as a small shield between himself and the two very powerful wizards across from him. Oh Harry was powerful, he had heard enough about it from Draco, but seeing him now, feeling the power that followed off of him in waves, it was enough to rival that of Voldemort sitting next to him. And it was nearly as dark.

"Lucius." Voldemort's voice deceptively soft and Lucius had no choice but to meet those blood red eyes. "I want Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger found and brought here, to me. They are to remain unharmed, a simple stunner should do." Despite the softness of his voice, Lucius knew that it would be on pain of death if either of them were suddenly hurt. Which made him wonder how exactly Harry Potter had gotten his claws in deep enough that the Dark Lord was requesting his two friends to remain unharmed. "And," The Dark Lord continued without waiting for Lucius to acknowledge his previous statement, "The Weasley's are to remain alive. Avoid harming them if you can, though I do understand if it is," He paused eyes gleaming again, "Necessary."

"Yes, My Lord." Lucius answered, doing a rather fine job of keeping the tremor out of his voice.

"Good. Make certain the others are aware of this as well. You are in charge of finding the Weasley boy and Granger girl." He waved his hand dismissively again, this time indicating that Lucius was no longer wanted or needed. Lucius stood, giving another bow.

"Yes, My Lord." Lucius turned to walk away and nearly made it out of the room without hearing a word from Harry Potter. Nearly.

"By the way, Lucius," Harry's voice made him stop dead in his tracks and turn. It was much crueler than he could ever imagine coming from the Potter boy and his eyes were glowing even brighter when Lucius met them, "Dobby is doing just fine." A vindictive, bloodthirsty smile came across Harry Potter's face and it was all Lucius could do to repress a shudder. He didn't respond, who knew how Voldemort might react to anything said to the Potter brat. Instead, he left the room with haste.

"Have fun?" Voldemort asked him, though his voice was laced with amusement.

"As a matter of fact, I did. I'm joining you, not them. As far as I care, they're all nuisances." Harry's vocabulary had improved significantly due to all the reading he had been doing. He had no choice but to expand it or else he would have never learned, or understood, half of the things he had read. "I will never play fair with them."

"I don't expect you to, pet." Voldemort stood, stretching as he did. "I expect that likely they will all be your toys." Now Voldemort leaned in, his lips brushing Harry's ear, "And after we win, they will be all yours to play with." Voldemort straightened up, "Until then I need them mostly in one piece."

"What of Bellatrix?" Harry asked, turning his eyes toward the door where Lucius had left. One thing Tom had taught his was Legilimency and was teaching him Occulmency just before Voldemort had taken him back. Which meant, he had seen everything in Lucius's mind the moment he walked in the door, even what he had just been thinking about before he had walked in. Bellatrix Lestrange. The very name made his blood boil. If what Voldemort said was true, then amongst his "toys" would be the deadly lieutenant herself. And part of him, a very small yet still loud part, was worried that Bellatrix would try to lay claim to what was his. His?

Again he was back to the question which plagued him before Lucius came. Was Voldemort his?
"What of her?" There was no teasing, no seduction, no lust laced with this voice, just genuine curiosity.

"What about her...devotion to you?" Harry wasn't looking at Voldemort now, instead he was looking over his shoulder.

He expected an answer, he was hoping for a verbal answer, what he got instead was much more reassuring that it should have been.

_Bellatrix means nothing to me. I want you, have wanted you._

Voldemort circled around him, pulling Harry's back against his chest, his arms possessively wrapped around his thin waist. Before Harry knew what was happening, his head was being coaxed to the side and Voldemort's mouth attacked his neck. An unbidden moan escaped his lips as he leaned back into the weight behind him. He grabbed one of the hands that was gripping him and suddenly their fingers were laced together.

"I should bend you over my desk, right here." Voldemort's breath was hot against his ear. "Take you, break you, make you mine." He growled and Harry felt the rumble in his chest. "You wouldn't be able to resist, I know you're having trouble resisting me now." Voldemort's lips brushed his ear. "I have seen your heart and it is mine. I have seen your dreams, Harry Potter. You belong to me." The seductive tone was making Harry shudder. "Let's be honest here pet, I've owned you since you were sixteen. You know what you want." Voldemort turned Harry around in his arms, pining their bodies together and making Harry stare right into those crimson lust filled eyes. "Take it."

Harry's arms wound around Voldemort's broad shoulders and their lips met in an explosion of passion.
Voldemort would have been lying if he said that having the sleeping form of Harry Potter next to him was uncomfortable. In fact it was the exact opposite. Harry was curled into his side, one arm draped over him. His wild black hair was scattered over Voldemort's shoulder and every now and then Voldemort would run his hand over the messy locks, pushing them down only to watch them spring back up the moment his pulled his hand away. Voldemort's other hand was placed against the small of Harry's back. The boy next to him breathed easily, as though being wrapped in the arms of his former enemy was the most comfortable place to sleep. Every now and then, Harry's brow would furrow in his dream but then he would relax more, almost as if each time he was sinking into the arms of Voldemort more and more. Voldemort almost wondered what was going on in his dreams and was rather tempted to look, but instead he focused on something else.

Their lips crashed together and at that moment, Harry was lost. Oh he had kissed Tom before, several times, and Voldemort too down in the dungeon. But this...this was beyond any kiss he had experienced with him. Voldemort's arms were around him, trapping their bodies close together and Harry found himself pulling Voldemort closer with his own grip. He didn't know exactly what happened, all he knew was he felt a rush of air and suddenly the sunlight around them was gone. Harry tried to look around at the dim room they were in as Voldemort pulled away but he didn't get much of a chance as suddenly he was picked up and placed on the bed he hadn't even noticed. Voldemort's body covered his and their lips crashed together again. Voldemort's hands seized his wrists and pushed them upward, pinning his hands above his head. "Keep them there." Voldemort murmured as he suddenly turned his attention, once again, to Harry's neck.

Voldemort's hands had started running down Harry's sides before they grabbed his hips and Voldemort's own rocked against them. Harry let out a low moan before he suddenly felt his shirt torn open. Voldemort's teeth attacked his chest leaving purple marks in their wake. It took everything Harry had not to bring his hands down to Voldemort's hair, grip his back, pull at his clothes. Instead, he forced himself to keep his hands over his head, far away from Voldemort. Voldemort's tongue slid across the flesh right above Harry's slacks and Harry mewed. It wasn't a very dignified sound but at the moment Harry couldn't bring himself to care. Voldemort grinned up at him, it was wolfish grin that Harry never thought he would see on the face of Voldemort but it somehow managed to make him look more handsome. Was that even possible?

Voldemort moved back up his body, his lips right next to Harry's ear. "Do you want me, Harry Potter?" Harry nodded. "No. I want to hear you say it. I want to hear you beg, Harry." Voldemort had slipped into parseltongue at Harry's name and Harry shuttered. "Beg for me, Harry. Beg for me, my Chosen One." Harry's stubbornness kept his mouth shut, but the alluring parseltongue in Voldemort's silken voice was getting to him. Harry Potter never begged, though he was about to. "I'm going to make you ssssing, Harry. I'm going to make you sssscream for me. But I need you to beg for me my lion. Say yesss, Harry. Give in to me."

"Yesss." Harry answered in parseltongue and it seemed to have the same effect on Voldemort as his own did on Harry. He shuddered and when their eyes met Harry couldn't resist anymore. His arms wrapped around Voldemort and their mouths came crashing together. Voldemort's own arms wrapped around him, pulling off his shirt and robe the rest of the way. Harry didn't have time to even attempt to pull at Voldemort's shirt because he already ripped it off. Skin touching skin was like
fire and Harry wanted more. He wanted everything. It was only when Voldemort pulled him into a sitting position on his lap that one thought crossed Harry's mind.

"I've never..." Harry started as he began to pull away, embarrassment burning at his face.

"Shh, pet. Do you trust me?" Voldemort asked as his lips trailed over Harry's jaw.

Harry hesitated. Did he trust Voldemort? With this? He trusted Voldemort with everything else, including his life. But this...this was much more intimate.

Voldemort pulled back, noticing Harry's hesitation. Their eyes met again. "I won't hurt you pet. I will never hurt you."

"I trust you." The words escaped Harry's mouth at the earnestness of Voldemort's voice and the look on his face. Their lips collided again and Harry's fingers tangled in Voldemort's hair, an action mirrored by Voldemort. Harry pushed himself against Voldemort, some part of him amazed at the amount of muscle tone the man had. It didn't take long for Harry was pushed on his back again and his slacks were pulled off and suddenly Voldemort's tongue slid along his hard length. Harry keened looked down, meeting a crimson gaze as Voldemort's mouth wrapped around him.

God his mouth was sinful.

Voldemort's tongue was everywhere and as his cheeks hallowed, Harry's head fell back. Voldemort pinned his hips to the bed, running his teeth gently along Harry's aching member but he didn't do any more. Instead, he worked his way back up Harry's body, simultaneously managing to finish undressing himself. Before Harry had any chance to marvel at Voldemort's body, he suddenly felt a pressure around his entrance.

"Relax." Voldemort's voice was right in his ear. It was the combination of hot breath fanning over his skin and the deep silken voice of Voldemort himself at had Harry relaxing. Voldemort pushed a finger inside him and seemed to somehow hit the sensitive bundle of nerves which had Harry arching up into him, despite the slight sting he felt. Voldemort laughed against his ear as he continued, hitting that spot over and over again.

"You can take another for me, can't you?" Harry's voice was suddenly lost to him at the husky tone of the man above him. Instead, Harry nodded, feeling Voldemort's hair brush against his cheek as he did. "Good." Voldemort purred as he added another and then a third, scissoring and hitting the sensitive bundle of nerves over and over again.

Harry thought for certain he was about to come apart when Voldemort's fingers retracted and there was a pressure of something much bigger. "Ready?"

Yes.

The answer hadn't been verbal, but he knew Voldemort could hear it as he pushed inside him, burying himself to the hilt. Tears sprung to the corners of Harry's eyes but he bit back the stinging pain, not wanting Voldemort to stop. Voldemort held, his body shuddering as his arms wrapped around Harry. Harry's fingers found purchase on Voldemort's shoulders and he rocked his hips upward, a silent cue for Voldemort to continue. Voldemort drew his hips back, nearly pulling entirely out of Harry, before he snapped his hips forward, somehow managing to hit the nerves yet again. Harry moaned loudly, his head falling backward as Voldemort continued and Harry's legs wrapped around his waist. He was lost under Voldemort's touch.

Harry's back arched as he felt himself about to fall over the edge. One of Voldemort's hands reached
down and began pumping his aching member and Harry was about to lose it. "Come for me
my lion." However, Harry had other plans, he fought it, instead rocking his body into Voldemort's
and finally eliciting a rather loud moan from the man above him. They went back and forth for
another minute before neither of them could hold on much more. Harry cried out as he painted their
stomachs with white, Voldemort moaning in time with him as his released inside Harry. They sat for
a minute, breathing heavily before their lips collided again in a rough and passionate kiss.

"Stubborn lion." Voldemort murmured as he pulled away, casting a quick wordless and wandless
cleaning charm over them. He lied down next to Harry who wasted no time in turning into
Voldemort's side and resting his head on his shoulder.

Voldemort looked up at the ceiling above him, thinking. He was going to win this war. Now that
Potter was his, it would be all too easy. His?

Is that what Harry was? Was Harry his? Tonight certainly proved that Harry was more than willing
to give himself to Voldemort. He was wrapped around his finger. So why is it that part of Voldemort
felt...felt something at the prospect of losing Harry. Harry was his...and his alone. Voldemort turned
his head to look at the sleeping form next to him.

If tonight proved anything, it was that he had Harry as much as Harry had him.

That thought scared him more than death.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry it's so short. I'll give you a longer one next time.
The first thing Harry was aware of was that the room he was in was not his own. He blinked his eyes open, looking at the dim, simple room around him. If he had pictured the Dark Lord's room, it definitely would not have been like this. It was simple and dark with only a wardrobe and a rather large bed which Harry had practically nested in. Harry rubbed his eyes, blinking at the blurry surroundings as he sat himself up in the bed. Before he could even begin to search for his glasses they were suddenly being slid on his face and the figure next to him came into view.

"You really do nest like a cat, my lion." Voldemort purred. Harry felt a blush creep up his face as the events of the last night swam back into his mind. To say that he didn't enjoy it would be a lie. However, he was not prepared for the next morning which suddenly he felt very awkward. But this was Lord Voldemort. The person who probably knew him the best and yet here he was embarrassed that the night before he had been basically fucked into the mattress.

"I would say red does not become you but even I am not that good of a liar." Harry could practically hear the smirk in Voldemort's voice as he raised his eyes to meet Voldemort's crimson ones. "But I stand by my original statement." Suddenly Voldemort was much closer, "I prefer you in green." Harry didn't know what possessed him in that moment, but the proximity of Voldemort made him much more brave than he had been a second ago. Harry pushed forward and their lips crashed together again and Voldemort grasped Harry's hair, pulling his head back to ravish his mouth more. When they finally broke apart, Harry felt dizzy and breathless.

"Come. You'll need to eat. Today is going to be filled." Harry barely had time to nod before Voldemort swept out of the room. Harry idly noticed that the sheet beneath him were green.

Snape paced in his office, his shoulders hunched and his shoes clumping on the stone floor. The portraits were all attempting to feign sleep but Snape was not fooled. He knew they were listening, yet he couldn't be bothered to care at the moment. The only portrait he cared about was Dumbledore, who sat as stoically as ever.

"I don't understand it. Of all the foolish things the boy has done, this has to be the most fool and idiotic thing. To join the Dark Lord. To be at his side." Snape paced more and more certain that perhaps he was missing something. In his portrait, Dumbledore's eyes held no sparkle. Instead he looked grave and old, as though some part of him had always feared this possibility. Had he? Had Dumbledore thought that Harry could possibly join Voldemort? Was this a thought that had crossed his mind? Had the great Albus Dumbledore foreseen this possibility too? The question flew around Snape's mind, though he refrained from asking. Instead he tried to think about what exactly would cause the very light Harry Potter to suddenly become as dark as the Dark Lord. It made no sense. None of it.

"The horcrux." Dumbledore said eventually as he dragged his hand through his long silvery beard. "It must be the horcrux. You said they had gotten one before?"

"Yes, the fools even invaded the Ministry for it." Snape answered.

"That must be it then. Harry kept ahold of the horcrux to keep it safe until they could destroy it and instead of hurting him, it manipulated him, appealing to the horcrux that already lived inside him."

At that Snape stopped pacing. "Then how do we stop him. The more he stays at the Dark Lord's side the more dangerous he will be. And the more dangerous they will be together. There is something
about the way the Dark Lord looks at him, Albus. It's like he's a meal. I fear the longer they stay 
together the more the Dark Lord's hooks will be in him. There may be no getting Harry Potter 
back."

"There might be a way, Severus. Though I doubt you will like it." Dumbledore's eyes were filled 
with sadness and suddenly Snape was very weary of the next request from Dumbledore. What more 
would Dumbledore ask of him? What more was he going to have to lose to win this war?

"What is it?" Snape steeled himself. This was going to be the worst thing Dumbledore asked him, 
wasn't it?

"I'm afraid you know, Severus."

"The boy must die." Snape breathed out, his heart stopping in his chest as he did.

"Yes."

"Your friends are planning to invade Hogwarts." Voldemort told Harry, who was had just ventured 
into his study.

"How did you find this out?" Harry asked as he sat himself in the chair in front of Voldemort, 
quickly delving into the plate of food left for him.

"They were foolish, of course. They were overheard. They went with you on your mission to find 
horcruxes, yes?" Harry nodded, unable to talk with the mouthful of food. "There was a horcrux 
hidden within Hogwarts, it's not there anymore."

"But they don't know that." Harry finished. "We never knew if it was there or not to begin with, 
entering Hogwarts at all would be a gamble in and of itself, whether or not the horcrux was still 
there."

"Indeed, so it appears we will have to...confront your friends. My question to you is, is that 
something you can do? Can you confront the people you once called family? Or would you prefer to 
sit this fight out."

Of course Voldemort knew Harry would never sit out a fight, he was incapable of 
that. Harry himself had said so. But was this a fight he could fight? Could he confront them? After so 
little time?

Harry's vibrant eyes met Voldemort's and held his gaze evenly. "Yes. I can confront them. No killing 
though. Not of them"

"Of course Harry," Voldemort purred, "I have not forgotten our deal." They sat in silence for a 
moment more before Voldemort straightened himself and stood. "If you're to fight, we have work to 
do. Come."

Seeing without glasses was a new experience for Harry Potter. He had always had glasses, they had 
been part of what defined him, made him look so much like the father he never knew. Of course 
there was his wild black hair and his stature but the rounded glasses were a trademark of James 
Potter. His eyes however, those were the defining trademark of Lily Potter nee Evans. And now not 
even those were the same. Dark magic made Harry's eyes more vibrant, like green neon lights. The 
color rivaled the intensity of the killing curse and the wicked grin that Harry now often sported 
twisted his once kind face into something near demonic. Needless to say, Harry Potter as the world 
had known him was no more. Gone was the Chosen One. Gone was the Boy Who Lived. This 
Harry Potter was something entirely different.
"Harry Potter doesn't seem to suit you anymore." Voldemort commented idly as he took in Harry's reflection. Their clothing was nearly identical now, gone even was the green that Harry had worn in the months before this. Harry's wild hair looked even more untameable now, his green eyes standing out like beacons against his skin, and the locket still clung to his chest. Now, however, there was much more definition to Harry Potter's body. Gone as well, was the scrawny, nearly starved to death boy. This Harry Potter had muscle definition, and his now regal stance seemed to add to his height.

The last months of training had forever darkened Harry's magical aura. His eyes shone consistently. And now was the time. The Order was planning it's assault to take back Hogwarts which meant that it was time for the former Chosen One to reveal himself. There had been no word about Harry's sudden departure from his friends, probably because they assumed he had left to hunt the rest of the horcruxes on his own. Which meant they would expect him to show up at Hogwarts too. And of course Harry was going to show up. How could he avoid such a delicious fight?

"That's why keeping the name is perfect." Harry murmured, though he knew Voldemort could hear him. "Just a satire of the boy I once was. Harry James Potter." Harry gave a cruel, short laugh. "I never knew them and the world expected me to live up to them. The father who died protecting his wife and son and the mother who's sacrifice saved her son's life. And the child who was supposed to defeat you. Poetic isn't it?" Harry asked as he turned around. "I was supposed to die too. Fulfill the Potter legacy of death. Two Potters dead on Halloween night and me to follow years later. Not even old enough to experience life and all it has to...offer." The last word was said as Harry's eyes slid over Voldemort's body suggestively. "Such a shame it would have been."

Voldemort hummed in agreement as he took in Harry's look one more time. "You are ready." Harry smiled at Voldemort's assessment and their eyes locked again. "You're still expecting me to hold up to my end of the deal, yes?" Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Were you thinking that had changed?" Voldemort shrugged.

"The Weasleys will always oppose me, oppose us. I want to make certain you are aware of the consequences of your actions."

"In time, they will learn. They will have no choice but to learn."

"The youngest Weasley will not be pleased with your choice of bed partner. Several people, herself included, thought for sure the one you would take to your bed would be her. I'm imagining three children, one looks like you, one looks like her, and one is a beautiful combination. Two boys and girl. Named after all the people who were important to you." The sarcasm was heavy in Voldemort's voice. "You would have met your friends on platform 9 3/4 and their children. Probably only two of them because Granger would not have wanted the army of children that the Weasley family is known for. You would have been an auror, as would your Weasley friend but I imagine the girl would have been in the Ministry, probably working with creature welfare. And all would be well." Voldemort gave a particularly cruel chuckle. "Well, all will be well, just not how they envisioned it."

Harry had moved closer to Voldemort during his little speech and soon they stood chest to chest, Voldemort's breath hot on his lips. "I have to admit, the idea of having a child as handsome as you running around is appealing." Harry murmured. "But then I would have to share you, and that is something I just cannot do." As their lips locked, Harry felt the powerful form of Nagini climb up his leg and wrap around both of their shoulders. Nagini had grown more comfortable with Harry over the months, even to the point where Harry too could wear the powerful python as a scarf if he elected. When they finally broke apart, Nagini wrapped herself around Voldemort's shoulders and Harry stepped away, looking back in the mirror again to straighten out his now rumpled appearance.
"If you're the Dark Lord, what does that make me anyway? Typically the companion for a Lord is a queen, which is the most powerful piece on a chessboard, but I am no queen. A Dark Knight, which just sounds ridiculous. And I am no pawn." Neon green eyes met blood red ones in the mirror as Voldemort moved behind him.

"The Dark Lord Harry Potter." The words were whispered against his ear. "The perfect companion for Lord Voldemort. Unless you would rather be called the Dark Consort." Harry wrinkled his nose at that, causing the rumble of a laugh to be felt against his back. "Then another Dark Lord it is." Voldemort turned him around until they were facing one another again. "So, Lord Potter, are you ready?"

"Yes." Harry moved beside Voldemort and took his arm, feeling the familiar pull of apparition as they left Voldemort's manor.

They landed in the Forbidden Forest, just outside Hogwarts. Harry could hear the sounds of the Death Eaters moving through the forest behind him, but he didn't care. Instead he was focused on Voldemort next to him, Nagini around his shoulders, and Hogwarts in from to him. Hogwarts. What had been his first home no longer felt like home to him anymore. Instead the castle felt cold and lifeless as the magic of the castle's wards shimmered in front of them.

"My Lord," Lucius's voice was heard behind them. "We will have to break the wards in order to enter." Harry snorted.

"It looks like my former deviance will come in handy." By now, it was well known in the ranks of the Death Eaters that Harry Potter stood at the Dark Lord's side. They had even seen the wrath of Harry Potter themselves, only to find that Harry's Cruciatus curse hurt just as much as Voldemort's. Now they stood, not only ready to follow their Dark Lord, but Harry Potter as well. Some, such as Bellatrix, were resentful, but the followed anyway. Harry turned and looked behind him, locking eyes for a moment with a very sickly looking Draco Malfoy. Turning back, a wicked grin slid across his face. "I'll bring the wards down, from the inside."

"The passageways have all been sealed." Lucius sneered at him. Several people took in sharp breathes knowing that the tempers of Harry Potter and Lord Voldemort were not to be tested. But everyone was aware the the passageways of the castle had been sealed before the start of the year to keep anyone from pulling the same stunts as the infamous Golden Trio.

"Oh ye of so little faith." Harry answered, aiming his demonic grin at Lucius. "Draco!" Harry barked, causing the Malfoy heir to jump. "Come. Let's go have a little fun." Harry saw Voldemort give a terse nod out of the corner of his eye as Harry moved, grabbing the Malfoy heir by his collar and apparating him just outside the boundaries of Hogsmeade. "Cover yourself." He muttered to Draco who quickly disillusioned himself while Harry threw his cloak over him.

Together, the invisible pair walked into Hogsmeade and waited. "What are we waiting for, Potter?" Draco's voice lacked its usual sarcastic sneer which part of Harry lamented. He had grown so used to that.

"Gryffindors." Harry answered, just before the banshee like sirens went off.

Harry and Draco watched two people, hunched over, running. They followed close behind and careful not to make any sound. When they were called into the Hogshead, Harry and Draco barely made it through the door and Harry caught sight for the first time of Ron and Hermione since he had left them all those months ago. It felt like a lifetime ago, compared to seeing them now when he had left them on that cold, November night. But the weather was cold no more, and this was not the same
Harry Potter who had left his friends to protect them. Harry didn't pay any attention to the owner's little speech, only catching that he was in fact Dumbledore's brother, Aberforth. It was when he dismissed the portrait that Harry perked up. He knew Draco was still standing next to him as he reached out, giving him a tap on the wrist which Draco returned, letting him know that they would be following Ron and Hermione. As the portrait opened, the face of a rather hardened Neville Longbottom greeted them.

Moving quickly, Draco and Harry followed Ron, Hermione, and Neville through the portrait which lead into a rather long tunnel. Harry quickly cast a Silencing Charm over himself, knowing Draco did the same so that their footsteps would not be heard trailing behind the three Gryffindors. Harry knew everything Neville was telling to Ron and Hermione so he forced himself not to pay attention. Instead, he followed them, memorizing each step until they entered through another portrait into a rather large room. Instantly Harry knew where he was, the Room of Requirement. Although now it looked different than it ever had. There were makeshift beds everywhere and it was currently inhabited by several people from various houses. Harry and Draco skirted around the people to the edge of the room. He knew the only way to get out would be to follow someone else who was leaving the room, so Harry waited. One of them would leave eventually. If not, he would make them leave.

Just when he was readying himself to cast the Imperious Curse, Luna volunteered to take Hermione to see the diadem of Ravenclaw. Clever girl. Harry thought. Oh he knew all about the horcruxes and their identities. Voldemort had shown him and he even held the former vessel of one of them around his neck. Now, Hermione had caught the drift of his preferences for the Founder's items. Here was Harry's ticket out. He could feel the breath of Draco on his arm as Harry turned to follow Hermione and Luna out of the room. It was all too easy. Harry held out his hand for Draco to stay out of sight at the bottom of the stairs leading to Ravenclaw tower as Harry followed Hermione and Luna up. He was curious, of course, to see what would happen.

It seemed to happen rather fast that the Carrows and McGonagall had found their way into Ravenclaw tower. The girl had been taken care of by Hermione but the brother, he was currently spitting in McGonagall's face. Harry knew he couldn't allow that, not because he cared for McGonagall, but because if there were any way to get her to attempt to strengthen the wards, she couldn't be tied down with dealing with the idiot Carrows.

Harry cast a wordless Crucio and he was on the ground, screaming. McGonagall looked around, started, trying to find the source of the curse that left the man on the floor, unconscious. Even Hermione seemed stunned and she too was looking around but she was quickly overcome with the sense of duty, appealing to McGonagall to strengthen the wards of the castle to prevent the threat from outside.

Good girl. Harry thought as he followed Hermione and McGonagall down the stairs. They quickly ran into Snape who McGonagall dealt with and Harry felt vindictive glee at seeing Snape flee. Ron and Hermione were reunited only to run right into a very visible Draco Malfoy. All three of them raised their wands when Draco's was suddenly shot out of his hand. Before the other's could react, Harry grabbed Draco's fallen wand, and wrapped him inside the cloak, pulling him away. "Not them." He growled when they were out of earshot. The pair ventured outside where the professors of Hogwarts were currently trying to strengthen their defenses against the awaiting army. The Order too, had started to arrive and Harry passed the very familiar faces of Remus Lupin and Nymphadora Lupin nee Tonks as he and Draco moved to a secluded area.

Now. Harry thought, knowing Voldemort could hear him and at the same moment, twin flashes of light shot out of the darkness, one from Voldemort and the other from Harry Potter himself. And the wards came crashing down.
Death Eaters began apparating onto the grounds and spells were suddenly shot chaotically, hitting nearly everyone and everything in their path. The battle raged on all sides, and Harry knew it would only be a matter of time before most of the Order was captured. "Have fun then." Harry murmured vindictively as he withdrew the cloak from around Draco, leaving him to flounder in the middle of the battle only taking the time to deflect a curse that would have hit Draco. Instead, Harry followed the vindictive laughter of Bellatrix Lestrange.

Perhaps he could kill her and no one would notice. Of all of Voldemort's followers, it was Bellatrix Harry wanted the most. His own bloodthirstiness rose at the sight of the dark witch and Harry was more than happy to put her out of her misery. Harry found Bellatrix in the Great Hall, dueling with Lupin, the last of Harry's father's friends and his last surrogate parent. Harry knew that Remus's life was to be spared, but Bellatrix wouldn't be able to contain herself. Mostly because she loathed Lupin for marrying Tonks. There would be no controlling Bellatrix now that she started.

So, Harry reacted the only way he knew best. A quick disarming spell and Bellatrix's wand flew into his outstretched hand. The sudden appearance of Harry Potter stopped the battle on all sides and Tonks ran to Lupin's side. Remus tried to catch Harry's eye, but Harry was focused on Bellatrix.

Harry's voice was low as he spoke, and the Death Eaters averted their eyes, not wanting that tone to be aimed at them, "You touch them, you die." Harry handed Bellatrix's wand back to her, and Bellatrix gave a quick bow to him, keeping her eyes away from his.

In a quick, snake-like motion, Harry's wand whipped toward Remus and Tonks, "Stupefy." The stunner it both of them and their bodies fell to the floor. Harry looked down at the two of them, their bodies so close together on the ground and Remus's eyes full of horror. "Well what are you waiting for?" Harry commanded as he looked at the Death Eaters around him, "You know who I want alive." And with that command, curses and spells began to fly once more. Harry ventured out of the Great Hall as curses flew past him, never hitting him. Up seven flights of stairs and down a hall and he came to a stop in front of the Room of Requirement once more. Oh he knew Ron and Hermione would figure out that that's where the horcrux had been and he knew they were in there now looking. Even though he had his Invisibility Cloak, Harry decided to Disillusion himself and wait. Ron and Hermione didn't make him wait long.

They were talking animatedly as they left the Room of Requirement, discussing where the horcrux could possibly be. "Curious things, horcruxes." Harry's voice echoed and Ron and Hermione froze. Even in the chaotic, loud battle around them they could hear the voice of Harry Potter. "It's interesting that one could take a piece of one's soul, and hide inside another other item." Hermione and Ron swiveled, looking in every direction for their friend. "How...interesting." Harry murmured as he suddenly revealed himself.

He watched his former friends eyes widen at the sight of him. Harry was leaning casually against a window, his wand interwoven between his fingers. "I'm thankful to say, that's one search you won't have to deal with anymore." He flashed a wicked grin and a silent stunner sent them to the ground.

Eventually the fighting died down and Harry levitated the stunned bodies of his friends, the two of them floating behind him as he ventured into the Great Hall where the rest of the Weasley's as well as Remus and Tonks and a few other Order members sat, bound and silenced. Harry set down the bodies of his friends and they were quickly revived. "Give them back their voices," Harry muttered as he passed Voldemort who was standing regally in the middle of them. "I want to hear their vehement denial." Harry walked around Voldemort and stood in front of him, looking over the faces of his former friends and family.

"Harry?" Hermione croaked out. "What are you doing?"
Harry answered her with a vindictive smile. "He's come home." Voldemort answered for him as he came up behind him, wrapping a possessive arm around him and lowering his mouth to Harry's neck where his tongue trailed along the flesh there. Voldemort's eyes never once left the crowd, watching them shiver at the proximity of He Who Must Not Be Named and the Chosen One.

Once Voldemort straightened, Harry's vindictive smile returned. "Now, shall we begin." Silence.

"Avada Kedavra."
The fighting had been vicious, more so than Snape thought it could ever be. The children of Hogwarts had been relentless in their attacks which part of Snape found himself proud of. Of course he would never admit that out loud. No one could ever know that he had actually felt pride toward any of his students. But he did, just once. Unfortunately, that pride diminished the moment he saw a former student and the Dark Lord's protege, Harry Potter. Oh he was a student alright. But not a student of Hogwarts, not a student of the light. He was steeped in darkness so much that it was nearly impossible to tell the difference between his magical signature and Voldemort's. Snape was standing in the corner when Harry strode in, powerful and strong, his friends floating behind him like sick caricatures of balloons. He watched as Harry lowered them to the ground and then strode around Voldemort himself, looking very snake-like in his movements. This Harry Potter was unknown to him. He moved like Voldemort, commanded the room like Voldemort, and his eyes were not longer the same emerald they had been before. Now they were like two shining neon green lights, exactly like the Killing Curse seconds after casting. This Harry Potter, Severus Snape knew not and he was not alone.

The Order members of the crowd gazed at their fallen hero in horror. Oh yes, Harry Potter had fallen, much like Lucifer. Harry Potter was their own brand of Lucifer, their own Judas, and there was no way of getting him back. Snape saw that now.

Snape repressed a shudder of horror as he watched the Dark Lord bend slightly, his crimson eyes fixated on the crowd in front of him and his tongue sliding out, across the former Chosen One's neck. Order members shivered, the Death Eaters sneered, Ginerva Weasley looked as though she might lose the contents of her stomach. Snape watched the horror cross Remus Lupin's face, seeing the boy who had basically been a son to him suddenly and so willingly in the arms of the man who had tried to murder him since he was a year old.

Harry's eyes returned to the crowd in front of him, most of them on their knees, with vicious delight. Harry's wild hair looked even more wild as he cocked his head ever so slightly to the side, examining the crowd in front of him. The next moments seemed to last into eternity. It was as though time itself had stopped. Seconds seemed to take hours, minutes took days, and hour took years. In those few moments, the light had truly lost and darkness prevailed. Whatever light was left in Harry Potter was snuffed out with the quick quirk of his lips in a sadistic smirk.

"So," Harry's voice was laced with power even, making it carry over the entire room, captivating everyone which included Bellatrix Lestrange, "Shall we begin."

Deafening silence.

Nothing in this world or the next, could have prepared Severus Snape for what came next.

"Avada Kedavra."

To say that Harry appearing in front of him was a surprise would have been the biggest understatement of Remus Lupin's life. No one had seen hide nor hair of Harry Potter since the
wedding at the Weasley house. His friends had been just as aloof but Remus had no idea that they had become separated on their journey. The last words Harry and Remus had spoken to each other were not pleasant, their last visit not ending on good terms at Grimmauld Place. However, Remus owed Harry more than he could ever begin to thank him for. It was because of Harry that he was at Tonk's side when she gave birth to a healthy baby boy who, thankfully, lacked some very wolfish traits. Teddy Lupin was everything Remus had hoped for in a son, very similar to the young man who he realized, the less he saw him, was really like his own son.

So the sudden appearance of Harry Potter had shocked Remus to his core. Especially since Harry had not arrived with his friends. But this Harry Potter was not the boy he had known since he was 13. He was not he baby he had known years before. He wasn't even the young man Remus had seen at the Weasley household all those months ago. This Harry Potter was man, a powerful man with a dark magic core. Remus didn't even have time to process the new version of Harry he saw when Harry's stunner hit him, sending him flying backward. He could hear Harry's voice and he could still see, but he still could not process the information he was receiving.

Harry's voice held so much power and strength that even James and Lily would not have been able to recognize their son just by voice alone. It felt like an eternity before he was moved from the floor of the Great Hall, sat up and the stunner lifted.

In front of him was a man he had never seen before, except with the blood red eyes which held the promise of torture and death. It was his eyes and magic that distinguished the man in front of him as Voldemort. But he was not the man Harry or Albus had said he was, or even the man he remembered from his past. The two men he trusted most in the world described Voldemort as reminiscent of a snake with pale, scaly skin; crimson eyes, and a cold voice like glass. This man was not that man.

Voldemort's skin was a pale white, but not the sickly pale it had been described as before. A nose suited the man well, and even Remus Lupin could not deny that he was handsome. His hair was a deep brown color and a lone curly of his wavy locks sat on his forehead, making him seem almost boyish in nature, yet the hard mask of his face took any of that boyish charm away. His cheekbones looked like they could cut glass and his hard jaw was set with a sneer across his lips. His form was tall and lithe and overflowing with dark magic which made him seem larger than life.

This was not the enemy Remus was used to fighting.

Once more, there was an even more dangerous enemy. It was known that Voldemort was dark and the very thing they were fighting to destroy. But Harry...Harry was a wolf in sheep's clothing. No one expected him.

Remus watched the way Voldemort's face changed from a stone mask with a slight sneer to a look of almost pure glee at the sight of Harry Potter. Remus didn't dare look, then it would mean that his worst fear had come true. He did, however, see the bodies of Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger set gingerly on the ground and for a chilling moment, Remus was certain they were dead and he felt himself release a puff of air when they weren't. Remus wanted to shout at Harry, ask-no demand-what exactly he was doing fighting with Voldemort. The very man who murdered his parents and numerous family and friends, killed a friend right in front of him, attempted to murder him his entire life, and tortured him in a graveyard after witnessing the death of a friend. However, when Remus opened his mouth no words, no demands would escape his lips.

"Give them their voices. I want to hear their vehement denial." Harry's voice was laced with power enough to rival Voldemort's own and while it did not have the same silken pure of Voldemort, it in itself held a promise of hope which was quickly quashed at the sight of those ethereal green eyes.
As Harry walked around Voldemort, their bodies nearly touching with every step, Remus took a better look at Harry, studying him. This man that stood before him now was not James and Lily Potter's son. He lacked the round glasses which had so perfectly framed his emerald green eyes, so much like Lily's. His wild hair, reminiscent of James, stood even more chaotically now, as though the very power that boiled within Harry now was threatening to shoot out the roots. Clad in all black dragon hide, his lithe form had gained some lean muscle, which was easily seen through his rather tight clothing which left next to nothing to the imagination. Around him shimmered a dark aura which reminded Remus earlier of the Dark Lord's. Under any other circumstances, Harry would have been a rather handsome man. But not here, not now. Not when he stood above everyone, his eyes gleaming with wicked delight.

Remus couldn't help the disgusted noise that escaped his mouth when he watched Voldemort's tongue slide across his adopted son's neck. This was not the Harry he knew anymore.

"So," The amount of power in Harry's voice could quite possibly have been intoxicating, had Remus not been so horrified, "Shall we begin."

Remus watched as Harry twirled his wand between his fingers at the silence of the room around him and he knew-somehow he knew-that the next thing Harry was going to do was going to be he most dramatic thing that had happened all night.

It seemed to happen in slow motion, Harry's wand raised and pointed and the words escaped his lips as though they were being dragged through mud.

"Avada kedavra."

Bellatrix was certain Harry's Killing Curse was going to hit her. She could almost feel the intent flowing off of the former Chosen One at herself. It was well known that Bellatrix Lestrange and Harry Potter rarely saw eye to eye. There had been a bet of sorts among the Death Eaters as to how long it would take Harry to finally deal with Bellatrix himself. It was Bellatrix after all who had murdered his beloved godfather. It was only a matter of time before Harry took his vengeance on the dark witch.

However, Harry's curse flew right past her and Bellatrix couldn't help but let out a slight sigh of relief. She would live-for now. There was no telling when exactly Harry Potter might snap. His temper rivaled that of the Dark Lord's, her master's, and his Cruciatus Curses hurt just as much, or so she was told. Bellatrix was fortunate to not undergo the horrid curse herself, though she had had her fair share of inflicting it.

Even though the curse had not been aimed at her, it had been aimed at someone and Bellatrix turned her head in curiosity to see whom exactly Harry Potter had struck down. Seeing the fallen body, a visceral laugh escaped her lips and her body doubled over in her delight. Black cloak in a pile on the floor, the body sat lifeless and eyes empty of all life. She should commend Harry, she had been telling her master that the now dead body was a vicious turn cloak and should not have been welcomed back as much as they had. But her master would not listen, determined to welcome back his fallen apprentice with open arms.

Now however, Voldemort looked slightly amused at seeing the fallen body of his former comrade on the floor of the Great Hall. It seemed as though the kill had not been a surprise to him, and maybe it hadn't been. Among the Death Eaters, herself included, it was not well known what exactly went on in the Dark Lord's mind. The only one who was told was Harry Potter himself. Since his arrival, it appeared as though the Chosen One and the Dark Lord had been inseparable, joined at the hip. It was not long after the rumor of Potter's sudden turn that the body of Peter Pettigrew showed up,
brutally mutilated, a silent warning to anyone who would dare endure the wrath of Harry Potter. Bellatrix almost admired the boy's creativity when it came to torture, she had seen him in action once. However, she could not appreciate the way the Dark Lord looked at the boy now.

It was no secret that not only had Harry taken up permanent residence at her master's side, but also within his bed. Neither seemed bothered by the fact that their secret was common knowledge within the Death Eaters and it almost seemed as though part of Harry had wanted it that way.

But Bellatrix could not dwell on that fact now, because Harry had begun to speak again and his voice was captivating.

"Now, who wants to join Severus Snape in his eternity?"

Chapter End Notes

I'm sorry it's not a long chapter but three exams and two presentations don't exactly leave much room for creativity. However, I wanted to give you all something so I hope you enjoyed.
"The boy must die."

"Yes."

Harry heard the voices from outside the door to the Headmaster's office. Apparently all the charms in the world were no match for George and Fred's Extendable Ears once they were inside the room. Oh Harry didn't dare enter, he was much smarter than that. Something told him that even under his Invisibility Cloak he would be spotted. So he threw the ear inside the room, just by the door as Snape swept in with his typical caricature of a bat. Harry could tell that Snape had been pacing thanks to the Map which showed his footprints following the same path Albus Dumbledore had taken in the past. Just hearing Dumbledore's voice now made Harry's blood boil. They were plotting his murder. Voldemort had been right.

Recently, Harry hadn't had a reason to doubt Voldemort, but whatever doubt that had lingered at the very back of his mind was quickly obliterated with the information that was coming from the other half of Fred and George's wonderful invention. Part of Harry was quite glad he had funded them, perhaps he would continue to support the devilish Weasley twins when everything was all said and done. Assuming of course that the pair wanted anything to do with him when it was all done. But that was not something Harry could dwell on, he had to be patient and listen to the murder plot brewing on the other side of the door.

"What would Lily think?" Snape muttered, almost sounding heartbroken.

"Lily. You still care for her?" Dumbledore's voice was kind and Harry could almost see those twinkling blue eyes filled with sadness as he addressed the current Headmaster of Hogwarts.

"Always." Was Snape's only answer.

"This will perhaps be the most difficult thing I have ever asked of you, Severus. More difficult than when I asked you to take the burden off of the young Malfoy."

"I know."

"Can you do it?"

"I don't know. But I have to try. For all our sakes."

There was a little more deliberation before the talking silenced altogether and Snape began to venture toward the doorway. Harry quickly pulled the ear from under the door and hurried down the stairs to the Headmaster's office. He waited in the corridor for Snape to pass and was far enough out of the way before Harry started to venture again. Harry had followed Snape after one of his meetings with the Dark Lord, relaying information. Part of Harry began to wonder how much information was true and how much was false because it appeared that everything out of Snape's mouth was a lie in one way or another. As Harry ventured outside the castle, he looked up at the place he had once called home. Hogwarts had been his saving grace from the torment that the Dursleys had inflicted on him over the years. At Hogwarts, Harry had felt like he belonged. Even when people thought he had been the one petrifying students, it was so much better than the pain he endured at his so called home.
Now, however, Harry didn't know where to call home. Was home still Hogwarts? Or had home become by Voldemort's side? Harry swallowed the lump that was forming in his throat as he moved outside the castle toward Hogsmeade, managing to avoid everyone that was on patrol of the castle that night. Once inside Hogsmeade, he shed the cloak, enjoying the slight breeze that swept through his hair. He missed flying. He missed when things seemed to simple and the biggest task he had was getting through his exams. But life had never really been that simple for Harry Potter. He had known that for a long time. He wished his life had just been school and exams and Quidditch. But that was never the case. It had been fighting Voldemort and saving people, an instinct even now he couldn't win against.

Something had driven him to make certain his friends were spared, just as he had fought for them over and over again. At one point, they would have fought for him too. But would they now? Would they stand with this new Harry Potter? Sadly, the answer was probably a no. But who knew, maybe his friends were better people than he could have imagined. He just hoped that they and the rest of the people he had once called family would not do anything stupid. Harry had gotten their lives spared, but it would only last as long as they didn't push it.

Harry was far enough away from Hogsmeade now that he could disapparate without the alarm sounding. It felt like a second before he was suddenly outside the wards surrounding Voldemort's manor. He was quite glad that Voldemort choose to stay in his own manor instead of with one of his followers-like the Malfoys-like he had before.

Harry found Voldemort inside his study as he nearly always was.

"Welcome back." Voldemort purred. "Did you find your trip productive? It was awfully Slytherin of you to spy on Severus like that." Voldemort's voice was teasing but Harry's stone face cut off the smirk from his face.

"Do you have a pensieve?" Harry asked looking around the room.

"In the corner." Voldemort gestured. "What is it you want to show me?"

Harry ignored the question and instead focused on the memory he wished to bring forth. The silvery liquid of the memory was drawn out by his wand and put in the pensieve, which looked like it hadn't been used in years.

"You know I could have just looked in your mind. That would have been much easier."

"I wanted to see if I could do it." Harry answered, gesturing to the bowl in front of them. "Have a look."

Voldemort gave one more look at Harry before diving in.

"So," Voldemort muttered bitterly as he reemerged from the pensieve, "Severus never truly came back to my side."

"It appears not." Harry answered. "Were I still on the side of the light I might have found it touching, even rejoiced inside at the vindication of Severus Snape. Dumbledore was right about him all along. A brilliant spy attempting to deceive the greatest Dark Lord in history. I probably would have immortalized him in some way, venerated him. But that is something I cannot do. If we were to exclude the fact that Snape is currently plotting how to murder me, he still tortured students-children-for years and hated me for no other reason than I happen to resemble a man I never knew. Yet as apart of the light I would have forgotten that and held him on a pedestal. But I am not that person."
"He loved your mother." Voldemort stated, his voice hollow. "It was he who delivered the prophesy to me, or what half of it I heard. And when I figured the prophesy was about you, he begged me to spare her life."

"So that's why you told her to step aside." Harry murmured. Voldemort raised an eyebrow and Harry continued. "Dementors make me relive that night. You didn't hesitate to strike down my father, but my mother...you asked her to step aside. You warned her, gave her a chance to move, to live. And she refused." Harry paused, searching Voldemort's face. "I have always wondered, why me?"

"You were like me, a half blood. I saw myself in you and thought that the person who would be most adept to defeat me would not be a pureblood like Neville Longbottom, but another half blood like me." Voldemort answered matter-of-factly.

"I understand." Harry answered with a murmur. "Do you know why Dumbledore sent me to the Dursley's?"

Voldemort nodded. "To keep the blood magic strong. To keep you protected from me."

Harry sneered. "Protected from you, yes. But not from them. Forced to live under the stairs like an animal. Beaten and abused every chance they got. Forced to work for them like a slave. I was no better than a house elf to them." The tiniest prickle of anger entered the depths of Harry's mind but Voldemort's face remained carefully blank. "I don't want them murdered." Harry said finally. "I want them to live in constant fear. They were relocated by the Order for their safety. They can go home once it's safe. So they will never know it's safe. They will live their lives constantly watching their backs. Constantly wondering if the Dark Wizard they heard about would come for them to get their no good nephew. Constantly wondering when the freaks would come for them." Harry paused. "Let them suffer."

"How very Slytherin." Voldemort answered in a voice barely above a murmur. Silence hung between them for a moment before Voldemort spoke again. "From now on you cannot go anywhere alone. Severus will take that as an opportunity to strike. You are with me or one of the Death Eaters at all times and you are never to be left with Severus Snape."

"How do you know that he won't strike with one of the lower Death Eaters around and modify their memories?"

"Because my dear Harry, as you well know I am quite adept at the mind arts. Not even Severus Snape can hide the memories of someone else from me."

Harry nodded, not answering.

"We must up your training. Make certain you are prepared to deal with him should you ever find yourself in the situation where you might have to."

Again, Harry nodded.

"Let us begin then."

"Do you remember what you must do?" Voldemort asked as he and Harry sat, enjoying their last meal of the day.

"Yes. I remember."
"Repeat it to me."

Harry gave an exasperated huff, though he was not actually exasperated, he just wanted to add his usual character to the situation. "After we gather everyone in the Great Hall, I will finish Snape. I cannot encounter him during the battle because he could make it seem like my death was an accident from being caught in the crossfire. I cannot attack him before hand because that would not be justice. He must pay for his crimes. Betrayal requires a suitable punishment, not dying where no one could notice, but as a message to anyone who dares cross you. Cross us."

"Very good." Voldemort purred.

"Pettigrew, Snape, and Bellatrix." Harry murmured. "Those are the people who are most deserved of pain at my hand. If not for Snape, this would never have happened. Pettigrew betrayed my parents and their deaths were the result and then he betrayed Sirius and left him for imprisonment he did not deserve. And Bellatrix..." Harry let his words fall in the space between them. "Well there is a special place in Hell for those who murder their own family."

"And what of me?" Voldemort asked, raising a perfect eyebrow at Harry. "I did, after all, murder your parents; attempt to murder you for years, and murder a friend in front of you. It was on my orders that others have died."

"For you, I understand. In war there are deaths. And to you, what was one infant life against thousands that could be spared in the future. It was a calculated risk. It's a good thing it paid off in the end."

"Indeed." Voldemort answered.

"Perhaps I could show you how little resentment I harbor toward you?" Harry asked, raising an eyebrow as his tongue slid across his bottom lip. Voldemort's eyes followed the action with a hunger.

"And how do you plan on doing that, Harry Potter?"

"I have my ways." Harry answered before plates were shoved aside and Harry was over the desk between them, straddling Voldemort's lap and their lips crashing together in a frenzied manor.

There was no more conversation that night.

Chapter End Notes

Apparently I write when I'm nervous. I hope you enjoyed the background for the end of Severus Snape.
The Descent

He was right. He was always right. It always came to this. It would always come to this. How could he have been so stupid? How could he have been so blinded? Why? Why why why?? How did he not see this? He should have seen this. He's better than this. Or so he thought...

The months after the fall of Snape had been difficult on Harry. He had to work very carefully, very precisely. One wrong move and everything would go down. Everything he had built. He started off small. It's ironic that about a year ago now, he was just running away from Ron and Hermione to protect them. He wanted them safe. And now they were. But life wasn't quite done with Harry yet. He still had more to do, and Voldemort had been buried in work, practically from sun up to sundown. Sometimes they only saw each other when they fell into bed together at night, and even then sometimes that didn't happen either.

Today, however, today would be different. Different than any other day since...well ever. Harry strengthened his mental barriers, not wanting to take any chances. He had to be very careful. Extremely careful. This was dangerous territory. Especially now. A few months ago-a life time ago-it wouldn't have been dangerous. But this, this was nearly suicidal. Not that Harry minded. Harry never really put much stock in his own life. Never had and he wasn't about to start now. He knew his place. And while part of him wanted to live, he knew sooner or later, he would always die. Maybe that day would be today. Maybe that day would be tomorrow. Maybe it would be a thousand years from now. But Harry would die, eventually. If not from this then the next thing. And if not from that, then the thing after that. He hoped though, that maybe, just maybe it would be the end of him. It's what part of him always wanted.

Harry walked through Diagon Alley, looking at the dilapidated, empty shops. In the past it was so full of life. Now it was a wasteland. Not for long though, not if Harry had his way. Luck had favored him thus far, hopefully it would keep up now.

Robes brushed along the back of Harry's dragon hide boots which clanged on the ground with every graceful step he took. He hadn't always been like this. He hadn't thrived in darkness and even slightly enjoyed the fear that was induced at the sight of him. It was like he could taste it, and it tasted delicious. Harry shook himself mentally. He had to focus. This was not the time to be off his game. It was never allowed. Not for him. It didn't matter what had happened earlier. It didn't matter that at any moment, Harry felt like he was going to shatter.

The world did not want to see a shattered person now and especially not a shattered Harry. That would be much worse than anything Harry himself had done over the last year. The last year's Harry and the one before that would not recognize each other. They would look at each other and go for blood. One thrived in darkness and death and the other was the beacon of light. But neither were Harry now. What Harry was, he wasn't sure. Not now anyway. A week ago he would have been able to answer that question. Hell, even last night he would have been able to answer that question. But now? Now everything was different. The game had changed again. It always changed. It would always change.

The twin's shop was the only store in the Alley that was open. Harry stood outside, not daring to enter. He had a feeling just stepping one dragon hide clad foot in the store would get him hexed silly. As useful as the twins' items were, Harry did not want any of them turned on him. Instead he looked through the window. He knew the occupants of the store weren't looking at him, despite the fact that they could have easily seen him. Instead they were gathered in a circle, head's pressed close together,
whispering frantically. Harry gave a sigh as he looked at them. They would probably kill him on sight. He had a very bad feeling about it. But he wasn't looking for all of them, he was only looking for two of them. That's when he saw them.

A head of bushy hair and a very distinguishable set of pale blue eyes and freckles which stood out amongst all the other sets of pale blue eyes and freckles. Harry had known Ron for years, he would recognize him anywhere. Ron on the other hand...

Harry let out another sigh, probably more dramatic than it needed to be but he didn't really care. If anyone saw him, they wouldn't dare to say anything. No one would. Not even his two closest friends. Not even Remus. No one.

Harry had no one now.

"Put your wand down and step away." A voice came from behind him.

Harry was right, they wouldn't say anything about the sigh. They were going to capture him, keep him as a criminal of war and then eventually execute him.

Harry turned slowly to face Remus Lupin. The man looked even older now even though Harry had just seen him a few months ago. How it was possible that Remus seemed to age at a supernatural rate was beyond him. But here he was.

"I'm not looking for a fight, Remus." Harry's voice was much more tired than he realized. He was tired. He was tired of all of this. But he couldn't-he wouldn't-spill anything now. He still had things to do. "I need a favor."

Remus raised an eyebrow at him, his face hardening but Harry could practically see the thickness in his throat.

"And why would I give you a favor? After all that you've done." Harry sighed, he knew it would come to this. Of course, he did it to himself. But he wasn't exactly in the position to be able to talk right now.

"I saved your life. You're alive because of me. You owe me." Harry muttered, bitterly. He didn't want to have to say anything. But it was sadly true. First from when Harry stopped Bellatrix from casting the Killing Curse on him and then again when Harry made it very publicly known that night at Hogwarts that all the captured in the Great Hall were not to be harmed. He had seen the confusion warp their faces, but he couldn't pay attention to it. Instead, he was wrapped again in the intoxicating arms of Voldemort and swept away. Back to their little hide out. Back to their haven. Harry had been rewarded very heavily that night and though he would never admit it-he had trouble walking the next day. But again, now was not the time to be dredging up the past.

Harry watched as a debate warred within Remus. He waited, rather patiently, which was a task. The last few months-well really his whole life-had proved he was not a patient person. But he forced himself to be now. It was infuriating. As he watched Remus's internal war, he had an internal war with himself. Remus could just disarm him now and then everything would be lost. He could always Imperio him. Force him to do what he wanted. Remus would understand later, he hoped. It wouldn't really matter then, though. Maybe. But on the other hand, if he ever wanted Remus to understand anything, he couldn't ruin what would probably be his last conversation with him. Just as the different sides of Harry were about to dive into a screaming match, Remus's wand lowered, slowly.

"What do you want?" Remus's voice was tight, Harry could hear it. But he couldn't let that stop him.
"I want you to go in there and get Ron and Hermione." Harry answered quietly. Remus's eyes lit up, first with confusion and then with hesitation.

"Why? So you can finally kill them? So you can finish getting rid of every good thing in your life? Like how you ruined Hogwarts? How you murdered people and destroyed your soul? Like how you ruined your parents' sacrifices for you by joining the enemy? You're a turncoat. A liar. A manipulator. A murderer. If I had any sense I would put you down right now. Rid the world of one less evil thing." Remus's amber eyes were like fire but Harry's face was entirely blank. He waited to make sure that Remus's little rant was done, before he finally opened his mouth to speak again.

"If I wanted them dead, I would have done it already. I have every advantage here. I could have ended their lives at Hogwarts that night. I could have ended yours that night. Or I could have let you die. If I really wanted you dead, I have had a million opportunities here. I'm faster, I'm stronger. I'm more powerful. I'm dangerous, Remus." Harry took a step forward, watching Remus tense as he did, seeing the man grip his wand tighter, ready to raise it again. "I know you can feel the power radiating off of me. Part of you is intoxicated. Part of you is afraid. I can feel your fear. If I were to draw on you now, you wouldn't win. If I wanted you dead, you would be dead. If I wanted them dead, they would be dead. You all would be dead. But you're not. So clearly I don't want you dead." Harry took a step away from the werewolf and leaned against the wall behind him. "Now, if you would please go and get Ron and Hermione for me, I would much appreciate it."

Remus swallowed again, a motion not missed by Harry. But he didn't care. He didn't even care at the moment what Remus thought of him. He wanted Ron and Hermione, and he didn't care if he had to force Remus to do it. He would get them one way or another. Eventually Remus began to move to the front of the store, never turning his back to Harry but Harry didn't care. He was just waiting, begrudgingly. As Remus took a step inside the store, Harry whispered a soft, "I'm so sorry, Remus." But Harry could not be certain if the man heard him because he disappeared inside the door.

A few moments later, Ron and Hermione came out, wands drawn and tense, Remus right behind them.

"Thank you, Remus. Now if you wouldn't mind I need to talk with them."

"I doubt you'll be doing much talking. Probably torturing," Ron growled but Harry ignored him.

"You can leave now, Remus." When Remus didn't move Harry gave another theatrical sigh. "I think we've already established that if I really wanted you all dead, you would be. I'm not in the murdering mood at the moment and would like to speak with Ron and Hermione alone. I really don't care if you have a problem with it." Harry stared Remus down, knowing his eyes had begun to glow slightly as his anger level rose. They were always illuminated now, dark magic had warped them so that they were no longer Lily Potter's eyes. They were entirely Harry's now. And Harry was dark. Eventually, Remus faded away, hesitantly.

Harry turned his attention to his former friend in front of him. "I'll surrender my wand to you, eventually. But I need it for now. We need to talk, and something tells me you're going to want to listen to what I have to say. If that's true, then meet me in Hogsmeade. If not, then I suppose this is goodbye."

Harry didn't even wait for them to answer. He disapparated in that moment and instantly he was standing outside Hogsmeade. With a wave of his wand, he got rid of the spell that alerted people to apparition in and around Hogsmeade. It didn't go off for Harry because the wards were attuned to him. But for Ron and Hermione, it would be banshee screaming and honestly Harry did not want to deal with that.
Harry counted the exact number of seconds in his head, knowing exactly how long it would take Hermione and Ron to weigh the pros and cons of coming and eventually, because they were Gryffindors, they would come anyway.

*Three, two, one. CRACK.*

Harry withheld his smile, though he had no doubts that his eyes shown with amusement. Fortunately the pair could not see it because they were behind him. How predictable they were. It was almost entertaining. He knew their wands were trained on him, but again he could hardly care. He really didn't care about anything. He merely waved his hand, beckoning them to follow as he began to journey toward the castle. Harry marched forward, hearing their shoes crunch on the snow behind them. It was exactly a year ago that Harry had left them in very similar weather.

Harry looked up at the majestic castle that was Hogwarts. It still wasn't his home. His home was with Voldemort, curled inside an overly large bed with a surprisingly warm body tucked behind him. It was with a massive python that decided behind wrapped around his neck like a scarf was the best place to be. It was where he had long, heated kisses and shared dark secrets in hidden corners. It was where Harry had shed his lion's skin and embraced his snake side, only Harry turned out to be more of the chimera Voldemort once called him than either of them had thought. Harry pushed the thoughts of Voldemort out of his head. The thoughts of soft, sinful lips and glowing crimson eyes. The thoughts of strong hands and a lithe body. The thoughts of warmth and comfort and home. Harry had no home.

The castle was currently under the control of one Minerva McGonagall after the sudden disappearance of every Death Eater stationed in and around Hogwarts. It left quite a disparity in teachers which was able to be filled, thankfully, by non-Death Eaters. It meant, that while Hogwarts was still under Voldemort's control, he had no control over the classes anymore. Though he had barely noticed that part. His attention was preoccupied by an all too willing Harry who had only need a lick across his lips and the slight spreading of his knees for Voldemort to come undone and becoming captivated yet again by the green eyed boy.

It was just at the right time that no one was around to see what would appear to be Ron and Hermione marching the former Harry Potter up through the castle into the Headmaster's office.

Harry gave a quick but loud rap on the door which was met with the words come in from a very familiar voice. Harry stepped through the door and the keen eyes of McGonagall were blown wide.

"Professor." Harry said, tersely. His glowing eyes bared into his former head of house as she sat, taught behind her desk. Harry moved inside the room, trailed by Ron and Hermione who were still looking at him rather skeptically. But he hadn't turned and attacked him, which was something he knew they would be stunned about. Rumor's of Harry's temper preceded him. "I need the room for a while, Professor." Harry wasn't looking at her, he was looking at the portrait of the former headmaster, Albus Dumbledore. Dumbledore's eyes weren't sparkling now. The man was watching him, his blue eyes focused with a look that could almost be described as rage, but it also looked like pity. Harry hated it. He didn't hear McGonagall's response and he probably would not have cared anyway. He was looking at Dumbledore, entirely focused on the portrait of the man he once idolized. He didn't idolize him now, though.

"It's alright, Minerva." Dumbledore's voice broke the silence that coiled around them. "I believe this is important." Harry gave the portrait a terse nod as he lowered his gaze to meet McGonagall's. She looked skeptical but she didn't say anything. She quickly passed Harry, shutting the door to the headmaster's office behind her. As she passed, Harry saw a look of fear and remorse. Harry hated that look too. He didn't want pity. He did what he had to. He would take their fear, their loathing,
their hatred. But he did not want their pity. Harry continued to look around the room for a moment, seeing how exactly it had changed from the last he had known it, under the care of Dumbledore.

It was as Harry turned again that he saw another portrait. Whether or not the current headmaster wanted it there or not was out of the question. It was there, and the eyes of it were piercing into Harry.

"Hello Severus." Harry said, his voice calm and cold, but the portrait didn't answer him. "Surprised to see me?" He paused waiting for a response that didn't come. "I'll take your hate filled silence as a yes." Harry's lips twitched as the glare of his former professor deepened. This was the Snape he knew, this was the Snape he could handle. Not the Snape who had been avoiding him or plotting his death in the months before he, himself died. Harry ventured around the office, knowing he had at least four pairs of eyes on him though the other portraits were horrible at feigning sleep. Not that it mattered. With a quick wave of his wand, curtains-not unlike that which silenced Walburga Black-dropped in front of all the former headmaster's portraits, save for Dumbledore and Snape. Another wave and wards appeared around the door to prevent eavesdropping. Not that he was worried, but he had to be cautious. Always cautious.

"No need to seem so alarmed." Harry murmured as he passed his former friends on his circling of the room. He was still examining it, his curiosity not quite satiated. "There's two of you and only one of me. And you already have your wands drawn and ready. I am quite fast, I won't deny that. But I would only be able to take one of you down before the other got me. And even I am not that stupid." Harry walked closer to the desk, moving behind it where Dumbledore had sat so many times during their talks and he lowered himself into the throne of a chair. Then he leaned forward slightly and place his loyal Holly wand on the desk in front of him. "And now I am unarmed." He gestured to the two chairs across from him, a silent invitation for Hermione and Ron to sit. He purposely place himself here, to avoid the eyes of Dumbledore, but he could see Snape.

Silence filled the room around them as the three people and two portraits waited, only barely able to hear the sound of their own breathing. Harry steepled his hands, pressing his fingers to his lips as he waited. While no one else knew what he was waiting for, he did. And it would be well worth the wait this time. Eventually, the tense silence was broken by the familiar hooting of Harry's beloved owl. Hedwig flew in the open window, a copy of the Daily Prophet tied to her leg. Harry quickly untied it. Usually it didn't come by personal owl, but Harry didn't want to deal with another owl that wasn't Hedwig. The owl nipped at his hand affectionately, and he began to stroke her wings. The bird fluffed herself before going to the now vacant perch of Fawkes and Harry handed the paper to the pair across the desk.

"Go ahead and read that out loud for me, if you would be so kind."

Hermione swallowed audibly as she took the paper from him gingerly, as though it would suddenly bite her. Harry leaned back in the chair as he listened to the paper unfold and gasp echoed through the silence.

"Out loud please dear." Harry repeated, though his eyes were closed and his hands still steepled and fingers against his lips.

"The Dark Lord found dead." Hermione began and Harry heard an echo of Hermione's earlier gasp from Ron. "The Dark Lord was found dead inside the Ministry of Magic early this morning. Preliminary evaluations of the body indicated that he likely died by the Killing Curse an hour before his discovery. The body was found with an attached note stating, 'It's over now.' Aurors immediately began searching for the Dark Lord's companion, former Chosen One Harry Potter, but the dark wizard has yet to be found. The fall of Lord Voldemort was preceded by months of missing witches
and wizards from the Dark Lord's followers named the Death Eaters. The last to go missing was devoted follower Bellatrix Lestrange who had been seen frequenting Diagon Alley as a form of patrol. The role of Minister of Magic also opened recently when the current Minister of Magic fell ill and has yet to recover. Sources speculate that the Minister might have been under the Imperious Curse for some time.

"While the search for the dark wizard and the Dark Lord's former companion continues, the outlook appears optimistic. 'With the absence of the Death Eaters, the world seems a little brighter. It had been happening for some time, but we just didn't notice it.' Writer and former friend of the late Albus Dumbledore, Elphias Doge stated. 'We assumed it was a plan, a coordinated attack to lure us into a false sense of security. But now that the Dark Lord is dead, the world can return to normal.' Doge had arrived at the Ministry for questioning mere hours after the discovery of the Dark Lord's body. Aurors, however, are a little less optimistic. With Harry Potter on the loose, it's anyone's guess what the next attack might be, especially considering sources say Harry Potter had been the Dark Lord's lover. With the sudden power vacuum left by the Dark Lord and his followers, the Ministry began early to rush to fill the spaces left. 'Anyone could come in and take the Dark Lord's place if we don't organize now.' A source said. 'Especially with Harry Potter still on the loose. He could easily take up the mantle left by his lover.' Another source, however, was much more optimistic. 'I think it's all over. Now we need to work on rebuilding and fixing the system that lead to this in the first place.' Vacancies are going to be filled in the Ministry soon. Among the vacancies left was that of Dolores Umbridge who was infamously known for tormenting students at Hogwarts and later Muggleborns. Umbridge's body appeared last week with the word's I must not tell lies carved into her hand with an illegal blood quill." Hermione took a deep breath before continuing to read.

"Now the Ministry must work to rebuild. Systems against Muggleborns are supposedly being torn down as well as the new statue commissioned under the titanic reign of Lord Voldemort. While this all began in the wee hours of the morning, it appears as though the system is quickly changing. But will it be for the better is anyone's guess. The search will continue for Harry Potter as well as new Ministry officials until all lose ends are tied."

Harry opened his eyes as Hermione finished reading and folded the paper, setting it on the desk in front of her.

"I think we should talk, don't you?" Harry's sentence finished with a rather wicked smile, as he leaned back in the chair, watching the stunned faces of his former friends across from him.
Good Riddance

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Of all the reactions to the newspaper article, Harry enjoyed Snape's the most. It had been nothing but silence from the two people and two portraits surrounding Harry before Snape started screaming, calling Harry every possible version of idiot under the sun. Harry let him rant, only nodding here and there to show he was "listening" as the older man bellowed word after word from the confines of his portrait.

"Do you have any idea how dangerous your plan was? Even if you did plan this from the beginning! You're lucky he didn't murder you the moment you had your back turned. Or the moment you crawled into his bed!"

"I didn't so much as crawl as I was thrown." Harry commented idly which lead to another tirade of insults from Snape. Harry chuckled as he listened to him scream. It was entertaining to say the least. Before, Harry had never purposely pushed Snape's buttons but now, it was as entertaining as watching Fred and George prank someone.

"What would your parents think?" Snape snapped. "What would:"

"My mother think?" Harry asked, turning his head toward Snape, facing him for the first time. "Yes what would my mother think?" Harry's eyes had begun to glow again and his face twisted into a wicked challenge. "What would she think of the man who loved her...and then sold her out to his master? What would she think of the man who was her son...until he betrayed his friends and became a murderer? What would she think of her childhood friend who murdered people for power? What would she think of her son who willingly crawled into the bed of the man who murdered her?

What would my mother think? See, I wouldn't know. I wouldn't know what her or my father thought because I never got to know them. Because you delivered half of a prophesy to a megalomaniac. Because her husband's best friend sold them out. Because she was protecting me. And because you"

Harry wheeled and face Dumbledore, "Sent me to people who loathed me. Who despised me. Who beat me and broke me, who used me like a slave and abused me like I was trash. I will never know what my parents think of me because I never even knew anything about what they were like until I was eleven. And even then, all I heard was how I was so much like my father. Well what was my father like? I DON'T KNOW AND I WILL NEVER KNOW. NOT REALLY." The room had begun to shake with the magic that was reacting to Harry's anger. Ron and Hermione pushed out of their chairs, backing away from the tornado of anger and magic that was Harry Potter.

"You," Harry pointed at Dumbledore, "Could have left me with people who actually gave a shit about me, blood magic or not. And you" Harry pointed at Snape, "Could have realized that you only heard half of the prophesy and that nearly all prophesies are self fulfilling. And He," No one needed an explanation about who He was, "Should have been smart enough to know that as well. But now," Harry voice turned from angry to vicious, "I've had my revenge. The four of you who left me an abused orphan are dead, three of you at my hand. And yes," Harry spun facing Ron and Hermione, "I am a murderer. I will never pretend to be anything but. I have murdered and tortured and had my vengeance. And it's about time you all heard the whole truth." Harry's magic had stopped swirling chaotically as he reigned it in and sat down in the chair behind him again. "Now if you're ready to hear what I have to say, then please, sit."

Moving cautiously, Hermione took her seat first, her eyes fixed to Harry. Ron soon followed, swallowing thickly as he did. "I'm ready." Hermione said, her voice almost too caring. Harry
struggled to keep his face impassive. Maybe there was something he hated more than pity...patronizing.

"It started with a horcrux. Not just any horcrux though. Not this one." Harry raised the locket which had been still clinging to his neck. He rested the heavy metal on the outside of his shirt and set his hands down in front of him again. "No. This horcrux was...is a very special horcrux. You see, it's a living horcrux. Living, breathing, thinking. It has a name. It had a family. It had friends. It's name was Harry James Potter." Harry eyed his friends, "I am Lord Voldemort's last horcrux." He paused, watching the emotions flit across their faces but he began talking again before they could begin to formulate words. "You see, years ago-a lifetime ago-my mother, a Muggleborn witch, stood between her only son and mass murderer. He asked her to step aside and she refused. He gave her a chance, and she didn't take it. She gave her life for her son. Such a sacrifice, made of pure love was enough-not to save her-but to save her child. As the mass murderer turned his wand to the child and cast the curse which should have taken his life, it rebounded and split an already shattered soul. Voldemort thought himself immortal and had gone to great lengths to ensure that he was. But that made his soul unstable. So when the Killing Curse rebounded and hit him, he was forced from his body, blasted through the ceiling. And the part of his soul which remained, latched onto the only living thing left. Me." Harry spread his arms and smirked slightly, before bringing his hands back together and steepling his fingers again.

"As I said earlier, when I lost control of my anger, Dumbledore sent me to live with my only living relatives on my mother's side where the magic of her sacrifice would be strengthened and held in place to shield me from any possible rise of Voldemort again. So for eleven years, I lived in a cupboard under the stairs and was only let out to do house chores. When my Hogwarts letter arrived and Hagrid finally found me, I thought I had suddenly found place where I could belong. The Wizarding World had long awaited my return. Of course how could they not? The Boy Who Lived." Harry sneered the name which had been given to him. "Just one of many names I acquired over time. Fast forward a few years and I was suddenly the Chosen One after the entire prophesy came to light. Oh how everyone expected great things of me. Fast forward again to a cold November night in a tent in the forest." Ron and Hermione knew which night he was talking about, the night he left them.

"I had been wearing the horcrux for a while and it began to speak to me. Whispering sweet things. Kind things. And oh how I wanted them to be true. How I wanted to save you both. How I wanted to be the hero, even if it meant dying myself. How I wanted to ensure that no more would die. Between the horcrux and my own internal hero complex, I decided that the best way to keep you two alive, was to do what I should have done all those months beforehand. I decided that I was going to hunt the rest on my own. Get very far away from you both. The farther away I got, the better. So I went to Grimmauld Place while you slept. I spent the night there. And in that night, I had the most peculiar dream where I watched Tom Riddle and Lord Voldemort talk about me as if I were a possession. That was when I first heard that I was a horcrux...and that Voldemort had the rest of them, except for me and the locket which hung around my neck. So they formed a plan to have me come to them. To twist me and warp me until I was their greatest weapon. That's when I began to form my plan. It turns out, I did learn some Occulmency from you, Professor." Harry sneered. "You see I learned just enough to keep very select thoughts all to myself. I had to be very careful about what I thought or how I thought it, and I kept a certain type of thought all to myself."

"I went to Voldemort that day. It was surprisingly pleasant, which he always was thereafter, since he wasn't trying to kill me anymore. If I died, he would lose his immortality and that just could not do." Harry's voice turned cold and wicked. "So I spent time with him. I watched as he somehow reunited pieces of his soul. I'm not quite certain how. To this day I don't believe he was capable of feeling remorse." Harry shrugged, "However I could have been wrong. "Tom began to teach me the Dark
Arts. I'll admit I enjoyed it. I still do. And then, Tom was gone. Voldemort had taken him back too. But he still left a piece of himself with me. It would have been romantic almost in a different context." Harry's hand had unconsciously gone to the locket as he spoke. "And so Voldemort took Tom's place. He trained me. Steeped me so deep in dark magic that I will never be able to go back. And I enjoyed it, I loved it. It was the day that Voldemort took Tom back that I murdered Pettigrew. Oh how I enjoyed that. To see that rat of a man screaming and writhing on the floor. Begging for mercy." Harry trailed off as he thought about that day, listening to Pettigrew's delicious screams flow over him again. "But eventually I gave him mercy. A quick death after, who knows how long of torturing." Harry gave his former friends a wicked smile.

"And then you showed up." Harry turned to Snape. "By that time I had already had Voldemort wrapped around my finger. Though I do lament that you interrupted a rather nice snogging session." Harry ran his fingers over his lips, watching the disgust dance across Snape's face. Harry gave a cruel smirk before he turned back to Hermione and Ron. "Oh how entertaining it was to watch the surprise dance of Snape's face. You might have enjoyed it had it been a different situation." Harry shared a knowing look with Ron who suddenly seemed to realize who he was sharing that look with. Harry's lips twitched but he continued talking. "I easily had Snape fooled. Because he believed like everyone else that there was no way I-the Gryffindor Golden Boy-could go dark. So suddenly seeing me dark, well I couldn't have been pretending. I must have joined Voldemort. I would be lying if I said that for a little while, he had me. I was as wrapped around his finger as he was around mine. I enjoyed the darkness. I still do." Harry said the last sentence nonchalantly, as if the fact that he now trafficked with the exact opposite of what he used to stand for was no big deal. "And then, dear Professor Snape, I followed you to Hogwarts." Harry watched Snape freeze out of the corner of his eye. "It's always entertaining to listen to your own murder being plotted. Especially when one of those people who were plotting it was the man you used to idolize." Harry turned his head slightly to the side, not enough to fully see Dumbledore but enough so that the man knew he was talking to him. "I don't idolize you now." Harry shifted back. "So I took the knowledge back to Voldemort. Any doubt that I'd had about him was gone. I knew then that I was far enough in that not even those closest to me could tell that what I was. I only had to make Voldemort believe that I was with him. He would, of course, want a recap of what happened when I followed you. So I told him the truth. Oh yes, I sold you out. Just like you once sold me out. But Voldemort had a cruel death in mind for you. You would have been tortured and ripped apart, all your sins laid bare for the world to see. Now that, that just would not do. So I offered to kill you. It was my life after all that was ruined, I had the right to end yours. That was how I repaid my debts to you, Severus. I sent you death, quickly and easily. Where you would have been torn apart at any hand but my own. If I didn't get you, then Voldemort would have. And if he didn't then Bellatrix would have." Harry paused for a moment as he studied Snape's face out of the corner of his eyes. "Oh you didn't know that? Had I not found out what I had and given myself a reason to kill you, you were promised to Bellatrix, who severely mistrusted you. Turns out she was right, of course." Harry idly began to study his nails.

"Long before I bargained to take your life, I bargained to spare others. Ron's. Hermione's. Remus's. Tonks'. The entire Weasley family. And anyone else who I saw fit. And then I worked on the reputation I gained amongst the Death Eaters. You see they were all promised to me too. My toys." Harry let out a particularly cruel laugh at that. "When Voldemort won, they were all mine to have fun with, and oh did I have fun. Even before I was allowed to murder them." Harry's eyes closed momentarily as he relived every moment of pain he inflicted. His eyes were once again glowing as he reopened them. "So by the time we had gotten to Hogwarts, I had them all fooled. Every last one of them was under my thumb. I owned them all. I owned Him too. And then I murdered Snape. And yes, I still call it what it is. It was murder. Even if it was a mercy killing, I still murdered him. And a couple of people before him and every damn Death Eater after him. One by
one, I tore down the ranks. Voldemort didn't even care. I had him too warped by me. Too intoxicated with his greatest creation. I tore them down bit by bit, even getting a little extra vengeance when I got my hands on Umbridge. Her screams were delicious. Though I didn't torture her like I tortured others. No. She merely wrote with her own vicious little blood quill. Apparently she didn't like having her punishments turned on her. I saved Bellatrix for last. I put her under the Crucius Curse for hours. She was begging for death by the time I finally allowed it."

"This is for the Longbottoms."

Harry didn't tell the others what he had said as Bellatrix looked at him begging for mercy, for death, for anything other than the pain.

"And then there was just Voldemort." Harry paused, forcing himself to push past the lump in his throat.

"I know you think it's weakness, but I love you."

"I will forever deny saying this, but I think I love you too pet. My lion. My Chosen One. Harry Potter."

Harry pushed the thoughts out of his mind. "He had no reason to think that I of all people would turn on him. Hell, I was the one who was the closest to him, who knew secrets he hadn't shared with anyone. I knew him best, and he knew me best. I won't deny that. I-" Harry's voice broke and he could see Hermione's eyes turn sympathetic.

"You loved him."

Harry eyed her for a second, his face suddenly becoming impassive. "Yes, I loved him." He paused, leaning forward against the desk. "And then I betrayed him." A wicked gleam flashed across his face and was gone as quickly as it had come. "It was easy enough. I waited for him to fall asleep and then I stunned Nagini. I may be fast but that snake is so much faster. And then I turned my wand on him. And just like my parents and many others, he was gone in a flash of emerald light." Harry paused, reconsidering his words. "Well, most of him." Harry raised his hand and tapped his forehead, right over his famous lightening bolt scar. "So here I am. The last horcrux. The last living piece of Lord Voldemort. And thus the real reason why I brought you here." Harry leaned away from the desk again. "You see, I am a dark wizard. There's no denying it. And while I have control now, my anchor is gone." Harry fluttered his fingers as if simulating something blowing away in the wind.

"And without him I will very likely lose the battle to my inner darkness. I can only keep it in check for so long. So here is my final plea to you."

Harry stood and Hermione and Ron jumped to their feet in response. Slowly, Harry ventured around the desk, coming to a stop in front of his friends. "You need to kill me."

Protests suddenly erupted from the two portraits which were quickly silenced by a wave of Harry's hand as two additional curtains which silenced all the other portraits draped over them too.

"Harry," Ron began, his voice shaking slightly, "We can't. Not even with the things you've done. You're my best mate...I can't."

But Harry wasn't looking at Ron. He was looking at Hermione. "You know as well as I do that it has to be done. One last dark wizard." Harry waved his hand and sent Ron flying back a few feet, landing uncomfortably on his backside. "I'm powerful and dangerous. I can't be left alive. Not even in a cell. I'll get out and by then, any semblance of humanity I have left will be gone. Please Hermione." Harry slowly dropped to his knees in front of her. "My life was given to me by a
Muggleborn, it's only fair that it should end by the hand of one too."

Harry looked up to her, beseechingly with Ron screaming protests in the background, but even he was silenced by a stunner from Hermione. "Are you sure this what you want, Harry?" Hermione's voice was quiet and tears leaked from her eyes. Harry stood and place one hand on her cheek, quickly wiping away a tear with his thumb.

"Yes." Harry was much taller than Hermione now, which allowed him to easily lean in and press a kiss against her forehead which only resulted in her crying amplifying. "It's the right thing to do." He lowered his voice. "It's the Gryffindor thing to do." And with that he dropped his hand again, lowering himself once more onto his knees and spreading his arms out to his sides. "I'm ready."

"I love you Harry. You're my best friend." Hermione told him around a hale of tears.

"I love you too."

Hermione nodded before aiming her wand at his chest.

"Avada Kedavra."

Harry's eyes closed as he was enveloped in a bright emerald light.

...And then they opened.

Chapter End Notes

It's not over yet. ;)}
Harry looked around the Ministry of Magic, taking in the sights. The last time he had been here was when he, Ron, and Hermione had infiltrated it to grab the horcrux. The locket now rested snuggly against Harry's chest, shifting with every step. He walked a path he had taken before and it lead him right to the door of Dolores Umbridge. The Ministry workers all looked the other way as he entered her office, shutting the door with a soft click behind him. Umbridge looked up, appearing as toad like as ever. Only upon seeing Harry, her face paled.

"Mr. Potter." Her voice seemed strained and her face pinched. "What can I do for you?" Harry strode around her room, taking in the explosion of pink and cats that she surrounded herself with. "Mr. Potter?" Umbridge asked, her nose pinching as Harry walked behind her chair. Harry purposely swung the hand with the scar Umbridge had forced him to give to himself.

"Dolores." Harry's voice was chipper. "Here's what's going to happen. You're going to get up out of that chair and you're going to leave this room with me, calmly so as to not attract any attention. And we're going to walk out of the Ministry. And then, I'm going to do whatever I want to you. And you won't complain. If you do, I'll make it worse. But you and I...we have some things to work out. And we're going to work it out. So, do you happen to have any of your famous blood quills?" Harry had circled her desk entirely and was leaning against the front of it, a sadistic smile plastered across his face. "Of course, should you refuse, I could always make you. And then it will be much worse for you." Harry almost wanted her to refuse, he wanted to make her suffer. But, slowly, Umbridge pulled open a drawer and withdrew the quill Harry hated with a passion.

Harry's smile vanished and a hungry look appeared in his eyes. "Good." He purred. "Let's go."

It took ten minutes to get Umbridge out of the Ministry, which was too slow for Harry's liking, but once outside, he grabbed her arm and disapparated. They landed in a desolate manor. In the center of the main room was a desk with some parchment waiting.

"Sit." Harry demanded, his voice harsher than it had been before. The moment she did, Harry plopped the quill in front of her, leaning over the desk again and smiling cruelly. "Go ahead, Dolores. You're going to write, I must not tell lies. And I want you to write it as many times as it takes to sink in." Harry watched the horror flash across her eyes as she looked down at the quill and then back up at him. "It's that or the Cruciatus Curse. Pick your poison. And choose wisely."

They stared at one another for a few minutes more before she reluctantly picked up the quill and began to write, wincing at the pain it brought. But she kept writing. Line after line. Harry was impressed, however. She didn't scream, didn't cry, didn't make a sound as the quill cut deeper and deeper into her hand. Harry watched-with delight-as the the blood began to drip from her hand to onto the page. Yet she kept writing and kept writing. The minutes ticked by as he let her write, not telling her to stop. By the time he felt he was satisfied, the parchment was soaked in her blood.
"You can stop now, Dolores." Harry told her as he prowled closer. "What should we do now? I suppose I could always unleash some Weasley products on you. Oh how much fun that would be. Maybe I could give you back to the centaurs. Everyone knows how much they want you again. Or perhaps I could give you to another half breed. Perhaps the werewolves. They would enjoy ripping you apart. Greyback especially wants you. He's ruthless. That would be fun, wouldn't it? But, I think..." Harry trailed off, tapping his fingers on his chin before grinning. "No, I know exactly what I'm going with you."

No sooner had he finished speaking was Umbridge on the floor, writhing and this time, she was screaming. It was music to Harry's ears, he loved it. Her body twitched in every direction and her screams bounced off the dilapidated walls.

"Scream all you want, no one can hear you. So please, keep screaming."

It was near an hour before he let up on her and she was shaking on the floor. "I won't beg. If that's what you want." Her words came out slowly but purposefully.

"Oh Dolores, I don't want you to beg. That would be too easy." Harry walked over to her. "Besides, I'm not planning on torturing you anymore. I've gotten what I wanted to out of my system. You're screams are boring me now. So instead, I'm going to make you a deal. You resign your position and run from the country and I won't bother you again. If you choose to stay, I can't promise you your life." Harry paused and evaluated the shaking woman on the floor. "So what will it be, Dolores?"

But Umbridge didn't answer. Instead she glared daggers at Harry, defiant as she looked at the man above her. "You're stronger than I thought you would be. Though I suppose you would have to be, being in love with Fudge. He was so idiotic, how did you put up with him?"

Umbridge rolled her eyes, "I did what I had to get ahead. Fudge was just a convenient route to power. It's hard for a woman in this world to get anywhere. So I did what I had to do. I don't expect you to understand."

Harry knelt next to her. "I understand very well. Though you won't believe it. You however, have destroyed people's lives for fun. You're a sadistic psychopath who should be put down like the dog you are. You've tortured children for your own amusement and destroyed the lives of innocent muggleborns. I don't care how hard you've worked to get where you're going, you don't deserve it. You deserve to rot in Hell." Harry leaned in, close to her ear as he spoke. "Don't worry, I know that I belong there too." He sat back, aiming his wand at her. "I'll see you soon, Dolores."

An emerald flash erupted and the light left Umbridge's eyes.
Whispers in the Dark

His eyes fluttered open as he began to take in his surroundings. He was in a forest, lying on the cold, hard forest floor. Above him, stars barely shown through the dense canopy of the trees. He could barely see an inch beyond his boots in front of him through the darkness. He sat up fully, rolling his shoulders in and taking care to brush the leaves off of his cloak. The night wasn't particularly cold but it wasn't the warmest of nights either. He stood, dusting the rest of himself off. He looked around him and not even a fire could be seen. He was completely alone. Sliding his hands into his pockets he began trudging through the foliage. His chest hurt and he rubbed the sore spot in the center. How quite annoying it was walk through this forest at night. His boots kept catching on rocks and roots, making the very trudge he was undertaking quite tedious. After he ventured about ten minutes away from where he had awoken, he pulled his wand from his pocket, looking down at it, rolling it between his fingers.

"Point me."

His wand twirled, pointing him in the direction he was already headed and a smile tugged at the corners of his lips. So, he continued walking in the direction he was already headed. It wasn't long before he came upon a rather drab looking boot. Now an actual smile did pull at his lips as he bent down, placing his hand on the boot. He sat for a few moments with nothing happening before he felt the familiar pull at his naval and he was whisked away. The world shifted and turned around him the darkness receding until he was in a nothingness and then he was suddenly being forced toward a dull light. He let go of the portkey and floated rather gently toward the ground, landing gracefully on his feet. His cloak fluttered around him before it too came to a rest and he had the distinct feeling that he resembled a bat in that moment. He walked over to the lit fireplace, standing in front of it. The warmth wrapped around him, chasing the chill from his bones.

"You took your time." A voice from the dark whispered. It wrapped around him, warming him in a way that the fire could never hope to do. "You cut that rather close." He turned to look for the source of the whispers in the dark. The shadows behind him moved and the first thing he noticed was a vibrant pair of green eyes.

Harry approached him, moving as snake-like as Voldemort himself and he came to a stop in front of him. "Of course, Tom, I know how you like to make a dramatic entrance." Tom smiled and bent, one hand catching Harry's chin and his lips catching Harry's own. Harry melted into him and he felt the lithe, lean muscled arms of Harry Potter wrap around his waist. The kiss they shared was intense and passionate. Their bodies seemed to become one as Tom's arms wrapped around Harry. They stayed there, sharing a kiss for a long time before they were forced to break apart for breathe. Tom pressed his forehead against Harry's lightning scared brow.

"You could have left you know. Gone very far away. This was your chance to be free." Much to his surprise, Harry gave him a snort. "Firstly, where was I going to go? And secondly, there's no where else I'd rather be. I love you Tom." Tom looked down, seeing the earnest look Harry was giving him.

"I know." He pressed his lips to Harry's forehead, right at his scar, feeling the boy under him shiver. "So, tell me all about your visit with you little friends."

Harry grinned and it was such a boyish grin that Tom felt his heart stop in his chest. Harry's grins were usually sadistic or utterly full of humor that it lit up his already glowing eyes, but this, this was something entirely different. It was boyish and charming and Tom was glad he was the only one
around to see it or else he would have to worry about fighting off any man or woman who saw it. Harry was enticing and captivating in ways he himself could only dream of. Oh Tom was quite aware of his looks, he'd used them to his advantage several times, as well as many other talents he had outside of magic. But Harry's vibrancy captivated people in a completely different way. They were drawn to his inner light that held passion and courage, they were drawn to his sarcasm and wit which stumped even the most cunning of linguists, of which Tom Riddle certainly was, in many ways. But here and now, it was the boyish charm and the sharp look in his eyes that had Tom willing to bow to his every command, and Tom didn't bow to anyone, but he would for Harry Potter.

Harry pulled Tom gently by his wrist, dragging them over toward the bed in the other room and they lied on the bed, both kicking off their shoes, ignoring where they happened to land. As Voldemort, Tom hated shoes but now that he was himself again, they didn't bother him.

"Clearly your little scheme worked as I now have my soul back entirely and you are still alive. Quite a feat I must say." Tom watched Harry preen under his compliment. "So tell me how your end of the plan went?"

A wicked gleam flashed through Harry's eyes but it was gone as quickly as it had come.

"Exactly as we expected it to. They believed that the body we left for them was actually yours."

"Which it was." Tom interrupted him and Harry nodded. Tom began to card his fingers through Harry's hair and he watched as Harry nearly began to purr under the touch. Oh he really was Tom's lion.

"Yes, that it was." Harry shifted and Tom looked at him. "That was probably the hardest moment in my life."

"It's ok now pet." Tom captured Harry's lips again for a moment, feeling Harry sink into him. Oh how he missed their connection already. It had been so easy to slip into one another, to the point where neither of them would come out. Perhaps it was better that they could remain separate in this way. The last time they had lost themselves in each other it had been torture to tear themselves apart, like rose bushes that grew together. This time they had to remember to find themselves, before they lost themselves. Though it would be much easier without the horcrux. The connection wasn't there on the soul level. But it was still there in blood and magic. They were still more connected than any two people on the planet. And for some reason, Tom was ok with that.

"I told them the story we had planned. I did have a moment with Remus where I thought he was going to kill me, but he couldn't do that, not to me. I brought them to Hogwarts and used the Headmaster's office where I talked to Ron and Hermione as well as Dumbledore and Snape. None of them were too particularly pleased to see me and Snape was the most ornery of the bunch but eventually they all seemed to come around. I died as the tarnished version of the Golden Boy in their eyes. How pathetic it was. I don't think I've ever heard Snape scream at me that much before, and I had to deal with him in Potions and Defense Against the Dark Arts." Harry gave an exaggerated shudder. "How I do not miss that. Besides," Harry maneuvered closer to Tom, "You are a far better teacher." Tom chuckled as Harry's eyes trailed over him. "What would I have to do to get an O, Professor?" Tom felt a smile pull at his lips but he merely shook his head.

"Use that beautiful mouth of yours to finish your story." Harry gave him a mock pout and honestly it took all of Tom's will power not to kiss that pout away, but he wanted the story and he was going to get it, even if meant holding sex over Harry's head to do so.

"Alright," Harry huffed. "I found them in Diagon Alley, just like I thought they would be. They were at the twins’ shop. I had a little encounter with Remus outside but he eventually went and got
them for me. Then I lead them to Hogwarts and entered the Headmaster's quarters and Hedwig delivered the Prophet." Harry nodded to the snowy white owl perched on a stand somewhere behind him. What an unusual creature she was. Of course Harry's familiar would be as stubborn and unwilling to die as he was. "And then I launched into the story. I added some personal details when I went after Snape like how I'd never known my mother. I think that helped sell my story. I didn't give Dumbledore or Snape a chance to argue against my execution. I used that charm that's on Walburga's picture in Grimmauld Place. Which, I have a question about but I'll ask you later. Just remind me. Anyway, I convinced Hermione to do it."

"The Muggleborn? Why her?"

Harry gave him a sly smile. "It's poetic isn't it? My life was given to me and saved by a Muggleborn, it was only fair that it was taken by one too."

"But it wasn't." Tom was almost reassuring himself. They both weren't dead were they?

"Ah, but it was for a moment. I did actually die." Harry paused and Tom watched the wheels turn in his head as though he were trying precisely to figure out the words he wanted to use. "I was in King's Cross, alone. I guess I had the option to board a train and move on but, I didn't. I just sat there for a moment. They say when you die that your life flashes in front of your eyes. But it didn't for me. I just sat there, considering my options. On one hand, I could go back and I could leave forever. Just disappear. No one in the wizarding world would miss me, because I'd already be dead to them. Or I could go back and join you. And we'd be together and we could decide our next step. Or, I could go on. Just end it all entirely and never look back." Harry paused again. "I have to admit that I thought about moving on. I thought about just leaving and being done with it all. But..." Harry trailed off and he looked down at Tom's chest.

"But?" Tom prompted.

"But I couldn't leave you." Harry whispered. Tom pulled Harry's chin up so he could meet those beautiful, glowing green eyes. "I love you, Tom. I really do. And I know how you feel about love but I can't help it. I love you. I'm in love with you."

Tom leaned toward Harry to where their lips were grazing, though he kept his eyes locked with Harry's. "I love you too, Harry Potter."

He could practically feel Harry's excitement and joy bubble under his fingers as Harry's lips pressed against his own eagerly. These kisses were much more heated than the one's that proceeded them and suddenly, magic snapped around them, tearing off their clothes until it was only skin pressing against skin. Tom rolled so Harry was under him, their bodies grinding together and the friction was slowly driving Harry insane-Tom wanted more of it.

Harry didn't need as much prep work as he had the first time and Tom was able to slip inside him easily. He heard Harry moan and it was like music to his ears. He was determined to coax out more. Harry's arms wrapped around him and it was in that moment that Tom truly appreciated the amount of muscle Harry had truly gained. It was defined now and he could see the ripples as Harry struggled to keep Tom close to him. Harry had always preferred close contact in situations like this, which Tom was more than willing to give him. The close proximity made Harry's moans that much sweeter. Tom knew the moment he found that one bundle of nerves that could make Harry sing, because his entire body arched upward and his hips bucked.

"There it is." Tom purred as he reached between them to stroke Harry's hard member. Harry thrashed under him as Tom pushed and jerked, purposely forcing him toward the edge. It didn't take long to push Harry entirely over the edge, his body freezing and his toes curling; his mouth open in a
silent moan with his eyes squeezed shut, as he painted their stomachs white. Tom wasn't far behind him as Harry tightened around him. Tom collapsed on top of him after a quick wave of his hand to clean them.

"Brilliant distraction." Tom muttered against the curve of Harry's throat, earning him a laugh from under him.

"I thought so."

Tom propped himself up on his elbow. "So it worked then? They don't suspect anything?"

Harry shook his head. "Not at all. We're clear."

"Good, pet. Tomorrow we can be on our way, out of this place." Tom wrinkled his nose, earning him another chuckle from Harry before he felt another weight on the bed. Tom looked over his shoulder to see Nagini settle herself on the foot of the bed. "Ah good." Tom looked back at Harry, only to notice his brow furrowed.

"What's wrong love?" Harry's brow furrowed even more in concentration before he gave a sigh and his entire body seemed to sag.

"I can't understand parseltongue anymore." He sounded defeated but the revelation seemed to hurt Tom even more than it had Harry. For a long time, Tom enjoyed being the only one that could speak parseltongue, but with Harry recently, he had enjoyed what was basically their secret language, only they could understand it...and now they lost that too.

"Maybe you haven't. Lost it I mean" Tom answered after a quiet moment.

"How-?" But Harry stopped himself. "Blood. We're bound by blood." Tom nodded.

"Maybe it will just take a little more to access the things we used to have. Which might be a good thing. Maybe then we can learn how to coexist with one another without trying to tear each other apart in some way."

Harry laughed again, which Tom loved. "Yes, that sounds good."

"Good. Now let's get some sleep."

"Yes, sir." Harry answered mockingly but Tom couldn't help the smile that came across his face.

They were silent for a moment more before Harry spoke again.

"What are we now?" Tom looked at him quizzically so Harry continued. "We're definitely not light, but we're not the way we were entirely dark. I'm much more sane and you're...loving. So what are we now?"

Tom thought for a moment. "We're just us."

"So you're just Tom and I'm just Harry." Harry paused, a sad smile drifting across his face and he seemed to suddenly exist in a time far away. "Just Harry."

Tom ran his hand down Harry's face as Harry answered, "I like that. Goodnight, just Tom."

"Goodnight...just Harry."
Epilogue: Seventy Years Later

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Students lined up outside the room to the potions classroom. It was their first class with the Head of Slytherin house and they chittered eagerly, wanting to know exactly why all the older students were utterly in love with the mysterious man behind the door. The man had been strangely absent at the Welcome Feast for the year and had let the Prefects make the introductions to Slytherin house. No one among the first years understood exactly why the professor had been absent and were given vague answers from the older students about it.

"You'll see soon enough." They said. "He's too distracting at first." They said.

So the first years awaited eagerly to see the mysterious potions professor. The Gryffindors and Slytherins had been paired up together, as they typically were for potions but neither side could muster the energy to send mutinous glares at one another. Instead, they chatted, Gryffindor and Slytherin together, about what exactly this professor would be like. Was he ugly? Was he incredibly handsome? Was he really smart? What kind of professor was he? Was he a hard professor? Was he a helpful professor?

Some students looked incredibly nervous and were probably goaded by the older students earlier that morning. Potions class was their first lesson, and they to some extent, all awaited it eagerly.

"I heard he's an incredibly good teacher but he's very strict." A girl with bushy red hair and clad in Gryffindor colors told her friend. The boy snorted.

"A good teacher? I doubt it. Probably just like the rest of them." The girl answered him with a swat on his arm, which he chuckled at and half heartedly swiped her hand away.

"We've had good teachers Harry, don't you act like you haven't. Playing this cool façade won't work with me. I know exactly how smart you are but you have to keep your ego intact." Harry snorted again.

"Ginny, listen to me, it has nothing to do with ego and everything to do with the fact that I am utterly perfect at everything I do, and that includes school." He puffed himself up with a mock bravado which was easily swatted down again by his slightly smaller friend.

"Pssh." Was her only answer as the door to the potions classroom opened. The dungeon fell silent as a tall man stepped through the doorway.

"Hello, children." His voice was a velvet purr as he looked down at the awestruck students in front of him. A lone, brown curl fell across his forehead and his obsidian eyes sparkled with a mischievous light. He stood tall and proud in the doorway and his very presence had the students hanging onto his every word. He had high, sharp cheekbones and his cheeks were slightly sunken in, further accentuating his cheekbones. His hair was a little long and it was tied back but it seemed to fit him perfectly. Somehow, his lithe form took up the entire doorway and it was nearly impossible not to notice the magic which swirled around him.

Time seemed to stretch into eternity as he looked at each student individually, and they gazed back, shocked and in awe. Before teacher or students budged, a brilliant white light bounced into view. It began to take the form of a stag and it walked around the professor before coming to a stop in front
"Stop intimidating the students and start teaching." Then the stag faded from view, but a fond smile appeared on the professor's face.

"Well I suppose I should listen to him. In you come." He made a grandiose gesture and swept into the room, the students eagerly following. They found seats and looked at their professor, tracking his movements easily.

"I could launch right into a lecture about how their will be no wand waving in this class or incantations and about how I don't expect you all to understand the subtle science that is potions." He paused, "But where's the fun in that?" A sly grin spread across his face. "It is true, you should not use magic when it comes to potions ingredients. Can anyone tell me why that is?" He looked around the room expectantly when Ginny raised her hand.

"Yes Miss?" He asked.

"Weasley, sir." The professor's lips twitched ever so slightly at the name and his eyes gleamed wickedly for a moment, but the movements were gone as quickly as they'd come.

"Miss Weasley, please. Continue."

"Because the ingredients are can be contaminated with the magic and become volatile. It could cause a reaction within the potion that could be deadly."

"Excellent." The professor nearly bounced as he spoke. "Five points to Gryffindor. Now," He clapped his hands together, "Let's begin this little lecture." He paused as students moved to grab their quills and parchment, readying themselves to write. However, two students began chatting eagerly with one another. "Miss Weasley and Mister..." He trailed off waiting for the boy to fill in the name.

"Lupin, sir. Harry Lupin."

"Lupin?" The professor purred, his grin becoming cat-like as he leaned over his desk. "Well, Miss Weasley and Mister Lupin, please refrain from speaking out of turn, won't you?" His grin dared them to try but they merely nodded their heads. "Good. Now, I am Professor Tom Gaunt. Welcome to potions class." He pushed so he was standing upright as he looked out over the class.

"Now, shall we begin?"

The first years filed through the door to his classroom as he leaned casually against his desk. He twirled the ring on his finger, silver with a polished obsidian in the center. Once the students were seated, they looked up at him, their eyes going wide with awe. He repressed a smirk. He was used to this of course. People still were in awe of his eyes and their reactions upon first seeing him gave him a great amount of satisfaction. But he could not let that satisfaction show, not now at least. He had to keep himself calm, and collected. Letting out that side of him was not good, at least not here and now. Once the students were settled entirely, he kicked himself off the desk and with a casual wave of his hand, writing began to appear on the board next to him.

"Welcome, First Years, to Defense. My name is Professor Harry Gaunt. Yes, this class was initially titled Defense Against the Dark Arts, however, it has been thought by many-myself included-that you should learn to defend yourself, not just from Dark Magic but from Light Magic as well, as both can be severely damaging. Can anyone tell me why?"

Immediately a hand shot in the air and it remind Harry so much of someone that it took everything he
"Yes Miss Weasley?"

"Because spells like the Bombarda which are considered light can do just as much damage as the Dark spells."

"Very good, five points to Gryffindor. You're too much like your grandmother. Harry thought as he answered her.

"In here you will not be expected to learn Dark Magic, but you will be taught how to defend yourself and other's against it as well as learning to defend yourself against Light magic. Are there any questions before we begin?"

This time several hands shot in the air.

"Yes, Miss Weasley?" She seemed to bounce when he called on her.

"Are you at all related to the other Professor Gaunt? The potions professor."

Harry chuckled as he dropped his head for a second, running his hand through his hair. The question came up every year and he had come to expect it. Sometimes the first years had potions before defense and sometimes they had defense before potions, but it worked like clockwork that every year either he or Tom were asked that question.

"Yes, as a matter of fact I am. He's my husband. Any other questions?"

Several hands had gone down at this point but one remained and he knew exactly what question this was going to be.

"Yes Mister Lupin?"

The boy shifted awkwardly as he looked between his desk and Harry. "Your name is Harry."

"Yes."

"That was my grandfather's godfather's name." The boy was eyeing him and if Harry didn't know any better, he would swear the boy had it figured out. But that didn't worry him.

"You're referring to Harry Potter?" Several gasps echoed around the room as the boy nodded. "Yes, that's where I got my name from. And I have no doubt that you attained your name from the same source." By this time the boy had paled significantly and no doubt regretted asking the question.

"There's no need to be ashamed. Despite the horrors he committed by the side of his partner, he is still considered a hero for nearly single handedly defeating the Dark Lord's regime." Harry gave a nonchalant shrug as if it weren't he and Tom he was currently discussing as if they were history.

"Clearly history has forgiven him. I'm not justifying the things he did, but in the end he was on the right side. Much like his former professor, Severus Snape who followed a similar path." Harry paused for a moment. "No doubt you all will be bored to tears hearing about them in your History of Magic class. Don't worry, I was too. Binns was still the professor then as he is now. But no more history talk. We're here to learn defense, are we not?"

Muttered yes's came from around him as he shifted his stance.

"So let us being."

"Harry Lupin and Ginny Weasley." Tom's voice purred as he came up behind Harry, wrapping his
arms around his chest. "How sentimental your friends still are. No doubt they will hear of the Gaunt professors but it will never occur to them that it is you and I. After all," Tom paused as he turned Harry in his arms so they were face to face. "To them, we are both dead. Me by your hand and you by theirs. They will never suspect."

"Also," Harry continued, "Everyone who knew about the Gaunts are dead and gone. It's only you and I who hold that information now."

"Indeed pet. Indeed." Tom raised his hands to Harry's face and planted a tender kiss on his lips.

"Even after 70 years, you are still so gentle." Harry said as Tom pulled away.

"Do you not want me to be?" Tom asked as he pushed Harry's hips against the wall. "After all, you and I both know," Tom stepped closer and trailed his lips over Harry's ear, "You like it rough."

Harry laughed. "You know me so well, Tom." Harry had slipped into parseltongue at Tom's name, making him shudder.

"I'm still so glad we managed to get that back." Tom answered, his breath becoming heavy.

"Yes, apparently blood bonds are quite useful." Harry answered as he bucked his hips against Tom. "But are we just going to talk, or are we going to have some fun?"

"Talking is fun." Tom answered as his fingers trailed down Harry's chest.

Harry rolled his eyes. "You know what I mean Tom."

"What do you mean, Harry?"

"I mean," Harry pulled Tom against him so that their chests were touching, "Shut up and fuck me Tom Riddle."

"You don't have to ask me twice, Harry Potter."

Chapter End Notes

And thus it ends. Thank you all for reading and I really hope you enjoyed it.

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