Dimidium Animae Duo

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by silverneko9lives0

Summary

Set in Goblet of Fire.

Navigating a budding relationship while temporarily being guardians during a long and harrowing custody battle isn’t exactly fun when said charge somehow manages to be chosen as a Champion for a dangerous tournament despite being too young to enter.
Keep in mind, there is mentions of past rape/witnessed rape. If this is a trigger for you, I am so sorry, but it's NOT graphic.

in fact, the best I can do is urge you to READ THE TAGS BEFORE YOU CONTINUE!!!!! I'll add more as I go, so always keep your eyes on the tags.
Chapter 1

~July 1994~

“Cool.”

Concentration broken, Severus fell onto the pillows he had learned approximately a decade ago were necessary. He eased back up, glaring at Harry, who smiled sheepishly.

“Sorry,” he said. “I didn’t mean to startle you, Professor Snape.”

He had made it clear that Harry could address him as Severus outside of school, but Harry seemed unlikely to start. He even addressed Remus as “Professor Lupin” still despite the same courtesy extended. The only one he accepted such a suit from was Black.

“Not the first time I’ve been interrupted,” he said.

Remus happened to find breaking Severus’ concentration amusing, even going as far as mumbling erotic suggestions just as Severus was about to enter the levitation state. He had to move the time to when Remus was fast asleep and also down in the living room.

Speaking of…

Severus stood. “It’s five in the morning, Harry.”

“I couldn’t sleep,” he admitted. “Nightmare.” Harry stuffed his hands in his pajama pant pockets in an attempt to hide his embarrassment at the confession. Severus hummed.

“I know the feeling,” he said. “Care to talk about it?”

“It’s silly,” Harry said.

“Nothing that frightens someone is ever silly,” Severus said. “You can tell us.”

Granted, this was more Remus’ area, but PTSD from the first war often left Severus with his own nightmares from the things he’d witnessed and even some of the things he’d done.

He tossed one of the pillows to Harry, who sat down on it, thinking. “I’m in a house,” he said after a moment. “An old, dark mansion. And I am heading toward one of the rooms because there’s a light on. I see that there’s a large snake on the floor and a man. He approaches an arm chair and tell someone sitting in it—someone I can’t see—that he’ll ensure that the job is done and make any sacrifices he must to see it through. There’s a voice, kind of raspy and tired, coming from the chair, telling the man he trusts him to not fail. The snake, then alerts whoever is in the chair that I’m outside in the hall. The man opens the door and there’s a flash of green light. Then I woke up.”

Severus hummed thoughtfully.

“You don’t think it means anything, right? Could it just be a dream?”

“You tell me.”

“That’s useful.”

“You’re taking Divination, aren’t you?”
“Yes, but it’s not like Trelawney is any good at her job.”

“Oh, she isn’t much of a teacher, I agree, but she does have a gift. She knows what she’s talking about. Sometimes.”

“She kept saying I was going to die last year. Said it was the Grim. Nope. Just Sirius.”

Severus snorted. “True as that is, she has been known to give a prophecy or two in the past.”

“Really?”

“It’s rare, but it does happen.”

“When was the last time?”

Severus hummed. “I think it was just before you were born…or not. Who knows?”

“Who cares?” Harry added, smiling.

“Well, either way, I’m not one for interpretation, and yes, most of the time a dream is just a dream. Sometimes, though, dreams have deeper meanings. They allow one to handle situations they are still coming to terms with or, in your case, more complex. It could be me, but it sounds like a vision of sorts.”

“Vision? I’m able to divine?”

“Not the same way Sybill does, but yes. If you like, I can show you a couple tricks that could help prevent these visions or dreams from happening.”

Harry frowned, unsure.

“You might be able to levitate, yourself.”

And now his eyes widened. “Really?”

“Don’t get your hopes up if you don’t start to. It took years for me to meditate deep enough where I can…and now you just want to learn how to levitate.”

It wasn’t as if Harry was avoiding showing his excitement at the idea of it, bouncing where he sat and grinning. “Won’t I?”

“It took me about seven years to get to a point where I could levitate during meditations.”

Harry stilled. “But it can happen if I’m diligent enough, right?”

“Diligent isn’t the word I’d use. Patient is more like it. You need a quiet space or at least some white noise. You get into a comfortable position and focus on breathing. Some find it helpful to count, but the point is to empty your mind of all clutter or thought.”

“Severus, we’ll have to get new shackles! The Velcro’s coming undone,” Remus called.

Harry doubled over laughing and Severus groaned, turning irately to him. “REMUS I AM WITH A CHILD!!!”

“Yeah, I see that now,” Remus said, blushing and hiding the felt shackles behind his back “I thought he’d still be asleep.”
“We agreed to keep it in the bedroom, Pet.”

*You wouldn’t have minded if he was still asleep.* “I’m sorry.”

*Not the point.* Severus pinched the bridge of his nose. “I know you are. I’m sorry, too. For yelling.” He stood and approached Remus, giving him a gentle kiss. “Good morning, by the way.”

“Good morning.” Behind them, Harry made a faux vomit sound before making his escape. Remus laughed. “Good to see him acting more like a regular kid.”

“And what does that make us? His parents?”

“Perish the thought! I don’t think we’d want to fill those shoes. Black can take up the role for all I care.”

“Good,” Remus said. “Happy as I am to have Harry here, I really want you to fuck me without worries.”

“You know, I don’t think I realized how horny lycanthropes were.”

Remus arched a brow. “Think if we get that chance, you won’t be able to keep up?”

“Cheeky,” Severus said, grabbing Remus’ ass. “I keep up with you fine, Pet. Now, I know you want to get fucked, but…” Severus pushed him back. “You have to give Harry the Talk.”

“Wait…really?”

“I’m not doing it.”

“Hasn’t he already…”

“Apparently, he hasn’t. Not that I expect that fat muggle to have given him accurate information even if he had. Add to it, you’re the horny one.”

“He might be straight. I can’t—”

“Yes, you can. And you will. At least Black won’t need to worry about it.”

“I hate you.”

“Nice, try, Pet. I know you love me. In fact, I’ll give you a little incentive: after you fulfill that task, I’ll fuck you any way you like. But you need to talk to Harry first. The longer it takes, the longer it will be till we have sex again.” He turned around to head in to the kitchen, then stopped, spinning back to Remus, smirking. “And you’re not to touch yourself in the meantime.”

“What if Harry already knows?”

“Have you seen the way the kid acts around his peers? He’s anything *but* knowledgeable about what to do if he gets a partner—male, female, both, or neither. And be thorough about it.”

“What? You’ll read my mind if I’m not?”

Severus’ smirk widened. “*Wasn’t planning on it but it’s a good idea.*”

Fucking mind-reader.
“You never minded before.”

“That’s it, I’m picking up Occlumency,” Remus snapped. Severus laughed and moved onward to the kitchen. “Just see if I don’t!”

“I believe you, Pet,” Severus said. “You could get it out of the way.” Remus followed him into the kitchen and rested his chin on his shoulder. “That’s not going to work, Remus.”

“I know, it’s just…give me a little bit of leeway?”

“Nope. I’ve had to do it for hundreds of students that aren’t even my children. Potter at least has enough brains to comprehend it. Unlike some Slytherins I can mention.”

“I’m sure you don’t even have enough fingers and toes to name everyone.”

“Not unless we include my collection of quills, fountain pens, and…actually not even that. It’s rather sad…” He turned the stove on and retrieved a pan. “My point is, you may have to do so in the future, being the Gryffindor boys’ go-to.”

“Well, how do you do it?”

“It’s better if you don’t bullshit through it, for one. I treat it like any other preliminary lesson before starting a new section of the practice.”


“Nice try,” Severus said. “Get the eggs, please.”

“You’re despicable and impossible,” Remus muttered on his way to the refrigerator.

Truth be told, it wasn’t a bad idea to at least make sure he knew how to handle romantic relationships before he started delving into them. Better to go in knowledgeable rather than blind. And Harry had proven to feel more comfortable discussing sex and relationships with Remus anyway.

He handed the egg carton to Severus. “I just don’t really know where to start. When my dad sat me down for it, it was all about how I got to be extra careful given what I am and the like. Course, at the time, I hadn’t come out.”

“Well, my dad was too drunk half the time to bother. Never mind he had a habit of fucking my mother whether he knew I was in the room or not. Tended to run to my room and cover my ears.”

Remus shut the refrigerator, horror stricken. That Severus could say something so nonchalantly…

“I didn’t know,” he whispered.

Severus shrugged, cracking the eggs in a glass bowl. “I knew something was wrong with that then even before I really understood. But I wouldn’t do that to you, Remus.”

“I know you wouldn’t,” Remus said. He embraced him again. “You know you can open up to me about these things, Love.” It explained his disgust at his darkest fantasy back in school. “I’m here if you want to talk about your past.”

Severus poured the egg mixture in the pan. “I don’t like talking about my parents.”

*But you want to get it off your chest,* Remus thought, giving him a little squeeze as he hid his face against Severus’ back. “That’s okay,” he said. “I’m not going anywhere, Love.” He released Severus
and went to the pantry to make some toast. “About that punishment you’re giving me.”

“Yes?”

“Will you at least help me figure out what to talk to him about?”

Severus snorted. “Yes, Remus. I’ll help with that ‘lesson plan.’ And Pet, maybe put those shackles away. We’ll worry about them later.”

Remus blushed and grabbed the cuffs, heading back to their bedroom.

#

Severus set a small folio in front of Remus once Harry had gone out to enjoy the sunlight. “Is this…”

“Just some notes and the like from the times I’ve had to do it for the Slytherins.”

Remus opened it and hummed, thumbing through the graphs, pictures, and brief explanations.

“Thanks,” Remus said forlornly.

He didn’t know how to even begin discussing it with Harry. Add that to the prospect he might have to also talk to other boys about their growing sexuality…Remus looked at Severus.

“Help?”

“I’m helping.”

“You know what I mean.”

“He’ll receive it better from you,” Severus said. “From me, he might just be traumatized. He’s getting used to me. And I him. But you,” he grinned. “He likes you, Remus. I know you can do this better than I could. Besides,” he kissed Remus. “I’m sure you’ll see it’s not as bad as you think it is.”

“Remember when you thought Harry had a crush on me?”

“Yes.”

“What if it’s like that?”

“Then no harm done,” Severus said.

“Is this really because of the cuffs?” Remus asked. Severus snorted and walked away, patting his shoulder without a response. Remus sighed and reviewed the parchments in front of him. Well, it wasn’t as if it didn’t need to be done.

*Sooner I take care of this, the better…*

He glared at Severus again, who only smirked in reply.

*No time like the present.*

Remus stood and smoothed down his jumper before going outside.

“Harry, mind if we chat?”

#
Granted, it could have gone much worse. But that was a small comfort for Remus as Severus laughed. Remus slapped his leg, sending Severus into another wave of jovial laughter.

“It wasn’t that bad. He’s healthily curious, if nothing else.”

“Oh come on, he asked if it was normal to be in love with one’s enemy!”

“Does it really surprise you that Draco Malfoy might have a crush on Harry?”

“No. But I am amused by it. Those two are always at each other’s throats. Or rather, it’s the classic proverb of pulling pigtails.”

“How’d it go again. Wait!”

“No.”

“Just one more. Not the whole thing.”

Remus sighed and waved his hand, giving Severus leave.”

“So, wait, what if a boy likes a boy? Could it still apply or does one need physical pigtails.”

“No, Harry, it does apply.”

Harry balked. “So Malfoy might actually have a crush on me or Hermione?”

“Uh…it’s possible, but without confronting him about it…”

“I’m not gonna confront Malfoy!”

“Well, you could turn it on him. Best way to shock an enemy is to be nice to them.”

Severus exited Remus’ mind. “On second thought, that’s actually adorable. What was the term Aurora used? Ah yes: I ship it.”

Remus arched a brow. “Should you be ‘shipping’ two thirteen year olds?”

“I think Malfoy’s fourteen now, actually,” Severus said.

“A technicality,” Remus snapped.

Severus shrugged. “Perhaps you’re right. It’s just a little adorable, is all. Not to mention, I’d like to see how red Lucius Malfoy can get.”

Remus hummed.

He had the misfortune of meeting the man recently. He was every bit as pompous as Severus and Harry both said. It was fun messing with his sensibilities, though, sending him a middle finger while kissing Severus in the middle of Diagon Alley after receiving Harry’s new school list.

Unfortunately, the boys had also caught the finger raised, earning a pair of giggling teenagers retreating from the argument about to ensue.

“One other thing,” Severus said. “Not entirely unrelated. The Quidditch World Cup.” Remus perked up. “You’re good, Pet. It’s a crescent moon that night. No full moon for at least two weeks after.”

“So we can go.”
“We can go.”
Remus pumped his fists in the air, falling backwards onto the bed. “Yes!”
Severus laid beside him, propping his head up on his hand. “I take it you’re excited?”
“I’ve not been able to go to any of the games in ages! Of course I’m excited!” Remus turned onto his side, grinning at Severus. “Ireland versus Bulgaria.”
“We’ll make the Bulgarians regret ever messing with the Irish!”
“Well, the Bulgarians do have Krum.”
“And?”
“He’s good at his job. An excellent Seeker if I’ve ever seen.”
“So is Harry. I fail to see the point.”
“He’s in his last year at Durmstrang.”
Remus sat up. “He’s still a student?”
“Yeah.”
“Wow.”
“Granted I’m sure Harry could get there himself if he wanted to. He’s got the talent.”
“He really does,” Remus agreed. “So, if I recall, you said you’d give me anything I want if I took care of that harrowing task.”
“It wasn’t that bad,” Severus said, “but I did.”
Remus straddled Severus’ waist, letting him shift to lie on his back.
“What do you want, Pet?” Severus asked, running his hands on Remus’ thighs.
Remus hummed, kissing Severus. “You’ll do anything?”
“I would.”
“Even if what I want is to cover myself in chocolate and you to lick it all off?”
Severus’ eyes darkened a bit and he licked his lips.
Remus grinned.
“After dinner, of course,” he said, wiggling enough to see Severus’ eyes glaze over some more.
“I want your wicked tongue all over me, keeping me to the edge of coming till the very end. I want you to bite me each time I beg you to let me come because I’m so close I’m going mad. Even here,” Remus cupped his groin.
“Of course, not as hard as anywhere else, just enough to hurt enough to make me remember that I’m not supposed to come till you’ve come all over me and make me drink every bit of your come just mingled with the excess of chocolate on my skin. Then once I’m clean again, only then can I come.”
Severus growled, rolling Remus on his back. “Go on, Pet,” he said, latching his teeth to Remus’ neck.

“To…to keep me from touching myself you have me tied up with my arms and legs spread wide with enough movement so you can lick as much of me as you can and bite me when I’m bad.” Severus growled again, shoving a hand down Remus’ pants and began to stroke. Remus bucked.

“Um…Oh fuck…you’re…oh god…Severus…I want…I…”

Severus removed his hand and licked at the bruise he’d given.

“No. You’re not coming yet, Remus,” he purred, motioning for Remus to turn over and spread his legs. He shoved his hand back down, running the pad of a finger over the creased hole. “The things you do to your master, Pet. Go on. Tell me what else you want me to do on that night.”

“I…I want…I…want to be beaten.”

“Beaten?”

“Yes.”

“Biting isn’t enough?”

“I want you to beat me, slap me, hit me, spank me, whip me—whatever you feel fits after we’ve come. In fact, when you do this, I want one of our toys in me vibrating at such a pace, I feel I might be able to come again. But again, don’t let me, Master. Please don’t let me come till you’ve come again all over my raw skin and make me drink it again.”

Severus hummed, moving his fingers down over the perineum. He could feel Remus attempting not to buck or move.

“Anything else?” Severus asked, removing his hand so to yank Remus’ pants down to his knees so to continue the gentle massage, fingers just ghosting over Remus’ scrotum

Remus rocked his hips against Severus’ fingers. “I…I…”

“Yes?”

Remus whined and pushed back on the fingers. “Severus…Master…”

“I’m here, Pet. You’re so pretty like this. Maybe we should see if any of our friends would like to watch this little scene you’re suggesting.”

“Yes!”

“Oh? You want to be watched? Maybe we should invite our guests to lick you off, too.”

“I thought you were insufferably jealous.”

A finger eased inside him. Remus gasped and keened at the burn, almost too painful to bear.

“I think it’s clear now that you are mine alone and will fight very hard to keep it that way. Would you like that? I wouldn’t mind watching another sub, of course. No harm in telling him or her how best to please my pet.”

The finger stroked inside him, burning and pleasing in tandem.
“I kind of like that image. You tied down and a female sub licking you clean for me and her dom alone to enjoy, telling her how to please you and how you can please her. I want to see that so bad. But we’ll explore that another time.”

The finger slid out and Remus twitched at the loss, even though it was just a pinky.

“I’ll give you that dream, Pet,” Severus said, “When do you want to embark on that little escapade?”

“Now now?”

“We don’t have any chocolate sauce on hand. Gonna have to go to the market first.” Remus hummed.

“Tomorrow night?” he asked.

Severus grinned and kissed him. “Tomorrow, then,” he agreed. He slapped Remus’ ass. “Undress and lie on your back with your legs spread for me.” Remus obeyed, grabbing the headboard. Severus gripped the base of his cock and swallowed him down, gently dragging his teeth over the flesh while the spare hand massaged Remus’ balls.

“Oh fuck…oh fuck…” Remus groaned. Severus bit down a little harder as he moved up the shaft, pressing the tip of his tongue against the slit. Remus gasped arching his back off the bed. He whimpered as Severus dragged his teeth over the head, cautious of the tip.

Severus pried Remus’ hands off the headboard and directed him to his crotch. “Well, pet?”

Remus swallowed and pulled Severus’ cock free, swallowing him down.

“Good boy,” Severus purred, running his fingers through Remus’ hair. “Do you like your master’s cock?”

Remus hummed affirmatively, bobbing his head. He moved just so that the head remained and sucked as hard as he could. Severus moaned Remus’ name as he came.

Remus lifted his head enough to meet Severus’ eyes. Severus pulled him back to stand on his knees and kissed his swollen lips.

“You are going to look so debauched tomorrow night, Pet. Might bring you to the pensieve and have it replayed for us so I can stroke you’re cock as you watch yourself go mad by my tongue. Make you scream and beg for more hands on you and I want to see you pegged…damn, Remus, I am going to fuck you till you can’t walk.”

“Promise?” Remus asked.

Severus laughed, tucking them both into the bed. “If I could do so now, I would.” Remus hummed, wiggling closer.

“Sev.”

“Hm?”

“I like your idea, too,” Remus said. “Even if it is a woman you want to see fuck me.”

Severus snorted, pressing a kiss to Remus’ forehead. “We’ll figure out my fantasy later, Pet. Tomorrow is just for you and only you.”
Remus snuggled closer. “How long had you been thinking about inviting others?”

“I think it started when I suggested making Black watch me fuck you.” Remus chuckled.

“Figured as much,” he said.
The following day, Hermione Granger arrived after breakfast. While Severus and Remus spoke to her parents, Harry helped her with her luggage as the plan was for them to finish some last minute summer homework and then floo over to Sirius’ for a couple days before heading over to the Quidditch World Cup, allowing Remus and Severus time alone.

Remus leaned back in his seat, taking a glance outside the window as Harry and Hermione worked together in the yard. “As long as she’s here, we aren’t likely to be needed as much,” Severus reminded him. “And I figured you’d like the break.”

“I don’t mind helping them with their homework,” Remus said, frowning at him. Severus set another sandwich on the platter. “Besides, we’re teachers. He can ask us for help.”

“And yet, he’s friends with one of the smartest students in his year. If not the smartest.” He narrowed his eyes at Remus. “Don’t you dare tell her I said that,” Severus growled, brandishing a mustard covered knife at Remus, who snorted.

“Wouldn’t dream it, Love,” he said. Remus peered at them again.

“Stop it, you’re acting like a broom-hover parent,” Severus snapped.

“I’m not that bad.”

“Yes, Pet, you are. They’re not going to be doing anything they shouldn’t. Hermione is too smart to let it and Harry is too noble to try anything.” He paused. “Actually they’re a little like me and Lily when we were that age.”

“Oh?” Remus asked. “Ready to reminisce at last rather than focus on your grudge against my friends?”

“Maybe I am…”

“Good. Harry should know more about Lily. Though I’m still curious to why he’s not asked after Faline…”

“Well, could he? No one’s mentioned her to him before and he might be waiting for the right time to bring her up. I doubt he remembers ever being a brother anyway. Not after thirteen years.” Severus approached the window. “Lunch is ready,” he called. The duo packed up their books and headed inside.

“Professors, help!” Harry said. “She refuses to try flying.”

“I don’t have the talent for it.”

“That was an old school broom.”
“You know I hate heights, Harry!”

“You flew on a Hippogriff. Brooms aren’t nearly as scary as that.”

“No.”

“Please help—ow! Don’t hit me, Witch!”

“They are like you and Lily,” Remus said, sniggering.

“Even the way she abuses him is similar,” Severus agreed.

Harry and Hermione stared at them as they took their seats at the table. “You knew Harry’s mother, Professor Snape?” Hermione asked, sitting next to Remus. Harry sat beside her, reaching for one of the sandwiches and keeping silent.

“I did. Lily was my best friend.”

“So you hate my dad because you didn’t think he was good enough for her?” Harry asked, frowning.

“Partly,” Severus said. “But not only that.”

“I’m regretful to report that James and Sirius were the school bullies,” Remus admitted. “I tried and failed to get them to behave…partly because I barely bothered.”

“So my Dad was like Malfoy, then?”

Remus sucked in a breath and winced at the comparison.

“Afraid so,” Severus said. “He grew up after Remus and I got together the first time and we eventually were able to be civil.”

“Then why do you keep insulting him?”

“Anger,” Remus said. Severus nodded. “Trust me, if James was alive, he’d likely do the same. Course, following any battles, your mum would hex the both of them.”

“I can see her doing that,” Severus added. “Lily Potter could be a rather nasty witch if she wished to be.” Hermione hummed around her own sandwich and Harry swallowed, setting his down.

“What was she really like? No one really talks about my Mum outside of that I’ve got her eyes.”

“More than that,” Severus said. “You’re more like your mother than you think, thank Merlin.”

“You got the best parts of both your parents,” Remus said, “Which is very good, considering what you go through most of the time. You’re mother had a strong sense of justice and before you were born, she was taking pre-law courses in the Wizarding World.”

“She hated bullies to a fault and always stood up for those being victimized,” Severus added. “It would be rare indeed to find anyone who met her to say anything bad about her.”

“Outside of that she was a muggle born.”

“Which is foolish,” Severus said with a dismissive wave of his hand. “Pure bloods are just angry that they aren’t the majority anymore in our world.”
Remus nodded. “I’m half blood, for instance.”

“As am I,” Severus added.

“Does it have to do with that pure magical bloodlines have been spread drastically thin?” Hermione asked. “I’ve noticed that there are more squibs found in pureblood families and I figured that might have to do with inbreeding.”

Severus nodded. “It’s actually a huge problem. Especially among followers of the Dark Lord. That level of extremism has caused many issues and inbreeding is just one of them. Not the worst, but still a problem. It has gotten a little better. No one marries first cousins anymore they make sure there’s a few generations in between, but it’s still rather bad.”

“Some families can trace back generations,” Remus said. “Some even go as far as to before Hogwarts was even founded when it was still considered normal for wizarding families to pass the knowledge on to their offspring.”

“Do your families?” Hermione asked. “I mean, not that far, I suppose, but…”

“No,” Remus said. “I’m afraid not. Mine didn’t.”

“Nor mine. Then again, my mother was disowned by that side of the family so I can’t say I really know.”

“Just because she married a muggle?” Hermione cried. Even Harry seemed irate at the news.

“Have you not known it to happen?”

“I have, but that kind of behavior is just…oooh.”

“Muggles do it, too, though,” Harry reminded her. “My relatives were happy to as soon as they could.”

“I know, but it still angers me,” she muttered. “No one should treat anyone with so much cruelty. It’s inhumane and deep down, every witch, wizard, and muggle are human. It makes me wonder if that’s why no one wants to bring up Faline.”

Harry shrugged. “I figured they would eventually, but I just…I don’t know how to ask.”

Remus leaned against the table. “No, Hermione. That’s not why.” Hermione and Harry stared at their teachers. Remus glanced at Severus. You were her godfather. You should tell it.

Severus sighed and met the stares. “Faline wasn’t even born. She’d just been conceived two months prior to your parents’ death. That name was one you gave her, Harry. At that time, you’re favorite cartoon was Bambi and Faline was the name of the doe. We weren’t sure that would stick, but at the time that was the only way to identify her. Only a few people knew about her, only those that were considered closer family.”

Through the tale, Harry had gone silent, staring at his plate. Hermione rubbed his back.

“I don’t…It’s been so long since then…”

“It’s okay to mourn someone you loved even if you don’t remember them,” Remus said. “You were so excited to be a big brother, too. It doesn’t surprise me at all that you’re upset by this.”

“So…no one…no one knows about her?”
“We know about her,” Remus corrected. “Sirius knows about her.”

“Did Peter Pettigrew?” Harry asked, looking up. His eyes were glossy behind his glasses.

“Yes,” Severus said. “He did know about Faline.”

“And he still…”

“Even if your mother wasn’t pregnant, it was horrible what he did to your family, Harry,” Remus said. “He wasn’t always a coward. Once, Peter was a good friend. I don’t know what happened to make him decide to betray your parents and let Voldemort close to you.”

“What’s most important is that Pettigrew can’t hurt anyone else ever again.”

“And Voldemort’s still weak,” Hermione added. “Even if he wants to go after you, he can’t do it alone.”

“What do you mean?” Remus asked, frowning. “Voldemort is dead.”

“Well, he’s *near* death,” Harry said. “He possessed our first defense teacher the whole school year. Actually, we thought it was Professor Snape who was helping Voldemort.”

Severus scoffed. “Well, I certainly was a follower,” he pulled his sleeve up to show the faded tattoo. “But not in the typical sense. I had joined as a spy for the Headmaster. At that time, I was a secret member of a resistance group he had formed. I became a Death Eater and from there gained Voldemort’s trust in order to gather information and give it to Dumbledore. Only those that the Dark Lord truly trusted had this tattoo. Getting it meant I was better at being a double agent than I thought.”

“Whoa,” Harry said. “It looks cool. If not for being Voldemort’s symbol, that is.”

Severus stared at it, brow furrowed. “You know, you’re right.” Remus smacked his shoulder, successfully lightening the mood. Severus turned to him. “Well, it is. If it was a regular tattoo, you’d probably not care.”

“Probably even think it hot,” Harry added, grinning. Hermione giggled, hiding behind her hand. Remus shook his head. “I mean, Professor Lupin, you’re dating a wizard equivalent of James Bond. That alone has to count for something.”

“Yes, it does,” Remus said, frowning. “My weight in stress.”

“Aw, he worries about you, Professor,” Harry teased. Hermione giggled harder, skin bright pink behind her hands. Severus took Remus’ hand and kissed the knuckles.

“Harry, your uncles are too cute!” Hermione said. Harry stuck a finger in his mouth, faking ill. Hermione slapped his arm.

“You’d be sick of it too if you were me! It’s weird seeing them this affectionate. I mean, sure we’re not at school or anything, but…I never understood Ron’s discomfort with his parents showing affection till I moved in with Snape and Lupin. Don’t get me wrong, it’s awesome being able to not worry about what I do or getting yelled at randomly for something I’d no control over…”

“In other words, you have parents now and you adjusted just fine to having them,” Hermione said, grinning. Remus and Severus exchanged a glance.
“Except Sirius is still working on getting the wizengamot to accept that he’s mentally stable enough to raise me,” Harry pointed out. “I don’t really understand what the problem is. Seems everything is set to me. He’s been cleared to work. He works at the Ministry under Mr. Weasley. He’s gotten a place of his own. What more do they want?”

“Maybe to make sure that he can watch you? Or perhaps there’s someone contesting him for the right to raise you,” Hermione said.

“But it’s in my parents’ will that it’s supposed to be Sirius.”

Remus hummed. “There could be a number of possibilities behind the delay. It could be that there are people trying to prove they’d be better guardians or it could be that he’s still struggling with his own mental illnesses. No one is surprised that Azkaban would have messed with his mind and it isn’t a far stretch that some might wonder if it compromises his ability to be a good guardian for you.”

“Add to that how high maintenance a world famous teenager is,” Severus said. “And it could cause him unneeded stress. Not for any reason you cause, Kid.”

“Paparazzi,” Harry muttered darkly.

“Exactly right,” Severus added just as darkly.

The last time they’d gone to Diagon Alley, a Daily Prophet reporter and photographer nearly injured Remus outside Madam Malkins, pushing the camera in Harry’s face and asking intrusive questions. Severus had punched the overzealous photographer and Remus hexed the reporter’s lips shut and stood guard outside the shop so Harry could get his school uniform and robes adjusted in peace while keeping curious onlookers and anyone wanting a moment alone with Harry at bay.

The first few days had showed Severus that Harry hated his fame, happiest when he was out of the limelight. The more he saw how much like his mother he really was, the easier it became to see Harry as Lily’s son rather than James. Sure there was always going to be a bit of James Potter in Harry, but it was mostly physical from the genetics to his athleticism in Quidditch.

It also helped him to remember that neither of his parents really had talent in potions. Lily only got into the slug club because Severus helped her with her potions. Him? Well…

He might have caused far too many explosions in Slughorn’s class with his experimenting from the beginning. Not that Slughorn was particularly scary when he yelled at Severus for experimenting. He didn’t really see the problem with it till he himself was a teacher.

“Maybe I shouldn’t have stolen Slughorns ingredients,” he mumbled aloud. Remus laughed and the two teenagers stared at him.

“You stole potions ingredients?!” Hermione asked.

“Now we don’t have to feel bad for stealing from him two years ago, right?”

“Harry!”

“I knew it!”

“We were convinced that Draco Malfoy was the heir of Slytherin,” Harry said. Hermione banged her head gently against the table.
“Knew it,” Severus snapped. “Granted I am impressed that you two and Weasley attempted to brew the Polyjuice Potion—”

“Succeeded,” Hermione snapped. “Except I didn’t have the right hairs and spent the rest of winter break in the hospital wing for it…Harry and Ron were okay.”

“Because we actually got the hairs straight from the source rather than off their robes.”

“Dare I ask what happened?” Remus said tentatively.

“Hermione turned into a half cat, half human. Just cat hair all over, pointy cat ears and whiskers and yellow eyes and a tail…”

“Okay, Harry, you can shut up now,” Hermione warned, voice dripping dangerous sweetness.

“Better a cat than a smurf,” Severus said. He shuddered at the memory of his skin turning blue for nearly a month. “That was the highlight of my second year.”

“I remember that,” Remus laughed. “It took the nurse three weeks to fix it!” Severus glowered at Remus, who cleared his throat and grinned. “I love you? Or will that not work this time…I’ll shut up.”

“Yeah, you have dads,” Hermione said.

“Well if Sirius loses, at least I’ve at least a decent home at last,” Harry agreed. “Nothing could be worse than staying with the Dursleys.”

“Are you sure?”

“Nothing that comes to mind,” Harry said, shrugging. “I mean, I’m sure there are worse things than going back, but I’d rather not think on that.” He stood. “Thanks for lunch, Professor Snape.” Hermione parroted him and the two went back outside. Once they were back outside, Severus turned to Remus.

“Still don’t know how to break it to them?”

“A part of me wants to leave it a surprise,” Remus said.


“History isn’t as bad for me and I don’t have to worry as much about getting sick.”

“And you nearly broke the curse.”

“I did break it. Just because I’m not going to teach defense anymore doesn’t mean I didn’t. I made it through the year with no incidents, so I consider it well and broken. Besides,” Remus grinned. “Who better to teach defense against the dark arts than a former auror?” Severus hummed.

“Well, I suppose we’ll know at the end of the year if it has been broken, but then we’ll never know if it was you or Moody who broke the curse.”

“Oh, we’ll leave that to opinion,” Remus said. “It doesn’t matter to me if it’s broken or not. Also, it’s nice of Albus to accommodate us.”

He’d sent them a map of their new quarters. It was larger, set for two. Their offices were still in the
same area as the classrooms with Severus needing only to go downstairs to his class and Remus up.

Said new quarters were a sub-level between floors.

“If nothing else, we’ll have a proper history teacher,” Severus muttered. Remus kissed his cheek and Severus pulled him back into a proper kiss. “Excited for tonight?”

“Very.”

“Good—”

“HARRY POTTER, DON’T YOU DARE!!!” Hermione shrieked as they ran back inside. “I’M NOT RIDING IT NO MATTER HOW BADLY YOU WANT ME TO!!!”

Severus shook his head.

“Without context, that could lead to a very awkward conversation,” Remus said.

“Only you, Remus,” Severus sighed. “Only you.”

A shrill scream split their ear drums as Harry and Hermione raced back on the firebolt.

“NOT IN THE HOUSE!!!” Severus shouted just as the teens flew outside. He strode after them, demanding them to get back to earth and take their scolding like adults.

Remus just watched from the comfort of the kitchen, wondering if he and Severus really could be parents for Harry if Sirius wasn’t able to get custody.

*Maybe we could.*

Severus checked the knots holding Remus in place. “Not too tight?”

Remus shook his head. “No.”

Severus ghosted his fingers over Remus’ bare skin, clean and warm from the thorough shower. Beneath him on the bed was a clean sheet, their usual bedspread set aside for now. Remus shifted when Severus’ fingers flitted over the joint where leg met pelvis, sending a tiny jolt of pleasure to his cock. Severus ignored it, moving over Remus’ stomach and chest, pausing to circle the soft nipple for a moment before moving further to his chin. Severus pinched it gently and kissed him.

“Still want this?”

“Yes.”

Another tender kiss was shared, then Severus pulled away to grab a bottle of chocolate sauce. He popped the cap and chose different areas to tease, drizzling chocolate where he pleased and then licking it off immediately before adding a little more to a place he desired. Remus closed his eyes, focusing on breathing and feeling, occasionally sighing at a particularly nice lick. It wasn’t exactly what he expected, but it was *so fucking good…*

He sensed a tang of mint and slickness over his cock and balls. “Sev?”

“Flavored lube,” Severus purred, kissing the tip. Remus gasped and tried to buck, but he was too securely tied to the bed, only able to thrust a tiny bit. Severus bit his inner thigh, bringing another
gasp to the surface before kissing the sting, nibbling...sucking...

Then Severus moved on, mixing the lube with the sauce near the middle of Remus’ thigh just below where he’d been bitten. Lower down his calf...

Then his ankle...

Severus moved to the other ankle and continued on up the other leg. Remus moaned when a drop of chocolate hit his hip, then removed quickly by Severus’ tongue which lingered a moment, dipping close to joint of his inner thigh before moving on up Remus’ body—

The navel...

The sternum...

His nipples, particularly, licked and nibbled and pinched...

The gentle press against the suprasternal notch...

A subtle bite along his Adam’s apple...

A lick to his chin...

A kiss to his nose...

“Severus...”

“You’re doing so good, Pet.” He pressed two fingers covered in chocolate against Remus’ lips. Remus sucked them in and delighting in the mild mint nearly overpowered by chocolate and the salty tang of Severus’ skin. Once clean, Severus’ pulled his fingers away from Remus’ mouth and loosened the ropes holding Remus prone.

“Scoot down, Pet,” Severus instructed. Remus obeyed till his heels were against his thighs. Severus secured the rope to the posts again. “Not too bad?”

“No.”

“Good.”

He straddled Remus waist and stroked. Remus licked his lips as he watched Severus bring himself to completion. As Severus neared, he adjusted his position, one hand pressed to Remus’ shoulder and the fingers dug in, bruising...semen spurted in ropes over Remus’ chest and neck. Severus scraped his seed off Remus and fed it to him. Some minutes passed before Severus climbed off him and retrieved his wand. With a flick, the ropes slid off.

“On the floor,” Severus commanded. Remus got on his knees in front of Severus and placed his hands behind his back. He bit his lip, meeting Severus eyes just before the back of Severus’ hand collided with his cheek, snapping his head to the side.

Remus looked at Severus again. He was slapped again, shuddering. Severus grabbed his hair, pressing the end of a flog against his lips. Remus kissed the end and the grip against his hair lessened to a caress.

“Hands behind your head, Pet,” Severus commanded. Remus moved his hands to the back of his head, back as straight as he could keep it. The whip’s tails trailed over his back and he eased himself to feel and breathe...to relax.
Then came the first lash. Following was another gentle touch over his back and shoulders. When they pulled away he exaled, ready for the sting. The pain deliciously spread through him, arousing him.

“Lie down on the floor,” Severus said. “Show me your ass, Pet.” Remus did so, head between his biceps and legs spread. The scent of mint chocolate lube filled the air again as his balls and slick fingers moved over his perineum...then back down. “You like this?”

“Yes, Master.”

Severus hummed, flicking Remus’ hole. Remus moved away, startled by the sting. Severus pulled his hips back and slapped the flesh till Remus felt he could come from the burn alone. He moaned when Severus stopped and presented one of the plugs to him. Remus kissed it and let it be fit into him. A tap from Severus’ wand sent it into a frenzying torture against Remus’ prostate. Severus then grabbed the flog again, dragging the leather over Remus’ sore ass and untouched thighs.

“Yes!” Remus hissed. “yesyesyesyesyesye—”

He arched into the sting, willing himself not to touch himself or to even move as pain and pleasure mingled. His skin felt hot and numb and for a moment, he thought he felt a bit of the flog’s straps against his perineum and balls—

It bit.

It hurt.

Too much.

He said their safeword.

Again here was too much.

He screamed the word.

Still, he was ignored.

Remus shook, trying to rid the memory. It’d been years since he thought of him. He thought he’d overcome that!

“Look at the mess you’ve made,” Severus said. “You’ve come on the carpet, Pet.” He grabbed Remus’ neck and pulled him back, pushing his nose into the drenched carpet. “Is that something you’re supposed to do?”

“No,” Remus said.

“No,” Severus agreed. “I’ll forgive it this time as it seems we’ve discovered a new part you like to have hurt.” Remus swallowed as Severus massaged his scrotum before squeezing. Remus whimpered, starting to hyperventilate.

“Remus?” There was a note of concern.

“I...” Remus blinked, trying to hold back the tears.

“Moonlight,” Severus said, releasing him immediately and gently caressing Remus’ face in both hands. “Remus? Baby, are you okay?”
Remus shook, trying to answer.


Remus nuzzled against Severus’ neck, still hyperventilating.

Severus twisted about to grab his wand and summon a throw blanket, wrapping Remus in it as tightly as he could. “I’d not hurt you more than you want me to,” he whispered assuringly. “I’m sorry, pet.”

Remus gasped and started to weep.

Severus embraced him, petting his hair. “Oh, baby, I’m sorry. I love you, Remus. You know that, don’t you?” Remus nodded. “Tell what happened, Sweetie.”

“I don’t…I don’t…”

“Let’s backtrack then, okay?”

Remus nodded.

“Was it when I grabbed your scrotum just a moment ago?”

Remus shook his head.

“Before?”

He nodded.

“When I pushed your face to the carpet?”

Remus thought on it. It was sooner than that…he shook his head.

“Okay…the flog did get between your legs. Was it that?”

Remus swallowed and nodded.

“I see. I’m sorry, baby,” Severus waved his wand again and the bed began to fix itself. “Would you like to take a bath?” Remus nodded. “Okay. You want me to stay while the bath fills or are you okay with me going to draw one for you?”

“You can…”

“Okay. I’ll be back in a minute.” He kissed Remus’ forehead and left to draw the bath.
Once the water began to pour, Severus slammed his fist against the wall, cursing himself for not paying more attention to Remus’ needs. Checking the temperature and confident it was the perfect, he turned the faucet off and with a wave of his wand, he fixed the hole in the wall and healed his hand before retrieving Remus.

He was curled, shaking by the bed, and it broke Severus’ heart to see him so. He sat beside him and tucked a strand of hair out of his face. Remus gasped, looking at him. Severus’ throat thickened and he forced a smile.

“The bath’s ready, sweetie. Can you walk or do you want me to carry you?”

Remus wrapped his arms around Severus’ neck, allowing him to pick him up and carry him to the bathroom. Severus set him in and moved behind him, holding Remus secure in his arms just not wanting to let go of him.

“It’s okay, baby,” Severus whispered in his ear. “It’s okay. You can tell me anything. You know that right, Remus? You know you can talk to me about anything.”

“It was…I…”

“It’s okay.”

“It was just so long ago, I didn’t…”

“Someone hurt you?”

Remus nodded.

Severus gave him a little squeeze. “You don’t have to tell me now. Okay? It can wait till you’re calmer.”

“I’m sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry, Remus. Don’t ever be sorry for remembering what you’d rather forget. I have memories I’d rather forget, too.”

“You’re not mad at me for not telling you sooner?”

“No, baby,” Severus said. “I could never be mad at you for wanting to keep some things buried. I trust you’ll tell me when you’re ready to. We’ll go through the contract again later, though, so we can be extra sure we’ve got everything covered. Okay?” Remus nodded and Severus kissed his temple. “I love you so much, Remus.”

Remus exhaled and wept again. “It shouldn’t bother me anymore. It was ages ago.”

Severus hushed him, furious at whoever had hurt Remus so badly to bring him to such a state. “You know how my father was,” Severus said. “There’s so much about that bastard that I’m still coming to terms with, Remus. Don’t ever think you don’t have the right to keep secrets. I trust you to come to me in your own time. I want you to know I love you, baby. And it breaks my heart to see you like this. You’re so strong, Remus. You know that, right?”

Remus nodded. “I love you, too, Severus. I know you didn’t mean to…I just…I don’t…”
Severus hushed him again.

“It was so long…”

“It doesn’t matter how long ago it was, pet. Trauma is trauma. And it can stay with a person for decades. There is nothing wrong with you. You’re not damaged. You’re strong, Remus. You’re so strong, it amazes me sometimes. You’re a good man and a brilliant wizard and an even better teacher. Don’t ever think I’d think less of you for needing to stop. Don’t ever think it changes the way I think of you. I want to see you cry and I want to be the one to wipe your tears away. I want to be the one who is there for you when you’re overwhelmed or afraid. I want to be there for you when you celebrate your triumphs and share in your happiness. If you wish it, I want to be with you for as long as you’ll have me.”

“I don’t want to hurt you again.”

“Oh, baby, we know what happened and I’ve forgiven you. You’re not going to hurt me. I’m not going anywhere and we’re not students anymore. God help me, if I knew then what I know now, I would have punched Black in the mouth for even *looking* at you, let alone kissing you.”

Remus managed a little chuckle.

Severus squeezed him gently. “You’re mine, Remus, and I am yours.” He kissed Remus’ shoulder and hid his face against his neck. “I won’t let anyone hurt you ever again, Remus. Even when that person is me. I don’t want to be that kind of Dom. I never have been and I am not going to start.”

“I know. I love you, Severus.”

“Is he still in contact with you?”

Remus shook his head. “He died the full moon after. It was before the potion was created and I… you know that a werewolf doesn’t have control those nights.”

“Good,” Severus said. “For doing what he did to you, he deserved death.”

“It wasn’t good,” Remus corrected. “I was so scared after that night. I’m still scared of the moon, Severus. I’ve been scared of it since I nearly killed you. It scares me so much.”

“You don’t have to be afraid of the moon anymore. You’re not going to lose your mind and let the wolf take over as long as I am here to ensure it. You don’t have to be afraid during the summer either, Remus. Okay?”

Remus nodded, swallowing. “Sev?”

“Yes?”

“Will you kiss me properly?”

Severus cupped Remus’ damp cheek and pressed their lips together, sucking Remus’ bottom lip and licking away the tear stains. Remus whimpered, breathing raggedly. He shifted to face Severus, allowing the kiss to deepen.

“I forgot about the plug,” Severus said.

“I took it out while you were drawing the bath,” Remus said.

Severus hummed and kissed Remus again, wanting to do something that would make him feel better
but unsure what or how. For now, he’d let Remus take the lead, going only as far as he wanted and not a centimeter further than what he was comfortable with.

Whatever made him happy.

“Can we have waffles for breakfast?” Remus asked.

Severus smiled. “As much as you like.”

They arrived at the Weasleys before the children were awake to help Molly with the preparations. Severus aided her in the kitchen as Remus helped Bill and Charlie outside with the table. Sirius aided them for as long as he dared till he and Arthur left for work, bidding the rest of them good day.

“So,” Bill said. “You and Severus going to tell us what Dad and Perce won’t?”

Remus arched a brow. “You know about this year’s event?”

“Only a little bit. They won’ fess up the dirt,” Charlie said. “It’s not like Bill and I are students anymore.”

“Well…”

“Please?” The eldest Weasley brothers asked, grinning.

“I think not. You’ll tell your brothers,” Remus said.

“But you know,” Charlie said.

“Of course I know,” Remus said. “I’m a teacher. Unfortunately for you, I’ll keep mum about it. But I wish you both best of luck prying it out of Severus.” They groaned. There was no way on earth, heaven, or hell that Severus would spoil the surprise even if he wanted to. He snorted. “To be fair, I only know about as much as your dad would. Other details aren’t going to be revealed till term starts.”

“Bill! Charlie! Go wake your brothers and sister! And NO spraying anyone in the face with water!” Molly shouted. Charlie snorted.

“Spoil my fun, why don’t you, Mum?” He yelped at the slap she landed the back of his head. “We’re going! Yikes!”

“Not like we’re going to turn any teddies into acromantulas,” Bill mumbled. Molly glowered at their retreating backs.

“I hoped adulthood would have stopped them from mocking Ron’s phobia,” she growled. Remus hummed. A teddy turned into a giant spider would spark quite the fear for anyone.

“I’m sure they don’t mean to be cruel,” Remus said.

“Oh, they don’t,” she sighed. “But that’s beside the point.” She handed him a platter of bacon and his mouth watered. “Take that to the table, Remus dear and not a bite before everyone else joins us.”

He slumped his shoulders and took the platter out. Severus had already laid out a bowl of fruit, waffles, pancakes, eggs, toast, jam…
“Quite the feast,” Remus said, adding the bacon to the spread. Severus absconded a piece of bacon from the platter. “You’re going to get me in trouble with Molly!”

“I doubt it. That witch knows things.”

“So you risk your own life for a bacon strip?”

“If it costs my life, may it be so. That is good bacon.” Remus glared at him.

“You know what? Fuck it.” He grabbed a strip of bacon and ripped it with his teeth. “Oh Merlin, that’s better than what they serve at school.”

“I know, right. I’m just as good as she is, and my bacon never turns out this good. They always turn out a little too crispy or not crispy enough.”

“We should get away from it.”

“Yeah. But one more piece.”

“Agreed.”

“SNAPE!!! LUPIN!!! GET YOUR HANDS AWAY FROM THE BACON OR SO HELP ME MERLIN!!!” Molly screeched. Behind her, the Weasley gaggle, Harry, and Hermione laughed. Remus pushed Severus in front of him to use as a human shield.

“Hilarious, pet.”

“You took a piece first,” Remus snapped. “So you get yelled at first. Besides, Molly scares me.”

“Molly scares everyone. Why do I have to take the brunt of her wrath—Good morning again, Madam Weasley. You look quite lovely this day.”

“Don’t sweet talk me Severus Snape,” she snarled. “This food is for everyone.”

“It was just one strip. There’s still plenty to go around. I don’t see why you’re getting your knickers in a bunch.” He and Remus backed away as she brandished her wand at them. “My apologies. It’ll never happen again. Right, Remus?”

Remus nodded.

“It better not,” she snarled before turning to the children. “Come have breakfast, everyone! And happy birthday, Harry dear.”

“Frightening how she goes from screaming at us to sweet as pie in under a second,” Remus said. Severus hummed his agreement. They sat as far from her as they could get only to be sandwiched by the twins.

“Don’t worry,” the one to Remus’ right said.

“Mum isn’t as scary as she likes to make herself out to be,” the one to Severus’ left added.

“Speak for yourselves,” Remus said. “She raised you two.”

“Which, if you think about it, is actually quite terrifying.” Severus said.

The twins grinned. “Professor Lupin, whatever you’re doing.”
“Keep doing it.”

“Oh, leave them alone,” Hermione snapped.

“You agree,” they chorused.

She glared at them. “Yes, but that’s not the point.”

*Care to silence some students?* Remus thought. Severus took his hand.

“*Gladly.*” He kissed Remus gently. A simple peck, but the table had silenced briefly.

“See what I mean? They’re as sickeningly sweet as your own parents,” Harry said, nudging Ron, who had averted his gaze, flushed. Hermione and Ginny had burst into giggles. The twins and their elder brothers were humming a serenade.

“That did not shut them up,” Remus mumbled.

“It did a little bit,” Severus said.

“Just a little.”

“Ah, young love,” Molly said.

“Young?” Bill repeated.

“They’re in their thirties. They’re still young,” Molly snapped, tugging on his unfanged ear, making him wince. He pulled out of her grip, rubbing the offended ear.

“*Mum,*” he hissed.

“I could have pulled the other ear,” she said, successfully silencing him. “Now, Bill, dear, about your hair.”

“No!” he snapped, jumping out of his chair and pushing Ginny out of her chair to sit beside Molly instead. “You are not going anywhere near my hair. Ginny, tell her.”

“I would but I still have to live with her,” Ginny reminded him. “I’m not risking my own peace just so you can keep your ponytail.”

“You’re supposed to be on my side!”

Severus arched a brow. “If nothing this is entertaining.”

Remus hummed and gathered Severus’ hair, pulling it back. “You should wear a ponytail, too, love.”

“No.”

“I’ve a spare tie,” Hermione said, pulling a ring out and handing it to Remus.

“Remus, no.”

“Too late,” Remus said, securing the locks in the center of the occipital near the base of Severus’ skull. “Looks hot,” he whispered in Severus’ ear. “Thank you, Hermione.”

“You’re welcome, Professor Lupin.”
“If I could take points away for this, I would. As it is, you’re lucky that it’s still summer,” Severus snarled. Remus kissed his cheek.

“I love you.”

The girls giggled again.

“Okay, yeah, they’re cute,” Charlie said. He shook his head. “I never thought I’d say that about Snape.”

“Never thought that’d be said about Lupin,” Ginny said.

“This is going to be a long day,” Severus thought. Remus squeezed his knee.

It could be worse, he thought. Sirius could be here. Imagine what trouble that would cause.

“Point taken.”

#  

“Why didn’t my Boggart become a broomstick?” Hermione asked, clutching for dear life to Harry’s firebolt and eyes shut tight.

Remus snorted.

“Relax, Mione,” Ron said flying beside her, “you’re barely off the ground.”

“You’re doing fine, Mione,” Harry added, taking the hilt in both hands. “Just breathe.”

“Ooh, I hate heights.”

“Hermione, you’re not even in the air all that much. You’re just hovering over the grass.”

“At last! Something we’re better at than her!” Ron cackled. Harry rolled his eyes.

“Mature, Ron. Very mature. Hermione, we’re not going to let anything happen to you, okay? Open your eyes.”

“No.”

“It’s not like you’ve not flown before.”

“You coerced me,” she snapped. “And we got yelled at because you thought it okay to fly around indoors.”

“Yes, yes, I know, I’m an idiot. But that’s been established already.”

“Then there was Buckbeak.”

“Hermione, that wasn’t even anything close to flying on a broom.”

“You’re right. I prefer the hippogriff.”

“Hippogriff’s aren’t horses. You can’t steer them. A broom is like a bike. I’ll ride with you like before. Just one more time and then try it yourself. All on your own.”

Hermione opened her eyes, glaring at Harry. “If I fall, Potter, I’ll hex your snitches off.” Harry and
Ron winced and Remus shuddered, crossing his legs.

“Well, then you’ll just have to trust I won’t let you. Neither will Ron.”

“I’m not putting my snitches on the line. If she falls, you’re on your own, Potter.”

“Fine. Geez. Be that way, Weasley,” Harry snapped back. “Okay Hermione just put your feet on the ground. There you go. Hold it steady.” He climbed on behind her, arms around her waist as he gripped the handle. “Ready?”

“If you kick off like last time…”

“Fine, fine, slowly.” He pushed off the ground, easing them higher into the air. “See? It’s not so bad.” After that, any other words spoken were lost to Remus as they rose higher.

“I still think Potter and Malfoy,” Severus said.

“No, it’s obvious that Harry and Hermione are meant to be.”

“Nah. She’s going to get with a Weasley. Only question is which one. My bet’s on the youngest son.”

“They’re at each other’s throats! Opposites may attract, but never lasts. She gets along better with Harry than she does Ron.”

“You know that winter thing that this year’s thing is going to have?”

“Yes.”

“I’ll bet she’ll go with one of the Weasley siblings.”

“Fine. I’ll match that bet and say she goes with Harry to the winter thing.”

“You’re on,” Severus said, smirking.

“And what exactly are we betting?”

“Not sure yet, but we’ve five months to figure that out.”

The four youngest Weasleys cheered as Hermione landed with ease. Harry swung his leg over, getting off and helped her. “See? Like riding a bike.”

“This is nothing like a bike, Harry Potter,” she snapped.

“Yeah, Harry and Hermione,” Remus decided. Severus scoffed.

“We’ll see, Lupin. We’ll see. Ah, Black! Just in time!”

“Sirius, help!” Remus laughed. “We’re betting on students love lives!”

“Pfft,” Sirius said, pulling Harry into a headlock. “Dare I ask?”

“Not with him around,” Severus said.

Sirius rolled his eyes and pushed Harry back over to the Weasleys. Harry ran back over to them, trying to push Hermione to try flying on her own.
“So far, I’m for Granger getting with a Weasley—only Merlin knows which one—and Remus is adamant that she’s a good fit for your godson, who’s most likely going to realize he’s got Draco Malfoy around his finger and vice versa.”

“Again, Severus: opposites don’t last!”

“Harry’s gonna get with someone who’s gonna keep him on his toes. Could be a Weasley. Could be Hermione. Could be the Malfoy kid. But I bet it’ll be someone no one expects. Same with Ron and Hermione,” he said. Sirius squeezed Remus’ shoulder. “But if you’re thinking anyone is going to get paired off before the winter ball this year, I’d doubt it. Think long term, mates. Long term. Oh, by the way, we’ve got excellent seats to the Cup!”

He placed a green top hat on Remus’ head and laughed.

“I know you spent your twenties in Azkaban, Sirius, but…”

“No, no, keep it on, Remus,” Severus said, grinning. “I’ve still the pony tail in. Just wear the hat for a bit.” Remus glared at him, looking a little more like an angry husky than an irate werewolf.

Severus laughed, earning a shove.

~August 1972~

“No,” Lily said. “Brooms are for sweeping, Sev.”

“Not just,” He corrected, floating just a few inches over Lily’s head. “It’s perfectly safe.”

“I’m not flying on a broomstick,” she said, crossing her arms. “And you can’t make me.”

“It’s not that hard. Flying’s easy and its fun. Quidditch is just as fun.”

“I’ve seen the games, Sev. I’ve no idea why you even want to try out. You could hurt yourself.”

“So? Everyone gets hurt in quidditch. No one dies. At least, not at the school.”

“Not helping, Severus.”

Severus gasped, jumping off the broom, which clattered to the ground. Lily turned around and backed over to stand beside him as Tobias Snape approached.

“What,” Tobias growled. “Are you doing?”

“We were just flying, Dad,” Severus said, voice shaking. “Or well, I was trying to convince Lily to give it a try. No one saw us, Sir.”

“We were being careful, Mr. Snape,” Lily squeaked, holding Severus’ arm tightly. Tobias sneered at them, his eyes lingering on Lily a little more than Severus would have liked.

He scoffed. “Severus, we’re going home.”

“I was going to stay over at—”

Tobias grabbed his shoulder, digging his fingers into the flesh and bone. Severus fought not to wince despite the obvious pain.

“I have to go, Lily,” he said. “See you tomorrow?”
Lily nodded, unable to say more than that before Severus was dragged back to Spinner’s End.

~August 1994~

Harry stumbled down the stairs glasses lopsided and shirt on inside out. Ron was in a similar state. Severus couldn’t say he blamed them. There’d been some days even now that it took a while to wake up. He waited to see if the boys would realize their disarray.

Ron banged into the corner of a table, cursing.

“Tried coffee yet?” Severus asked.

“Gimme a cup,” Ron groused, rubbing his injured thigh. Severus snorted and grabbed a cup for the both. “Harry, your glasses are gonna fall.”

“Shudup.”

“And you’re shirt’s inside out.”

“Fuck off, Weasley,” Harry muttered. “It’s too early for this shit.”

He put the mugs in front of them. “Drink,” he ordered. They sipped at first and the disgust on their faces revealed how amateur they truly were. “Helps to just drink and not stop if you’ve not had coffee before.”

“We have, just not black or so strong,” Harry said as Ron just grimaced through it. “At least it’s not as bad as polyjuice.”

“Nothing could taste as bad as polyjuice,” Ron said. Harry finished his mug and set it down, sticking his tongue out. “Wait, does Snape know?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Yell at Hermione later,” Harry said.

“Damn it Hermione,” Ron muttered. “I need something to wash this friggin taste out.”

“Right behind you.”

Severus snorted just as Remus approached, pouring himself his own cup of coffee, looking perhaps as ragged as the boys.

“What’s so funny?” he asked, fixing his mug to his liking—with lots of cream and sugar—before taking a sip of coffee.

“Devirginizing non-coffee drinkers.”

Remus glanced at Harry and Ron. “You gave it to them black, didn’t you?”

“They’ll thank me later.”

“Honey, I love you but I will punch you if you do that to me,” Remus muttered. “Give me sugar or give me death.”

“Your sweet tooth worries me, Pet.”
“You’re lack of one worries…and you’re smirking. Right,” Remus glared at Severus around the rim of his mug. Harry approached the table, pouting.

“No one else is up.”

“Everyone else is awake,” Severus corrected. “Except you two are sluggish this morning.”

“You try waking up at the crack of dawn after staying up till midnight,” Ron muttered.

“All right everyone,” Arthur shouted, sounding far too chipper for Harry and Ron. “To the living room for a headcount!” The boys groaned and Remus herded them to the living room.
“Amos!” Arthur called, waving at the duo at the top of the hill.

“Arthur! About time! Ced and I were about to head on out without your group,” Amos said, shaking his hand. “Sirius, good to see you again.” He shook Sirius’s hand next, but if no one noticed the drip of subtle animosity between them, they were either blind or deaf or both.

“Same, Amos.”

Amos waved at the teen by his side. “My son, Cedric. Did you know he bested your godson at Quidditch last year?”

Cedric winced. “Dad, I told you it was fluke.”

“Sure, it was.”

Cedric sighed and gave Harry an apologetic smile. Harry responded with a shrug. Fluke or no, the win was legitimate.

Sirius chuckled. “We’ll have to see if we can gather enough for a little rematch before the big game begins. Can’t say it’s not a fluke when you’ve no dementors to worry about, right, Amos?”

“Sirius!” Harry hissed, turning red. Ron patted his shoulder.

“Pack it away, lads. We’ll figure that out later,” Arthur said. “We’ve a port key to catch as it is.”

“And I thought we were aggressive,” Fred said. Cedric shrugged.

“I wouldn’t mind playing if you are,” he said. “In good sport, that is.”

“Same,” Harry agreed.

They gathered around a ratted old boot and found a part to touch. Once everyone had at least a finger on it, they felt a tight pull behind their navel, thrusting them into the air. A minute later, one by one, they let go, falling back to the ground.

Most of the younger group fell on their rump. Of those used to portkeys, Sirius was the only one who joined them in the fall, groaning and cursing.

Remus helped him up. “You okay, mate?”

“Peachy,” Sirius muttered, dusting his trousers off. “I don’t recall them being that nasty.”

“No harm in being out of practice,” Severus said, fixing his backpack. “You’ll catch up in time, I’m sure.”

“Why do I feel like you’re insulting me?”

“Only you would take a factual statement as an insult,” Severus snapped back.
Remus stepped between them. “Breathe, lads, no reason to get into a fit over nothing. We’re all here to have fun, after all. Come on,” he linked an arm around Severus’ and pulled him toward the camp. “At least try to be cordial with him.”

“I am trying. It is not my fault he makes it so bloody difficult!”

They approached a campsite manager—a muggle, it seemed—and paid him. The man was a bit suspicious at first, but the appearance of a ministry official, who cast a mild confundus charm, helped ease his mind and allowed them to go to their camp site.

“Could be worse,” Remus said.

“Could be better,” Severus corrected. “Some of these wizards are anti-muggle. And others—”

“Don’t you dare say a word to anyone about it,” Remus hissed. “We’re all here to see the game. That there could be D.E.s here doesn’t necessarily mean anything. Not at this point. Wait on it a bit.”

“And if they do something they shouldn’t? What then?”

Remus hushed him, waving the others on. “Then we will handle it with those who are against them.”

“They’ll want me to help them if they do.”

“You won’t,” Remus said. “I know you won’t. He is not coming back so if they do anything, it is at their own risk. You are the best spell caster and duelist I know. If anyone can stop them it’s us.”

“Professor Snape!”

They turned to see Draco Malfoy and his father. Draco waved them—well, Severus—over.

“Oh great,” Remus muttered, meeting glare for glare from Lucius Malfoy. “Keep your guard up.”

“Always, Pet.” Severus kissed him. “I’ll meet you over at the Weasleys’ camp.” With that, they split ways and Severus approached the Malfoys.

“I was unaware that a teacher could afford to come to the last game of the season,” Lucius said. “Especially when there’s other things to take care of.”

Severus ignored the jibe that was quite obviously directed at Remus. “We’re guests of some other students and their family,” he said. “No point in not enjoying ourselves while we can.”

“I agree,” Lucius added. “Some of our old school mates will be getting together after the game to celebrate, Severus. You’re welcome to join us if you like.”

Severus hummed. ‘I’ll think about it,” he said, gently prying into Lucius’ mind, trying to get a read on what he might mean.

If it was a regular...after party, then no reason to worry. But the flash of the muggle grounds keeper met him instead. “As long as it won’t interfere with the others right to enjoy the outcome of the game.”

The twitch at the corner of Lucius’ mouth was a little worrying, but it wasn’t as though many Death Eaters knew Severus was an Occlumens. He doubted Lucius knew that he was, but why risk it?

“Of course not,” Lucius said. “Enjoy the game, Severus. You know where to find us if you change your mind.”
Severus nodded and walked away. Once far enough, he sent a patronus to the nearest ministry official, voice disguised, to the possibility of an attack. He hoped whoever got the message would be wise enough to at least look into the possibility of an attack on the muggle—and perhaps even the rest of the attendees.

#

The official Quidditch game would not be for another two days leaving plenty of time to gather two makeshift teams for a “rematch” as Amos Diggory and Sirius had taken to calling it.

It wasn’t much of a game, to be fair, as the majority of the players ended up being little children wanting to play, so instead it became a game of “who makes the best little quidditch league coach?” Severus tried to fight down the swell of pride as Harry helped a weeping girl off his firebolt for going too fast for her liking and picked a daisy for her. She perked up at that and went to show her parents.

“Remus told me he knows about Faline,” Sirius said.

Severus nodded.

“Have to wonder, don’t you, whenever he passes a little girl if he just thinks about her.”

“She’d have been…gosh.”

“Twelve,” Severus said.

Remus glanced at him briefly, leaning against his arm as Severus thought about what to say next.

“Given when she was conceived, she’d have been born May or June of ‘82.”

Sirius stared at him, arching a brow. Severus scoffed.

“I was going to be her godfather, remember? I may have gotten a little excited around that time and did a little dousing to figure out a little bit.”

“You’re not a diviner.”

“No, but I was decent at dousing. I could figure out a couple things. Possible birth month, eye and hair color, favorite animal and the like, but ask me to tell you about what she’d have been like…I just wanted to figure out what to get her on her birthday when it came.”

“And?”

“It’s a unicorn plush doll. I buried it with Lily. For all that work, I wish it had just told me something useful. Perhaps none of what happened would have happened.”

“You did what you could on your end,” Sirius said. “I never should have trusted Peter. If I hadn’t, well, maybe she’d be here, too.”

The silence was thick save for the laughter of children playing quidditch or taking a turn to fly with The Harry Potter, getting a high five or a flower regardless how they took to the air.

“She was going to take after her father,” Severus said. “Brown hair and eyes. Her favorite animals were going to be unicorns. Favorite color…well, seemed like she’d settle on a lighter, almost pastel green.”

Sirius smirked. “What about her house?”
“Not a clue to that.”

“Maybe she’d have been a Ravenclaw.”

“God willing. Anything but Gryffindor.”

“Anything but Slytherin. Hufflepuff wouldn’t be so bad.”

“I’d be afraid of that. She’d have a gaggle of overprotective uncles. Not that she would have had them anyway. But when one thinks Hufflepuff, they think adorable.”

“Indeed they do,” Severus agreed. “Except they’re not that adorable. Diggory for instance. Brilliant student. Plenty smart, excellent in all marks, athletic, and braver than a lion, shrewder than a wolf. I would not have minded him in my house one bit. Some of the most well-rounded and healthy students are in Hufflepuff. Course, some of them are plenty insane, too.”

“Damn. All that in one student?”

“I’ve also had taught your cousin, you know. Nymphadora Tonks.”

“Oh, yeah. She was one of the aurors at my trial. You’ve no idea how shocked I was to learn she was Andy’s girl. Would never have guessed.”

Severus sighed. “She right gave me a heart attack one year just after her metamorphmagus powers kicked in. Transformed into me and took over one of my first-year classes. Nearly killed her by accident because of that stunt!” He snorted. “I didn’t know she was a metamorphmagus then. Imagine showing up at your class and there’s you practically skipping down the aisle? I was absolutely out of my wits. She transformed back into herself before it got ugly.”

“Docked points.”

“Fifty points and two weeks detention. With Argus.”

“Damn.”

An eight-year-old boy whooped, holding his fist in the air. “I GOT THE SNITCH!!!” he declared, showing everyone the golden ball in his hand. “POTTER WAS MY COACH!!!”

Sirius laughed and punched the air. “IN YOUR FACE, DIGGORY!!! IN YOUR FACE!!!”

“And I thought Minerva was bad.”

“Amos Diggory had been bragging about his kid beating Harry whenever the chance came,” Sirius groused. “Completely ignoring that said game had been sabotaged by Dementors and that Harry was rendered unconscious.”

“I remember that game,” Severus said.

Dumbledore had been furious and had Severus take Harry to the hospital wing while he and Remus dealt with them. The Hufflepuffs had wanted a rematch but were not granted one as it had been a legal capture of the Snitch.

“You know this just means that Harry is better at teaching the game than Diggory. Not that he’s the better player.”

“Doesn’t bloody matter.”
“They won’t have a rematch this year.”

“Still doesn’t matter.”

“Add to that it could also mean that the kid’s got wicked eyesight.”

“True, but that snitch wasn’t nearly as fast as the school one nor the one that’ll be in the game. And it still doesn’t matter because MY GODSON BEAT YOUR SON!!!”

“Calm down, Sirius,” Remus said. “We know. By the way, Sev, a unicorn?”

“It was a big white and pink one with a gold horn from a muggle toy store and I do not regret ever buying it.”

“It is a rather strange thing to imagine,” Sirius agreed. “I got Harry a snitch onesie when he was born.”

“Ooh, I remember that one,” Remus said, grinning. “The snitches moved. Lily said it gave her motion sickness and refused to use it.”

“Don’t remind me. I spent good money on it and it still smarts that she decided not to use it.”

“You tried putting it on him just after he was born, but he was too small. Add that he spit on your dragonhide jacket and Lily demanding you get that monstrosity away from him and I’m sure it would still smart.”

“I didn’t really care about that jacket much,” Sirius said.

“Dragonhide, Sirius,” Remus repeated. “Dragonhide is bloody expensive and you don’t care that it was had baby vomit on it?”

“I wouldn’t have even bothered wearing dragonhide anything to meeting a newborn baby,” Severus added. “Never mind the expense.”

“I was excited,” Sirius said with a shrug. “More than James was, anyway.”

“Well, then again, you weren’t getting castration threats from Lily, so…even if that was just the pain talking, no man in his right mind would be that excited if your kid’s birth was really bugging mum that much,” Remus reminded him.

“Right. I half thought she’d follow through.”

“Not surprising,” Remus said. “I thought she would too.”

“I’m surprised she didn’t,” Severus said. Remus snorted.

“On the bright neither of you have to worry about such threats,” Sirius added. He yelped at a mildly cast stinging hex to his ankle. “Moony I was just—”

“I’m not above casting another one,” Remus said, glaring at Sirius. One of the mothers called for lunch and the group slowly dispersed. Perhaps a little too slowly…

Such is the fate of Harry Potter, it seems, regardless of how much he actually despised the attention. But eventually it was just their own group making their way back to the tent for a bite to eat. On arrival to their temporary abode, harry climbed into his cot and collapsed without even bothering to
remove his shoes. He groaned when they were magicked off and set aside at the foot of them.

“You can’t be that tired,” Remus said.

“Kids are mad energetic,” Harry snapped. “I knew that, yeah, but I don’t think I really understood till now what that really meant.”

Sirius laughed. “You did well, Kid, for handling more than twenty.”

“Twenty?” Remus asked. “That was closer to fifty. None of our classes have as many, right, Sev?”

“No, but it was about enough to fill at least one of the school houses.”

Harry groaned. “Thank Merlin the parents were there.”

“Come on, Harry,” Ron said, sitting beside his feet. “We were all there. You were brilliant with them.”

“Thanks,” Harry mumbled. “I think I’ll be all right unless I’m asked to do that again.” Arthur snorted, sending a knowing look at Sirius, who shrugged.

“I can’t say he’s ready for it being fourteen, but one day, for sure…”

“Ugh, don’t even bring that up, Art!” Sirius groaned. “I don’t think any of us were thinking about parenthood at fourteen.”


“You said you’d be nice,” Remus reminded him. “So be nice.”

“It’s fine, Moony, I was a bit of a slut back then,” Sirius said. Harry sat up. He, Ron, and the rest of the children stared at him. “What? Don’t tell me none of you at least—”

“No,” Hermione said.

“Not regularly,” the twins said.

“No point to it,” Ginny added.

“Same,” Ron agreed.

“What would the point?” Harry asked. “Most of us are famous by association and I’m just famous. If I were to have sex with anyone, what would be the point?”

Sirius stared at them, a little befuddled. “What is this? What is going on?”

“I imagine stopping mass murderers and the like would damper one’s desire for sexual exploration,” Severus said. “Can’t say I can complain about that, though. Less kids to find in awkward positions. At the very least they could learn a couple charms to hide themselves like we did.”

“Yeah, the one time I caught a couple going at it in one of the closets was…why? Why can’t they be smarter about it?”

“Hormones,” Severus said. “And common sense or a lack thereof and you’ve a couple more likely to be caught in the middle of it.”
“But you two never were.”

“Because we were older when we got together and much smarter than the average student,” Remus said. “Funny that our room never went back into use.”

“Probably for the best.”

“TMI!!!” Harry shouted, lying back down with his head under the pillow.

Severus blinked. “That was funnier than I thought it would be.”

“It usually is, Arthur said. “Molly and I love messing with ours if only for the reactions. These two, for instance,” he motioned at Ron and Ginny. “Would not go to bed most nights, so making kissing faces with Molly did the trick till they wised up.”

The groans from the teenagers led to hearty laughter from the adults.

“It really was fun,” Arthur said. “All of my kids, actually, didn’t like naptime or going to bed when they needed to, so you can imagine the fun I had messing with them.”

“Ugh, parenthood,” Remus said.

“After a year teaching you just don’t want to do it. Especially when you feel like your babysitting half the time,” Severus muttered.

“Sorry,” Harry said. “We know you’re not our babysitters, Sirs.”

“Nicely put, Harry,” Arthur said. He flicked his wand and the table set for lunch with a stack of grilled cheese sandwiches. “Let’s eat.”

~August 1972~

“Severus?”

He couldn’t face her. Lily always had an uncanny ability to just know. Severus sniffed and wiped his nose on his sleeve, holding the splintered, charred remains of his broomstick.

“Sev?”

He still did not answer her.

“Found you,” Lily declared gleefully.

Severus glanced at her once, long enough to see her grin dissipate.

“Your dad?”

Severus nodded. He couldn’t hold back the tears anymore and Lily embraced him.

“I’m sorry, Sev. I know you were looking forward to trying out for the team. Maybe we could get you a new broom. I’ll talk to my parents—”

“No. He’ll just destroy that one, too,” Severus said. “I don’t know how much longer I can do this, Lily.”

“You know you can come over, Severus,” Lily assured him. “My parents don’t mind.”
“Petunia does.”

“Hang Tunie. She’s just jealous of us and bitter because of our abilities. You said so yourself. You know it doesn’t matter to my parents. They know what yours are like.”

“I just wish Mum was stronger. Like yours.”

“Well, if she gets enough courage to, you know my parents are willing to help. Dad’s a divorce lawyer after all.”

Lily usually didn’t remind Severus of that.

He had asked his mother what she thought and just gave him a strange look. The idea of divorce was a foreign one in both the Muggle and the Wizard worlds, though it was getting better on both fronts.

“I know,” he said. “But it just…she won’t…I tell her things are different now, but she’s still so…”

“It will get better, Severus,” Lily said, letting him go and crossing her legs under her. “It’s just a few more years and then you can leave that place for good.”

Severus moaned, pulling his knees to his face. “I don’t think I can wait, Lily, it’s just so bad…not just for me but my mom, too. I don’t know…it’s not a shock what kind of man he is…”

“Well, we start school again in a couple weeks,” she reminded him. “Just come over for the rest of the summer. It’ll be okay, Sev. We’ll get through it all and one day we’ll be better than our parents. Stronger than them. You’re better than him. You know that.” Lily stood. “Come on, Severus. Let’s go over to my place. Mum’s making lasagna tonight.”

Severus nodded and stood, following Lily and leaving the broken broom behind.

~August 1994~

Remus ushered Harry along. Otherwise, he’d likely stay in one place, gaping like a fish. Slowly, they climbed up to the Minister’s box. Once there, they were greeted by the Minister himself.

“Harry! So good to see you again,” he said, shaking Harry’s hand. “Excited?”

“Yes, Sir,” Harry said.

“Mr. Black, welcome,” Fudge continued, clapping hands with Sirius. “I hear good things in the Department of the Misuse of Muggle Artifacts.” Sirius shrugged.

“Can’t do it without Weasley here,” Sirius said.

“Are you sure you won’t reconsider rejoining the Aurors?”

Remus arched a brow at him. Sirius had once aimed to be one, but after Azkaban, perhaps that wasn’t the best option.

“I’m sure,” Sirius said. “I appreciate the offer, but I think I’m best in the M.O.M.A.”

“Ah, well,” Fudge said. “You are missed there. Scrimgeour would like to have your smarts. Anyway, everyone, I brought some things for you.”

He handed out Ireland themed colors for those still school age and motioned at the seats.
Severus collapsed into a chair, massaging his neck. “That’s worse than the school.”

Remus replaced Severus’ hand with his own. “We’ll get you back in shape for those stairs in no time.”

“Careful, Pet.”

“Oi! No flirting in front of impressionable children,” Sirius snapped. They glanced at him and laughed as Harry pried Sirius’ hands off him.

“I’m not five!”

“Of course, you’re not. You’re forever one in my eyes,” Sirius said. “Otherwise I’d probably forget you’re not your father.”

Harry groaned, bowing his head and muttering curses under his breath.

“Harry!” Fudge called.

Harry raised his head and suppressed a pained groan at the prospect of meeting more people. Sirius squeezed his shoulder and led him over.

“Poor Harry,” Remus laughed. “The pains of being an introvert.”

Severus leaned into Remus’ hand still rubbing at his neck.

“Think we should save them?”

“Nah,” Severus said. “I think Black will ensure they don’t pry into Harry’s life too much. Especially since Crouch is among them.” Remus hummed his agreement, hand moving over the base of Severus’ skull.

“I suppose we’ll just have to see how it goes—oh, Sirius, everything all right?”

“Yes,” Sirius said. “Up to the point Ludo Bagman attempted drawing in the kids for a gamble. Got the twins in, of course, but you,” he locked Harry in a headlock. “Are too smart to gamble, aren’t you?”

“Yes, Dad. Now let go!” Harry pulled his head out of Sirius grasp and dove for his fallen glasses. “Is the game about to start soon?”

“Soon enough,” Remus said.

“There’ll be an introduction with the teams’ mascots. Tends to be different every year, but they always choose a creature that’s native to their country,” Severus added. “Didn’t Ireland try for banshees one year?”

“Yes, but they didn’t make the finals that year,” Remus said.

“Not surprising. Whoever thought it a good idea to use death-harbingers ought to be hexed,” Severus muttered. Remus snorted and leaned against him just as the Bulgarians came out. “Oh shit, Veela.”

“Never expected that treat,” Sirius said.

“Veela?”
“Kind of like sirens,” Severus said. “And I’m screwed.”

“You’re allowed to watch,” Remus said. Severus leaned over to whisper in his ear.

“You say that now, but unfortunately most of us are extremely susceptible to Veela. I know you’re not as susceptible, but still.”

“Severus,” Remus said. “I know what’s about to happen. I’ve dealt with Veela before. Besides,” He grinned. “Perhaps you can make it up to me later if you really feel guilty about what might happen.”

Chapter End Notes

Faline in my eyes would have been a lot like Agnes Gru from Despicable Me as a little girl, but become more like a mix of Edith and Margo as she started school at Hogwarts. And who likes the idea of there being an AU for this AU where the Potters live? I really want to explore Faline’s character if she had lived.
Sirius hid his laugh as a cough as Hermione pulled Harry back after the Veela had finished their song.

“What?” he asked, seeming a bit confused.

“Honestly,” she muttered, rolling her eyes.

Remus nudged Severus’ arm. “See? No harm done, Love. It could have been worse.”

“I suppose,” Severus said, shrugging.

Ron was trying to untangle an Ireland necklace from his neck. Arthur stilled him. “Just wait till you see what they’ve brought for the entertainment.”

“What could beat that?” the twins asked right before a burst of green and gold spread through the stadium.

“Leprechauns!” Ginny exclaimed as the fairies took the stage and the team flew onto the pitch. The crowd erupted in cheers yet again as Bagman announced the Irish team as they flew in circling the pitch:

“Mullet, Troy, Moran, Connelly, Quigley, Ryan, and Lynch!”

Moments later, the game began as the quaffle was thrown in the air. Remus leaned back, groaning.

“Ugh.”

“Nausea?”

“Didn’t think it’d hit.”

“It’s a crescent moon tonight,” Severus reminded him. He was certain of that. There was no reason for him to have miscalculated the moon phase.

“I don’t think it’s that. They’re going too fast. My head’s spinning trying to keep up.” Severus hummed and kissed Remus’ forehead before allowing it to rest on his shoulder.

“Okay, that’s adorable,” Sirius laughed.

“Shut up, Black.”

“C’mon Lynch!” Harry shouted. “No! It was right in front of your nose!”
“At least one of us can enjoy it without getting motion sickness,” Remus snorted. “I hate being a lycanthrope.”

Severus kissed him again. “Some tea after the game sounds good,” he suggested. Remus hummed his agreement.

“Wake me up when we win.”

“What if we don’t?”

“Even if we don’t catch the Snitch, our team’s quite aggressive when they want to be.”

“True enough,” Remus said as Harry groaned. Severus arched a brow at him.

“Krum got a bludger to the face,” he said, rubbing his own nose as if he could feel it vicariously. “Never got one to the face, but I have had one break my arm. Never fun. Ow.”

“Wouldn’t have been nearly as painful if not for Lockhart,” Severus said.

Harry laughed, sitting back down. Nearly two years ago, Gilderoy Lockhart attempted healing Harry’s arm with some dumbass spell that vanished all the bones in his arm and hand, leaving him in the hospital wing longer than was originally necessary.

“So true! Can’t believe that idiot tried to heal me.”

“Well, as you said, kid: he was an idiot.” He whispered a short explanation to Remus, who sat up and turned to Harry, brow furrowed in worry.

“Skele-Gro?”

“Whole night just to get my arm back. I think it was worse for my hand given that’s made of tons of little bones. Just ow. Much, much ow.”

“Eloquent as always,” Severus said.

“That’s as eloquent as one can be to describe taking Skele-Gro.”

“Lockhart? Wasn’t he a year below us?”

“Yes.”

“Complete utter idiot who thought he was brilliant but actually kept causing chaos?”

“Yep.”

“Damn. He taught?”

“Defense.”

“Fuck no,” Remus said. “No.”

“Thankfully we won’t have to worry about that, right, Professor Lupin?” Hermione asked, turning to him.

“Maybe we should tell them now?” Severus asked.

“Tell us what?” the twins asked.
“After the game,” Remus said, sighing. “Now that they know, they’ll likely be too curious to leave it be till term.”

“Sorry.”

“No, it was likely to come out sooner than later.”

“IRELAND WINS!!! KRUM CAUGHT THE SNITCH, BUT IRELAND WINS!!!”

The twins jumped up and high fived each other while the rest of the group in their box cheered. Remus exchanged a kiss with Severus and Bagman returned.

“How much do I owe you two?” he asked the twins, who approached, grinning widely. Ginny turned around to face her teachers.

“So,” she said. “What were you talking about earlier?”

Remus groaned. “Well…uh I won’t be teaching Defense anymore,” he said. The students approached, assuming this meant he wouldn’t be a teacher at all and begging him to reconsider. Remus held his hands up. “I’m just switching to a different class. You might have noticed I get ill often, so I figured, with Binns moving on finally, to take over his class instead. As for your new Defense teacher, he’ll be a retired Auror. No better replacement I can think of.”

“Can’t you teach both?” Ron begged.

“No,” Severus said. “Even with just one class, most of us are hard pressed. Teaching magic, especially magic that is potentially dangerous, causes unneeded stress. Given Professor Lupin’s condition, a less stressful class could prevent it from worsening.”

“I’ll still be teaching and I don’t mind tutoring if need be, but I will be focusing more on history. It’s not like I could do any worse than Binns, right?”

This earned a few chuckles.

“What if he’s not as good?” Harry asked.

“Well if you’ve any concerns, you’re welcome to talk to me or any of your other teachers,” Remus reminded them, giving Harry a smile. “I’m not leaving Hogwarts. I’m just going to teach a different class. That’s all. Now, I think we’ve won the Quidditch World Cup, correct? Stop pouting and go have fun.”

Sirius ushered the kids away to go greet the Irish team. Severus took Remus’ hand. “I was expecting more of a fit.”

“Well, I think the idea that I’m still there is enough to ease their minds, but we’ll see how Moody does. He is a bit eccentric, I hear, so that worries me a bit.”

“I don’t think he could do any worse than you, Pet,” Severus said. “He’s intense, sure, but he was also good at his job for a reason. You could have found a worse replacement for the defense class.”

“True,” Remus said. “Can’t wait for that tea.” Severus snorted and kissed his hand.

“Tea sounds good,” he agreed.

#
“When did I last thank you for taking Harry in while I battle with the ministry?”

“Erm…a couple weeks ago.”

“Been too long.”

“Sirius, we get it, you’re grateful,” Remus snapped. “You don’t have to keep saying it.”

“Yes, I do,” he said. “If not for you and Snape, I might’ve been given the Kiss instead and Peter could have gotten away and gone who knows where. Add to it, you helped me get him away from those Muggles. I don’t think I’ll ever stop thanking you both.”

“Give me that whiskey,” Remus said.

“You don’t drink.”

“You’ve had too much to drink.” He pulled the glass away.

“That was my first glass.”

“Well I’m not surprised you’re a lightweight. After twelve years in prison, anyone would be. I’m glad you’re thankful. I’m glad to help, but after a while, I start wondering when you’re going to start asking me for favors.”

“What?! I would never!” Sirius exclaimed. Remus arched a brow at him and watched him wiggle uncomfortably. “Maybe when I’ve got a favor to ask…”

“I knew it,” Remus said.

“I don’t have one, though! Not…yet…”

“Sirius, relax. I don’t care. Where are the kids, anyway?”

“Goofing off inside. Mostly teasing Ron.”

“On a beautiful night?” Remus asked, affronted. “We used to go to the forest and chase unicorns and the like.” Sirius laughed. “Couldn’t do that now.”

“No, unfortunately not. Remember when we had to outrun that acromantula nest? Damn that was scary.”

“Peter clung to you. I just grabbed James and held on for dear life. Only time I really regretted not being an animagi myself.”

Sirius nodded. “Damn we did some stupid things as kids. It’s getting easier to admit that I’m not that kid anymore, but still…if not for Anna, I don’t know if I could be where I am now.”

“Anna?”

“You know that court psychologist?”

“Oh? You’re still seeing her?”

“Yeah,” Sirius rubbed the back of his neck. “I just…she’s great, you see, and I’m…I know I shouldn’t…”
Remus squeezed his shoulder. “Ask her,” he said. Sirius stared at him. “You like her, don’t you? You only get mopey when you’re really interested in someone, rare though it was.” Sirius punched his shoulder. “Ow. You know I’m right.”

“Except for when I was ‘mopey’ over you. I had to catch you with Snape just to get the courage to tell you,” Sirius said.

“I still hold to the belief you just hated Severus enough that you were willing to get in the way of any of his happiness, even at the cost of mine.”

“Well, for the record, I was wrong about thinking you were my soul mate and I definitely fucked up enough that I know that you wouldn’t think of me that way even if I did feel that way still. But it was a little bit of both. I did hate Snape enough to get between him and any chance at happiness. And it really tore at me he was finding it with you. It never occurred to me you were happy with him. Thought you’d come to your senses or something if you broke up. Well, load of good that did. You got back together in the end and you’re happy. Granted I know more about your sex life than I really wanted to know.”

Remus laughed.

“But I am glad you and Snape are together again,” Sirius said. “At least one of us gets their happy ever after, right?” Remus wiped his eyes with the pad of his thumb.

“You will. Just because it didn’t work out for James doesn’t mean you’re doomed, either. You’re going to win that custody battle and we’ll move Harry to your place when you’ve got one for yourself. Unless you plan to stay at Grimauld?”

“No,” Sirius said. “Not if I can help it.”

“Didn’t think so. You will overcome Azkaban. You’re doing so every day. You cleared your name. You’ve got a new wand. You’ve a good job that is steady if nothing else. Sirius, you’ll win that custody battle.”

“Before Harry’s an adult?”

“Yes. It must count for something that you’re doing the best you can to adapt. Dating again, if she agrees, is just another step to show the wizengamot that you are doing better and readjusting to the best of your ability.”

Sirius rubbed the back of his head. “What if she doesn’t say yes? What if the wizengamot doesn’t care about how well I’m doing because of my PTSD? What if I can’t raise Harry and they’re right to drag it on as they have?”

“Severus has PTSD from being a Death Eater. I have PTSD because of my condition. We’re doing fine. We’ve been managing it just fine for years. It’s only been a couple months for you, Sirius, since you were officially exonerated. Stressing about what is holding them back from granting you custody may be exactly what is making them hold back. Court members are…like animals.” Sirius threw his head back and laughed. “They can smell the insecurity and the fear on you. So, with that in mind, stop it,” Remus poked him. “Harry likes you. You’re good with him. So, relax and remember that he wants to live with you. Severus and I aren’t going to kick him out if you do lose and we won’t let him go back to the Dursleys either. He’s a tough kid with three uncles, all war heroes but one’s an ex-con, one’s an ex-cult member, and the last is a werewolf with a giant sweet tooth. I think that’s enough—aah! You’re back!”
Severus arched a brow. “What is it?”

“Nothing,” Remus latched his arms around Severus’ neck. “Is everything okay?”

“Well, even if they thought it a prank, whoever got my message took it seriously enough to make sure nothing happens to the muggles that were here. They’re nowhere to be found.”

“Well, that’s good, isn’t it?”

“I suppose, but I’m not sure if my…cult buddies will see it the same way.”

Remus chuckled. “You heard?”

“Just that last bit.”

“Ugh, spare me,” Sirius said. “I’m going to see if the kids are still teasing Ron about his crush on Viktor Krum. At least that is entertaining.”

Once he had vanished into the tent, Severus kissed him. “That is never going to get old.”

“What? Kissing me? I’d hope not.”

“That and messing with your brother,” Severus said. Remus snorted.

“My brother?”

“I am calling him your brother because that is how he’s been acting since he got exonerated. To be fair, it’s better than worrying about him trying to seduce you.” Remus rolled his eyes. “I trust you. I don’t fully trust him yet.” Remus moved his hands over Severus’ shoulders.

“I can understand that,” Remus said. The tent flap opened and Arthur stepped out with Bill and Charlie. Remus released Severus. “Everything all right?”

“Very,” Arthur said. “Sirius is giving Fred and George some advice on how to not get caught at school for their pranks.” Severus and Remus groaned.

“Why would he make it harder?” Remus muttered.

“Like I said: brother. In fact, he’s your little brother.”

“He’s older than me.”

“Still your little brother,” Severus said. “I will not change my mind in that respect: Black is your little brother.” Remus shook his head then smirked.

“In that case, would it be safe to say that Lily was your sister?”

Severus cringed. “You know, I try not to think on how true that is at times.” Remus laughed.

“I’m sorry, Love,” he said. “That reaction is too funny!”

“You’d cringe too if you dated your sister. Or brother, in your case.”

“You and Lily weren’t even blood related. I don’t see why it’s bugging you so much.”

“Blood means nothing, Lupin,” Severus snapped. “It would have saved us both a lot of trouble if we realized that sooner. Course, if we did, I don’t think we’d have liked you’re group any more or less.”
“True, but James at least wouldn’t feel as threatened.”

“They’re as bad as you and Mum,” Charlie said. Severus turned to him.

“Care to say that again, Weasley?”

“You can’t take points from me. I’m not your student anymore,” he said, grinning broadly. Severus blinked.

“I still teach your younger siblings.”

“It’s still summer.”

“Not for much longer.”

Remus rolled his eyes. “Severus, you’re not taking out your embarrassment on the students,” he snapped. “I will know if you do. In fact, starting next term, any points taken away just because you’re pissed, or annoyed, or angry, or nursing a migraine will be given back. Don’t think I won’t know if you try pulling that stunt again. I’ve my sources.”

Severus sat down across from the Weasleys. “And who is this source?”

“Sources,” Remus emphasized, sitting beside him, “As in more than one. I’ve got to keep an eye on you somehow.”

Severus shrugged. “I’m sure I’ll find a way around it.”

Remus turned to Arthur. “This is what I put up with. Can you believe this?”

“Molly says the same about me. Glad as I am to have had so many kids, you’re lucky to not need to worry as much. This one,” he shook Bill’s shoulder. “Was the toughest of the lot.”

“Then why have more?” Severus asked.

Arthur shrugged. “The sex is good.” Charlie and Bill groaned and made their escape back into the tent. “And that never gets old,” he said with a bright grin.

“Thank Merlin I can’t get pregnant,” Remus mumbled. “I love you, Severus, but I draw the line at two.”

“I think it’s still a little early to discuss that.”

“Just saying,” Remus said, nudging him. “If we get to that point in our relationship, you know where I’m putting my foot down.”

“I can live with that,” Severus said, nudging him back. His arm burned and he hissed, grabbing it.

“Severus?”

“All right there?”

Severus pulled his sleeve up, trying to understand how the Dark Mark on his arm could come to life again. Remus took his hand.

“What does that mean?”
“Nothing good,” Severus said, pulling the sleeve down and standing up. He backed up seeing Arthur point his wand at him. He held his hands up. “I am not one of them anymore. I don’t want anything to do with them. But getting rid of the Mark is not easy. Arthur, I was a spy for Dumbledore and needed the Mark to get close to him so I could report back. I was never a true Death Eater.”

“Arthur, think of it this way,” Remus said, stepping between them. “If Severus was really untrustworthy, would I or Sirius allow Harry near him? Would Albus Dumbledore let him teach at Hogwarts?” Arthur lowered his wand, but only just.

“I don’t like Death Eaters, defected or not.”

“I understand,” Severus said. “Most don’t like me regardless of the Mark. But other than that, have I given you a reason not to trust me?”

“If I were to write Dumbledore now, would he back you?”

“Yes,” Severus said.

Arthur lowered his wand completely. “Why did it…”

“I don’t know. It’s not done that since 1981. I don’t think he’s back, but whatever the reason, it can’t be good. It would be best if we all got out of here—”

They jumped, ducking at a spell blasting at the camp parallel to them as the fire rose high in the air and outward. Arthur cursed and went to the tent as Remus put the fire out. Severus set up a barrier, barring the Death Eaters from continuing their march before sending a patronus to warn the rest of the attendees and give them time to escape before more damage could be done.

“Professor Snape!” Harry shouted. Severus turned to him holding his hand out, forcing him to stop.

“Potter, get out of here!”

“But—”

“If a Death Eater approaches, use the spell Sectusempra. It’s an offensive spell and you are to only use it on a Death Eater. Now GO!!!”

Hermione grabbed Harry’s arm and pulled him along. Severus waited for them to vanish into the crowd before facing the hoard breaking down the barrier he put up. He cast the spell again, but there wasn’t much more he could do before they broke down…

So he did the only thing he could do:

“Expulso,” he hissed, sending some of the Death Eaters screaming backwards. Another Death Eater moved to the front.

“What are you doing?” Lucius asked, voice muffled behind his mask. “You’re one of us.” Severus held his wand steady, lip curled in a sneer. “Or have you forgotten, brother?”

Severus growled and cast another curse: “Impedimenta!”

“Flipendo!” Lucius shouted.

The spells canceled each other out and the duel began. Severus found himself forced on the defense, blocking Lucius’ curses as they came after him.
“Expelliarmus!” Lucius’ wand flew out of his hand into Remus’. “Stupefy!” Lucius apparated and the spell hit a different Death Eater, sending him backwards.

Lucius reappeared in front of Remus and seized his throat, squeezing. Remus dropped both wands, trying to pry Lucius off. Severus roared and ran toward them, stopped and risen into the air and wand cast out of his hand.

“What is it about you, Lupin? You’ve a feral look about you. Especially, in the eyes…Accio,” Lucius’ wand flew back into his hand and he placed it under Remus’ chin. “Bestia Revelio.”

“THAT SPELL IS FORBIDDEN!!!” Severus shouted. “IT’S NOT TAUGHT—”

“So no one should know it. Correct?”

Remus fell, coughing and shaking.

Lucius smirked. “Well, to let your lover know, the particular spell is a beast-revealing spell. Cast on a normal person, it doesn’t really do anything, but it used to be used in the height of the Werewolf Hunts to force a werewolf to reveal himself at a time other than the full moon. It is a particularly violent spell, since the werewolf is forced out of hibernation, so to speak.”

“MALFOY!!!”

“It didn’t take much to figure out what your lover was. I just needed to take a visit to Azkaban visiting some relatives and take a stop at Fenrir Greyback’s cell, drop the name. By the way, Lupin, your father wanted me to tell you hello.”

Remus vomited as his bones and muscles shifted and dislocated. His tattered clothes gained new tears…then the screaming and the choking ended. Remus eased onto his feet, snarling.

“Wingardium Leviosa!” Lucius said, raising Remus up. The wolf yelped and snarled, clawing the air as it was raised high above them.

“PUT HIM DOWN!!!” Severus demanded.

“And risk getting ripped to shreds? I think not.”

Another Death Eater brought out his wand. “Incendio,” he shouted, hitting Remus’ shoulder. Remus roared, swiping toward them pointlessly. Another curse was hurled at him, cutting at Remus’ muzzle. One by one, the Death Eaters cast spells intent on torturing him.

A stinging hex.

Rocks flying off the gravel path to hit him.

Minor but deep cuts along his body.

A conjunctivitis curse, making his eyes bleed.

Severus hated it, screaming threats and vows at the Death Eaters—and hating himself in this helplessness to do nothing but watch Remus be tortured.

Then they fell just as the werewolf revealing spell began to reverse.

“Snape!” Sirius shouted, followed by Ministry officials. “Remus!” Severus ignored his shouts, seizing his wand and aimed it at Lucius.
“Sectusempra!” he shouted. Lucius jumped back and the spell sliced through a tree. Sirius wrapped his cloak around Remus, who had passed out from the pain. “Cru—”

“Snape! Look!”

He turned around, staring at the sky:

The Dark Mark rose above the trees and the Death Eaters apparated one by one, as if seeing it was a ward against them taking further action. Severus raced over to Remus. Sirius let him take over, running a diagnostics spell over him. He was alive, still, but in dire pain. More than could be seen. From the bruises and the burns and the cuts, to the blood dripping from his eyes and the corner of his mouth.

“Remus? Baby, wake up.”

“Severus, he needs a healer,” Arthur said. “We’ll get him to St. Mungos.”

“No,” Severus said. “Nononono…”

Sirius eased him off Remus so he could be put on a stretcher. “Snape, he’ll be okay.”

“They’ll find out what he is. What if they—”

“They are not going to deny him medical treatment just because he’s a lycanthrope,” Sirius assured him. “Look, they’re getting a portkey ready to take him straight to St. Mungos. Go with them. Arthur, Bill, Charlie, and I can handle the kids.”

Severus nodded and took Remus’ hand just as the Portkey fired up, sending them to St. Mungo’s emergency ward waiting room. A healer shouted for aide as he approached Remus. Severus was left in the waiting room.

He collapsed in a chair, hands shaking as he finally gave in to weeping.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry!!!!! *goes and hides*

Honestly this was a little hard to write. I love Remus and feel so bad for putting him through this.
Remus woke to darkness. He couldn’t open his eyes and raised a shaky hand to his face, feeling the bandage. He winced at a gentle touch moving his hand away from his face.

“Hey, Pet,” Severus whispered.

“Where are we?”

“St. Mungos,” Severus said. “How much do you remember?”

“Um…I remember Lucius Malfoy casting some sort of spell on me. I don’t remember after that.” Severus kissed his hand. “What did he do to me?”

“He forced Moony out. It’s an old spell, tabooed across the world after, um, hunting werewolves fell out of vogue, but it was used then to find them. Not unlike the Muggle witch hunts—”

“But far more accurate,” Remus concluded. “I transformed, didn’t I?”

“You didn’t hurt anyone,” Severus said. “But…”

“Am I blind?”

“They used a particularly violent conjunctivitis curse on you, so no, but it’s taking a little longer to heal.”

“And my job?”

“You’re not going to lose your job,” Severus said. “I can’t promise it’ll be any easier or harder, but you can survive another year, Remus. Dumbledore is handling it right now.”

“Severus, don’t lie to me.”

“I’m not. Albus is doing what he can to make sure every parent knows that you’ve not harmed anyone at school in any way. In fact, the students are a lot more accepting than their parents are.”

He heard rustling and smelled—

“Chocolate?”

“Indeed it is.”

“So,” Remus said. “How bad is it?”

Severus did not answer right away. “Well, your eyes are the main issue right now, there’s some internal damage due to the forced transformation, but that shouldn’t take much more time. The healer thinks that will be fully healed by tonight. Externally, there were burns from the incendio spell. Bruises from rocks being enchanted to…to hit you…the severing charm was used, too…sliced your right Achilles tendon…”
Remus squeezed his hand. “I’m okay, Severus.”

“This is not okay!” Severus yelled. Remus swallowed.

“I didn’t say that it was.”

“Remus, you’re not going to be able to walk without a cane for some time.”

Remus turned toward his voice. “Severus, I know that what happened never should have happened. But I also don’t see much point in letting it get to me. I had to learn to deal with what I’ve been dealt from a young age. I’m alive. That’s enough for me.”

Severus lifted their joined hands and kissed the back of Remus’. “I know that. I’m sorry for losing my temper, but damn it, Remus, I should’ve been able to stop them. And don’t give me any crap about us being outnumbered.”

Remus sighed. “Then I won’t,” he said. He pulled his hand out and cupped Severus’ cheek. “I’m sorry I scared you. But…how did they know?”

“Fenrir Greyback,” Severus spat. “I didn’t think you knew that madman.”

“Madman? That’s one way to describe him, I suppose,” Remus said. “Personally I can’t think of a proper word for him that would be accurate enough. He made me a werewolf when I was four years old.” He scoffed. “I’m not shocked that he would tell Malfoy. Probably even suggested that spell if it’s not even in use anymore. It wouldn’t surprise me if he knew of it at least. Greyback sired quite a few lycanthropes before he was caught, and killed so much more in the process.” He felt warm water slip around his thumb. “Severus, I’m going to be okay, right?” He felt Severus nod. “Then please, Love, don’t cry.”

“I can’t lose any more people I love.”

“You won’t lose me,” Remus said. “Never ever think you’ll lose me. You’re my Dimidium Animae. And I don’t even believe in soul mates, so…” He quieted at the gentle kiss placed on his lips. Remus returned it, placing his hands on Severus’ shoulders.

“When you’re better,” Severus purred. “I’m going to make you scream.” He gently bit below Remus’ ear lobe, sucking a bruise into the skin.

“You’re going to get in trouble if you add another injury,” Remus pointed out.

Severus ignored the warning and continued administering his mark. Remus could feel Severus’ hands on his hips through the blankets and wished he wasn’t blindfolded. He shifted a bit, hoping to hide his arousal from any who might walk in on them.

“Do we have to wait till I’m out of the hospital?” Remus asked.

Severus slid his tongue over the hickey, humming. “I’m afraid so,” he said. “Sorry, Pet.”

“Well, that’s just incentive to get out of here faster.” Severus hummed and pecked his lips.

“I’m going to get something to eat.”

“When did you eat last?”

“Not since dinner after the game.”
Remus sighed. “Sev…”

“I know. I’m going to get something substantial right now. I’ll be back soon.” Severus squeezed Remus’ hand and left the room.

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“Moony’s awake?” Sirius asked. Severus nodded, swallowing.

“Figured that if I’m able to eat lasagna, then Remus would be awake?”

“Yes.”

“You figured correctly. He’s still recovering, of course, but it shouldn’t be much longer now.”

“And his ankle?”

“All that can be done has been, but a bit of therapy, some potions to ease the pain, the healers think he’ll only need the cane for a few months at best. At least the first semester at school,” Severus took another bite.

“Well, that’s good. Has he gotten that chocolate?”

Severus nodded. “He got it. Still doesn’t know how big that pile is since he’s still got bandages on and now that he’s well, I’m going to hide it first chance I get.”

“Good luck with that. Moony loves chocolate.”

“I’m aware,” Severus said. “That’s why I’m going to hide it. Have you any news of your own? Perhaps concerning Remus’ job?”

“Yeah, Dumbledore convinced the school board to let Remus teach another year,” Sirius said. “He reminded them that he’d been at school as a student seven years with no incidents without the Wolfsbane potion and then a year with it and no incidents. As long as that spell doesn’t circulate and he keeps taking the potion every month, all’s well. Parents will be tougher to convince, but what else is new? For now, Professor R.J. Lupin can stay on as the History of Magic teacher. It’s not like he could do worse than Binns, you know.”

Severus fully agreed. “I don’t think anyone could do worse than Binns. Who knows, we might get some proper magic historians again. Not that rubbish that Lockhart published and the like.”

“That’d be good,” Sirius said. “Harry’s worried about both of you.” Severus arched a brow at that.

“Me? Remus, sure, I can see that. But I’m not his favorite teacher.”

“I think that doesn’t matter anymore. He might not remember your connection, but he’s grown attached in his own way, Todd.”

“Will you not?”

“Why not? It’s a little endearing. I’m actually jealous of you and Remus. I’m his godfather and he’s more attached to you two than I thought.”

Severus set his fork down. “I don’t know about that,” he said. “But Remus is his favorite teacher to date—actually, second favorite. He’s rather attached to Minerva and vice versa. It’s like a lioness and her cub when you see him with her. Then again, Minerva is quite the formidable sorceress. I would
not want to get caught alone with her when she’s angry.”

Sirius nodded. “I can see that. I would not want to be in that position myself. In the meantime, Severus, would you be okay with him visiting Remus again now that he’s awake?”

“Why even ask?” Severus muttered. “Remus would probably love it. Of course, let’s agree not to tell Remus that Minerva is Harry’s favorite teacher. I don’t think he’d take that very well. Not make him angry, but perhaps a little upset.”

Sirius snickered. “I think we can keep that from Moony. He’d at least pout as bad as a sad pup.” Severus wanted to laugh, but managed to suppress a snort. Sirius stood. “Well, I best go. I’ve an appointment with Anna.”

“The psychologist?”

“Yep,” Sirius said. Severus arched a brow, taking in the blue robes and pressed suit underneath. Sirius crossed his arms petulantly. “What?”

“Bit nice for just an appointment,” he pointed out. “Just don’t let her boyfriend catch you. Likely going to get yourself punched this time.” Sirius glowered.

“You’re never going to let that go, are you?”

“Don’t tell Remus that.”

“You’re an ass, Snape,” Sirius snapped and strode away.

Remus eased his eyes open. The room was dark due to the lights being off. He blinked, trying to rid the bleariness. He turned his head, squinting.

“Severus?”

“How are your eyes?” Severus asked.

Remus hummed. “Itchy,” he said. “I know I’m not supposed to scratch, but damn it’s bad.” Severus took a vial and dropper.

“This will sting at first, but try to hold still.” He tilted Remus’ head up. “Look as far up as you can.” He squeezed a drop into the first eye. Remus hissed, blinking rapidly. “Just one more,” Severus said, taking Remus’ chin again and adding a drop to the other eye.

“Ugh, that’s nasty.”

“How are you now?” He looked at Severus.

“Well, they work. How long do I need those for?”

“One drop in each eye twice a day for a week, then after that, we’ll have to come back to see what the healer says,” Severus said. “Given how twitchy you are, would you rather I do this for you?”

Remus looked at his hands. “Yeah, I think you better,” he decided, looking up again. “I’d probably attempt getting out of using that. What is it, anyway?”

“Just a potion to restore damaged corneas,” Severus said. He picked up a book. “Also, you need to
choose a cane or staff till you’re ankle’s better.” Remus scowled at the images. “What?”

“Not a cane.”

“They aren’t that bad.”

“No. I am not having a curved head added to my wand just to walk easier.”

“Fine,” Severus said. “Most of these are made of wood with healing properties. Ash, canarywood, eucalyptus, marblewood, rosewood, and ziracote seem to make up the majority. They all have a pocket for the wand which allows it to be used for magic as well. Erm, if you can match the wood with the wood of your wand, it works quite well.”

“My wand is made of cypress,” Remus said.

“Cypress has minimal healing properties,” Severus said. “More closely associated with…divination, the afterlife…”

“This is utter rubbish, you know?”

“Actually, it’s not, most wandless magic relies on different types of wood, metal, crystals and is quite elemental. So…how about a staff made of Honduran or East Indian Rosewood, or Eucalyptus wood?”

Remus sighed and flipped through the staffs. He paused at one. It was simple, well polished eucalyptus wood with a pocket at the top for his wand. He pointed it out to Severus, who kissed his cheek. “I’ll see what they’ve got available, Pet. What’s the length of your wand?”

“It’s ten and a quarter inches. You get it and then we leave?”

“We’ll go home after I get it, yes.” He kissed Remus once more and left.

Once Severus was gone, Remus threw the covers off to look at the damage that had forced him to need a staff, no matter how temporary. He sat up on the side of the bed and lifted his right foot. The area in question was swollen though the skin bore just a faint white scar compared to the thinner left ankle. He lightly touched it and winced. He stood, finding himself favoring the left side anyway as even the slightest pressure hurt. He sat back down, cursing.

“Professor Lupin?”

“Good…is it morning or evening?”

“Afternoon, actually,” Harry said. “Where’s Professor Snape?”

“Getting me a staff,” he said. “Magical healing has some limits. How are you? Ready to go back to school?” Harry nodded, sitting down and staring at his hands. “What is it?”

“Erm…are you really a werewolf?”

Remus blinked. “Does that bother you?”

“Not really. I’m just curious why you didn’t mention it. I mean, it’s not like it’s a big deal—”

“It is,” Remus corrected. Harry silenced and crossed his legs, waiting for him to continue. Remus massaged his forehead, unsure how to explain it. “Unfortunately, werewolves have a rather bad reputation. We’re considered violent, mad, angry, and predatory.
“The first werewolf was a wizard who had committed cannibalism. This wizard was named Lycaon. When he killed and ate, he would take on the traits of a wolf and one time, he attacked another wizard. That wizard survived and he, from then on, was like Lycan in that he took the characteristics of a wolf but only once a month. Lycaon’s evil hunger had cursed him and in that moment, he spread the curse. From then on, werewolves just sprung up and terrorized communities all over the world. But the curse itself is so archaic that no one really remembers where it began or if there’s a way to break it and allow a werewolf to be human again.

“Many werewolves are considered vile criminals. Some are. Some commit…rape and have been known for committing pedophilia…the one who turned me, for instance, primarily targeted children. There have been attempts to both help and eradicate werewolves for centuries and much debate about it, but for the most part it’s…there isn’t much known about it and it’s an incurable condition. Of course, there are potions—particularly the potion I take—that allow a werewolf to maintain his human sense of morality today, but…”

He exhaled. He’d explained it before and with less eloquence than this, so why was it still so difficult?

“You’re not that kind of werewolf,” Harry said. “I mean, no one chooses to become a werewolf, right? It’s kind of like how muggles treat homosexuality, intellectual disabilities, and even witchcraft: they criminalize and even demonize what they don’t understand. I know I’ve only known about the wizard world for a little more than three years, but I don’t see very many differences between the two in their treatment of things they can’t adequately relate to. It’s not something that was chosen but came due to maybe fate or karma or luck, I don’t know.

“But I do know that you’re not dangerous, Professor. I know people probably make assumptions about you, but you were friends with my parents. You went to Hogwarts and were allowed to study magic. And now you teach and you don’t let it get to you or affect you.” Harry managed a little smile. “You, Professor Snape, and Sirius saved me from a real bad situation. I just didn’t really know how bad until I started to live with you and Professor Snape. If Sirius can’t win the custody battle, I’d really rather stay with you two. If that’s okay, that is.”

Remus swallowed thickly. “Of course, it’s okay,” he said. “You won’t have to go back to your aunt and uncle. We’re not going to let that happen.” Harry moved to sit beside him and hugged him.

“Thanks, Professor.”

Moon Moon, up.

Remus cleared his throat. “And I thank you, Harry. I don’t hear what you said very often.” He looked up to see Severus watching with a small, genuine smile, leaning on the staff he had gone to procure. “How long have you been standing there?”

“Long enough,” Severus said. Harry jumped, releasing Remus and blushing. He stared at his fists on his lap. “Harry, you needn’t be embarrassed for wanting a hug,” he said, handing the staff to Remus. “It’s completely normal.”

“Yes, Sir,” Harry mumbled.” Remus picked up his wand and pushed it into the staff’s tip, the hilt remained out so he could remove it once he didn’t need the staff anymore. He felt the staff hum gently, then cease as the magic of his wand and the magic of the staff melded together.

He aimed it at his clothes. “Accio,” he said. The clothes flew over to him, landing gently between him and Harry. “Well, I guess this isn’t so bad,” he said.
“We’ll let you dress,” Severus said, motioning for Harry to come with him.

“Sure. Sev.”

“Yes?”

“Where’s my get-well chocolate?”

Severus pushed Harry out the door and shut it without a word.

Remus shook his head, pulling the dressing gown off. “Bastard,” he muttered.

~September 1972~

“What are you two doing?”

Severus and Lily glanced at each other then back at McNair.

“Nothing really,” Severus said.

“Just trying to figure something out,” Lily said.

“By sitting upside down?”

“Blood is supposed to build up behind your eyes when you’re upside down, make them spurt out,” Lily said. McNair frowned.

“No it doesn’t.”

“It’s scientific,” Severus said.

“Then why risk it?”

“Cuz we can,” Lily said. “Besides, we’re hoping this could help us weird out Potter and Black.”

“You’re weirding me out, Mud—”

“Don’t,” Severus and Lily warned, glaring at him.

“Fine. Evans, then,” McNair said. “Snape, your girlfriend’s strange.”

“Tell me something I don’t know,” Severus said. “She’s bloody violent, too. My nose still hasn’t healed properly from when she broke it.”

“We were six and you cut my hair.”

“I thought it was a brilliant prank. You didn’t need to break my nose.”

“It was horribly uneven!”

“It’s just hair, Lily,” Severus said, sitting upright slowly. The compartment spun. “It grew back.”

Lily sat back up at a faster pace and nearly fell off her seat. “Oof, I’m dizzy.”

“It’ll pass.”

“You two really are weird,” McNair said. “Creepy, too.”
“I don’t want to hear that from someone who needs psy—fy—ugh! Psy-ko-loj-ical help,” Lily said. She bit her tongue gently. “Words suck.”

“I don’t think McGonagall will appreciate you being incoherent, Lils.”

“There’s still time before classes begin. I don’t have to worry about coherency yet.” The compartment opened again and Potter’s gang peered inside. “Damn it! Just a little longer and we’d have had them,” she mumbled.

“Evans, looking gorgeous as ever,” Potter said, smirking at her.

“Well, shoot! Sev, take my face wash, I’m going to stop washing it and hide the shampoo.”

“Aw, don’t be like that,” he said, trying to look more mature than he was by leaning against the door frame. “Learn to take a compliment.”

“Didn’t think he’d know what a compliment was,” Severus mused, scratching his chin. Lily crossed her arms and frowned.

“What do you want, Potter?” she demanded.

“Nothing much,” he said. “Just wondering if you’d like to go out sometime? On a date.”


“But—”

“Not happening. Ever. You’re a bully and narcissist. All in all, a sorry excuse of a human being. Though, I hear Narcissa Black might have a crush on you. Try someone on your level, Potter.” She unsheathed her wand and he was forced to jump out of the way of the door sliding shut and locking.

“That was amazing,” Severus said.

Lily grinned. “Thanks.”

~September 1994~

"Never thought we'd be here," Sirius mumbled to Remus, pushing Harry's cart toward the platform. "Seeing anyone off. Bit surreal."

"To you, perhaps," Remus said. They disappeared into the wall arriving on Platform 9 ¾. Harry jumped off.

"Never doing that again," he said.

"Come on, you can't say that was fun."

"Not when you've actually run into the wall and not gone through."

"That never happens!" Sirius said.

"It did my second year! Ron and I couldn't get onto the platform..." Remus felt eyes bearing into his back and spun around to face them. A few Ravenclaws and their parents turned away.
"Moony!" Sirius said, "Ignore them." He pulled Remus toward the train. "Help me with this bloody thing! Damn, Potter, what did you put in here? A troll?" Remus grabbed the other end of the trunk, easing onto his bad ankle (which was slowly healing and didn’t hurt so much anymore that short tasks weren’t too painful) and they loaded it in the compartment.

"Just a hippogriff."

Sirius snapped his head up. "What?"

"Relax. I'm not that crazy," Harry said. He turned to Remus. "I've yet to see why people say he's not mature enough to be my guardian. Care to enlighten me?"

"Later. Train's about to leave," Remus said. "I'll see you at the feast tonight."

"Cool. Bye, Sirius! Bye, Professor!"

Harry entered the box and waved at them with Ron and Hermione peering outside. Once the train was out of sight, Remus turned to Sirius. "Is that really one of the issues?"

"Some are saying that, citing our past escapades as if that means anything on whether or not I can be a parent. It's minor compared to the depression and PTSD, though. Care for a drink at the Cauldron before you head off to school?"

"Erm...I think I'd better not."

Sirius locked his arm around Remus' neck. "Mate, just because people know you're a lycanthrope now doesn't mean you stop enjoying life. Let them throw a fit. You and I are going to the Leaky Cauldron for lunch and then you go on to school for that beginning of the year staff meeting or whatever. And if anyone gives you a hard time, we'll punch their noses flat."

"I don't think that resorting to violence will benefit either of us, Sirius."

"I'm allowed to use a figure of speech, aren't I? Look, the way people found out about you is not normal, so show them that you aren't going to let them treat you any differently. Besides, wouldn't you like to show off your cool staff?"

Remus glanced at his staff and sighed. "Cool isn't the word I'd use."

"You're just not used to it yet," Sirius said. "Think of it this way: one of the things I did after the game was take Harry and Hermione to the movie theatre to see that new...whatsitcalled...Disney movie...erm...The Lion King or something. You could be like that wise baboon with this thing. Just add a couple coconuts and you're good. Then you could go Bruce Lee on anyone who--"

"I am not doing that, Sirius," Remus growled.

"What? The coconuts or Bruce Lee?"

"Either one!" Remus snapped. "Fine. Fine, I'll go to the Cauldron with you, but you are not getting sugar. You seem to be on a sugar high and it bothers me a bit." Sirius grinned and they apparate to Diagon Alley. Remus half didn’t want to enter the Cauldron, but found himself following Sirius inside anyway.

As he had expected, the room silenced when he stepped onto the premise. He could feel their stares and judgement bearing into him like needles and he felt weighed down as if being pressed into the floor. Sirius pulled him to a table in the center of the room where a woman sat, reviewing a menu.
"Anna," Sirius said. She looked up and smiled. She really was a comely woman with a small nose and hazel green eyes. Her blonde curls were pulled away in a large barrette. "Glad you could make it."

"Did you see Harry off?"

"I did." They sat down and Anna handed them two menus. Remus thanked her and held his hand out.

"Remus Lupin."

"Annabelle Lee Pennyworth," she greeted, taking his hand and giving it a firm shake. "It's an honor to meet you. How's your ankle?"

"It's fine. Um..."

"Sorry, mate," Sirius said. "Been worried about you, is all."

Remus sighed, mentally cursing Sirius’ blabbering mouth. Why do I let him drag me into these situations? He asked himself, ordering a water.

Chapter End Notes

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https://www.pottermore.com/writing-by-jk-rowling/werewolves
Chapter 7

The first to greet Remus back to Hogwarts was Severus outside the gates, looking ever the stern Potions Master until he caught sight of him and relaxed. Remus kissed him, wrapping his arms around him.

"I'm going to miss you wearing jeans," he said.

"I'll keep that in mind," Severus snorted, taking his free hand and leading him to the castle.

"How are the others? Are they..."

"So far, no one has mentioned anything to me about your condition. Either they're too scared of me, or Minerva, or Albus."

"Or they know that Hagrid's half Giant and he's been groundskeeper for years," Remus reminded him. "Plus, now that they know, and knowing there were no incidents last year, maybe they won't let it get to them." Severus hummed.

"One can hope," he said. "I am worried about Moody, though. That man might keep a close eye on you."

"And not you?"

"I think after being forced to watch my former compatriots torture you, they and the world probably know I'm not likely to go back to them easily." Severus kicked open the side entrance into the castle and a bucket of water fell out. Remus jumped back, but Severus left it be, drying off with a wave. "Peeves," he said simply. "Every fucking year that dumbass tries to get me with this blasted gag."

"Does it ever work?"

"Only twice. The first time I started working here and two years ago." Severus smirked. "I may have insisted that Lockhart go ahead of me." He set the bucket aside and they entered the castle.

"You were so cruel to him."

"Pompous idiots deserve it."

"By said logic, so does Malfoy."

"Senior or junior?"

"Both."

"Aren't you the one who told me to stop bullying children?"

"You should stop. However, after what Lucius did, I think I'm in every right to make it hell for his brat and right now, best way is..." Remus sighed, angry at himself. "You've corrupted me." Severus laughed. Once on the landing, staircase moved and they waited for the appropriate case to place itself.

"I'm sorry, Pet," Severus said. "It could be worse."

"I know it could be," Remus sighed. "I just wish it wasn't your penchant for making students' lives
"Just be careful this year. I've a feeling you'll be handing out a few detentions and shaving points as bad as I do," Severus said. The stairs they needed clicked in place and they resumed their ascent to Albus' office. "Particularly with the elder students."

"Perhaps, but I'm more worried about your lot, Severus."

"My lot?"

"The Slytherins."

"Oh. Yeah. I'll have a talk with them in case. And if they do decide to act out anyway, let me know."

Finally on the last landing, they made their way to the gargoyle outside Albus' office. "Some might think I'm joking."

"You've joked."

"Never about how I feel about you—"

"And the cuteness overload is back!"

Remus jumped, aggravating his ankle and Severus rounded on Aurora and Rolanda, who merely laughed as he yelled at them. Remus leaned on the staff, rolling his ankle around as if the movement could relieve a bit of the pain. He watched Rolanda banter with Severus and Aurora sidled up to him.

"Doing all right?"

"Yes," he said. "Though I do wish you hadn't done that. What if I'm stuck with this thing longer?"

"Having a staff isn't that bad," she said. "My grandfather lost his leg in one of the battles against Grindelwald and had to use a staff since he was twenty."

"I suppose that's not as bad as I thought, but still, it's a bit..."

"Embarrassing? Cumbersome?"

"Both," he said.

Aurora hummed and gazed at the wood. "Eucalyptus wood for swift healing, a wand slot so that it's multi-functional," she gently took it from him and weighed it. "Perfectly balanced and lightweight. This is a good staff, Remus."

"I suppose I just feel old with it," he admitted as Aurora returned it.

"Thirties is still young and even Muggles use staffs, canes, and whatchacallit?"

"Crutches," Severus said, "Especially when it comes to an injury such as yours, Pet. And now if you ladies are done driving me mad, can we go into the damn office and get this blasted meeting over with?"

"Sour as always, Severus," Rolanda teased, following him to the gargoyle.

"State your class," the gargoyle said.
“Potions,” Severus spat.

“Flying,” Rolanda said behind him.

“Astronomy,” Aurora added.

“History of Magic,” Remus said.

The gargoyle moved aside for them and they filed into the office. Remus paused outside the door, leaning on his staff, heart lodged in his throat.

“Remus?”

“I don’t… Severus, I can’t go in there.” Severus waved the girls off and shut the door.

“You can,” Severus said. “None of them care and if any of them actually do, then they are not worth our time. And some of them already know from last year. Minerva, for instance, and of course Albus knows. He wouldn’t have hired you if he really thought you a threat. Let alone let you attend school here either. Remus,” he cupped Remus’ cheek. “You don’t have to worry. I’m right here with you, Pet.”

Remus swallowed. “Right. Thanks.”

“Anytime.”

He opened the door and they entered the office. Remus looked around. Charity nodded at him and Filius waved. Hagrid was in the corner, counting stitches as he knit and no one spared more than a noted glance.

“See? You’re known here. Being a lycanthrope doesn’t define you any more than the mark on my arm defines me.”

“All right, is everyone here—Albus,” Minerva rounded on him. “You did tell Professor Moody, did you not?”

“I might have… forgotten to mention it last we spoke,” he admitted. The resounding groan was drowned out by Fawkes squawk.

“Happened with you last year,” Severus explained. “I swear he’s losing it.”

“I can hear you, Severus,” Albus said, amused. “Alastair Moody will be here before term begins.”

“That’s not the point!” Minerva screeched. “We needed all teachers in by noon for this meeting so we could discuss what to expect this year because of the Tournament, Albus!”

“I’m sure Alastair will have done his own research in the subject.”

“That isn’t the point! Oh, Merlin’s Beard! I’ll fill him in later,” she growled.

“Thank you for being so accommodating as always, Minerva,” Dumbledore said. She exhaled slowly, straightening her emerald robes.

“I’m sure you all know by now about the Triwizard Tournament that will be held this year,” she began. “For such a reason, Quidditch will be canceled.”

“Ha! The teams will like that,” Rolanda scoffed.
"They'll live with it once they are told about the tournament," Minerva said. "We've sought out our sister schools and it has been agreed that the French school, Beauxbaton, and the Bulgarian school, Durmstrang, will be joining us. Hogwarts is hosting this year so EVERYONE," she narrowed her eyes at Severus. "Best be on their most ardent, genteel behavior. Remus, I am counting on you to make sure Severus does not embarrass the school."

Severus placed his hand on his chest. "You wound me, Minerva."

"I'll do that," Remus said.

"Why are you siding with her?" Severus asked.

"Because it is the wiser option," Remus laughed. "She was my head of house and even though we're coworkers now, she still scares me."

Severus glared at Minerva, who met it with one of her own. He sighed. "I see you're point."

"I'll make sure he behaves. Or at least try to. I can't make any promises," Remus said.

"You never can," she muttered. "Some of our less used corridors will be granted to them for their studies. A few rooms have also been modified to house the students as sleeping quarters. These areas are off limits to everyone save by invitation. For safety reasons and in light of that the last tournament ended with the death of a student, there's been a new rule added. No one under the legal age of seventeen is allowed to participate."

"And that will stir ruckus as well," Aurora mumbled. "Especially for your lot, Minnie."

"I can handle my lot just fine, Aurora, thank you very much. As can Ponoma and Filius and Severus. Of course, we expect the rest of you to help us at times. What with Malfoy for Severus and the Weasley twins for me…" she massaged her forehead. "I swear I ought to retire…"

"You say that every year and never follow through," Filius said. "I doubt you're leaving Hogwarts for at least another decade." Minerva arched a brow as the corner of her mouth twitched.

"We'll see. Albus is looking at retirement as well."

"Maybe in a bit, but for now, you're stuck with me, the barmy old coot, as headmaster at least another year. Of course, we will need all hands on deck for the Yule Ball."

"All teachers are expected to attend if only to ensure there is no unwanted occurrences between our guests and our students. I would also encourage everyone to help decorate the school for the ball and also assist in removing the decorations the following morning."

"After breakfast," Albus said.

"Which will be provided for us, courtesy of Aberforth."

Remus winced and Severus rubbed his arm. "It couldn’t get much worse than that," he whispered. "Besides, we might be able to get out of it if we just help out getting it ready."

"Let’s hope," Remus said. "I don’t think I could stand Aberforth's cooking."

"Neither can I, to be honest."

"As you may be already be aware, the position of Defense Against the Dark Arts has been filled by Alastair Moody as Professor Lupin agreed to take over the History of Magic class now that Professor
Binns has decided to move on with his afterlife. Some of you may be aware now of…”

Remus cleared his throat. “It’s okay,” he said. Severus took his hand and gave it a tiny squeeze.

Minerva inhaled and exhaled slowly. “Some of you may be aware by now that Remus is a werewolf. Albus and I have known this since his school days, which would have been long before any remedies for lycanthropy were even a thought in a brewer’s mind. He managed it very well then and he now with the wolfsbane potion, brewed by Severus, his condition is a little easier to handle.”

Remus nodded, voice caught in his throat. “It was not my intent, nor Albus’, to keep this from you out of disdain or negligence—”

“We know,” Hagrid said. “Heck, I knew since he was a student. Used to come to tea.”

“Anyone who knows how to recognize a werewolf would have known,” Ponoma said. “And it doesn’t matter to any of us, right?” This was met with assurances.

“And Hogwarts has been known to employ those who normally couldn’t get a job elsewhere,” Filius said. “I’m half-Goblin, for instance.”

“Half-Giant,” Hagrid added.

“And given you’re taking over for a ghost,” Charity said. “I’m sure no one will really mind once they get used to the idea of a werewolf for a teacher.”

“Add to that, you’ve a unique and engaging style, you’ll probably be able to actually teach the class,” Rolanda said. “That class isn’t going to bore the students to death anymore, that much is certain!”


“Rolanda, we need to reclaim ‘cutest couple’ status this year,” Aurora said decidedly. Remus snorted and Severus rolled his eyes.

“You can keep that title for all I care,” Severus said. With that, the meeting adjourned and Remus was crowded by his coworkers, either to admire the staff, ask how his ankle’s healing, or invitations to tea. After another hour, they finally went to get their rooms and offices prepared.

“I don’t remember them being that…friendly, I suppose,” he said.

“There doesn’t seem to be much point in getting to really know or like a coworker who will only be teaching for a year,” Severus explained. “Most of them tend to open up more after the first year.”

Remus held on to the rail as he followed Severus down to the first floor.

The new History classroom wasn’t much different from the other classrooms:

Two rows of desks with an aisle in between. A desk in the center for Remus with a blackboard bolted to the wall. Remus ran one hand over a desk as he looked around his new classroom with a frown. Perhaps for the younger students, but for what he had planned for students who’ve taken their OWLs, it would not do. He approached the front of the room and tapped his staff against the ground, mumbling a spell, and watched the furniture rearrange so that the desks now formed a circle with his desk among them.

“Should I ask?”

“Well, after they’ve completed their OWLs, they shouldn’t need to study more than recent history
and current events. My plans for the sixth and seventh year classes are more discussion style with
focus on what’s going on in the Wizarding World. So, they’ll need access to the Daily Prophet, The

Quibbler—"

“Seriously? The Quibbler?”

“Yes, Severus, the Quibbler, if just for variety, and at least one weekly publication and one
monthly,” Remus said. He put the room back together and followed Severus into his new office. “If
you’ve not noticed, not nearly enough wizards think about what’s really going on, let alone engage
in a healthy discussion about current events. I also hope that I can establish a school bulletin or paper.
Something that can circulate around school on a weekly basis.”

Severus leaned against the new desk and pulled Remus to him. Remus set his staff against the desk
and rested his hands on Severus’ shoulders. “Well, with the school being more sports-oriented when
it comes to our after class programs, a school paper would be a refreshing change.” He slid his hands
over Remus’ waist. “What would it be called?”

“Not sure, yet,” Remus said, sliding his hands over Severus’ chest.

“Owlery Weekly?” Severus suggested.

Remus snorted. “Might work, but then we might get confused about which owlery is being talked
about.”

Severus hummed. “Good point.”

“Maybe…Hogwarts Weekly Tribune?”

“I think The Hogwarts Report is a little easier to stomach.”

Remus grinned. “Maybe you should also help out with this school paper.”

“Absolutely not,” Severus said. “This is your thing, Pet. I might through a suggestion in here and
there, but otherwise, it’s all yours.”

Remus took the pause as an invitation to kiss Severus, cupping the back of his neck. Severus
nibbled on his lower lip, eliciting a gasp from Remus, and slid his tongue inside. He gripped Remus’
hips and pulled him closer, thigh rubbing against crotch.

The kiss broke as Severus stood, one hand moved from Remus’ hip to cradle his head.

“I could take you here and now,” he purred.

Remus gripped the lapels of Severus’ robes. Severus had been hesitant since their last scene and
more so since the night after the game.

“But I want you on the bed. Propped against pillows, naked…”

“Yes,” Remus hissed.

“Waiting,” Severus continued. “I’ll tie you up and play with you, Pet. Groom you and open you up
for me.”

Remus’ throat felt tight as he resisted the urge to shut him up and kneel down to suck his cock.
Particularly if it meant risking further damage to his ankle, which would spoil Severus’ mood.
“I’ll make you come before I take you and ensure to drain you of every last bit of pleasure I possibly can—”

“Snape, if you don’t fuck me today before the feast, I swear, I’ll make your first day of term awkward.”

Severus snorted. “Awkward?”

“I don’t know if I can make anything like hell,” Remus confessed, blushing. Severus moved his hand from the back of Remus’ neck to caress his cheek.

“You’re adorable, Remus,” he said. “All right, Pet. I’ll get the room ready. All I want you to do is take a shower.” Remus kissed him once more and grabbed the staff. They made their way down and Severus waved his wand.

The barren room soon was finished and Remus went to the bathroom to prepare, hoping Severus wouldn’t back out of his promise. He’d finished washing shampoo out of his hair when he felt Severus’ arms snake around his waist and his lips press to his shoulder.

“Hi,” Remus said, grinning at Severus over his shoulder.

“Decided not to wait,” Severus explained moving Remus’ excess hair to lick at the back of his neck and nibble his earlobe.

He moved his hands lower to Remus’ hips and pulled Remus backward into his chest. Remus turned his head, pulling his ear free and kissed Severus, hissing as Severus’ hand gripped his cock and slowly stroked. He twisted his wrist upward, pulled the foreskin up, and gently rubbed the pad of his thumb along the slit. He moved his hand back to the base and repeated the movement. Remus braced against the wall, head bowed, and pressed his ass against Severus’ pelvis.

“Hand me the soap,” Severus ordered.

Remus picked it up and handed it, and a wash cloth, to him. Severus lathered the cloth and set the soap down, running the sudded hand over Remus’ abdomen before taking the cloth and ran it over Remus’ body, from the neck down to the legs and over his feet before taking the soap again so to wash his more intimate appendages. Remus moaned as the cloth ran over his perineum and scrotum. He rolled his hips at a particularly sensitive stroke closer to his hole and as it ran back down, he sucked in a breath as he came. Severus hummed.

“Not even finished and you soil yourself already,” Severus said.

Remus whined as the cloth continued to clean between the globes of his ass.

Severus hushed him. “I’m not mad, Pet. I’m going to make you come as much as you like today. Face me.”

Remus obeyed, letting the water beat down on his back and clear the soap away. Severus set the first cloth aside and grabbed the soap again. Once the cloth was heavily lathered, he set it in Remus’ hand and leaned back, waiting for him to run the cloth over his skin. Remus always marveled at how pale Severus’ skin was and how warm it felt to him. He ran the cloth over Severus’ arms and torso before going down his legs with the cloth, easing down to his knees.

“All right?” Severus asked as Remus pressed the cloth against his left inner thigh.

“Yes,” Remus said as he washed Severus’ skin. Once satisfied with the left leg, he moved to the
right. He paused at a moment to stare at Severus’ cock and licked his lips.

“Not yet,” Severus said, taking Remus’ chin and tilting his head upward.

“Not even a little taste?” he asked imploringly. Severus exhaled slowly, pupils wide. “Please?” Severus groaned, pinching Remus’ chin more roughly than he intended.

“In time,” he promised. “Stand up and go dry off. I’ll be out momentarily.”

Remus stood back up and Severus pulled him into a kiss.

“Go to the bed, lie on your back and take care of this,” he cupped Remus’ crotch and squeezed gently. “Get it up for me again, Pet.”

Remus nodded and left the shower, drying off quickly and leaving the towel loose around his waist as he approached the bed. He climbed up and laid down on the bed, head and back supported by the pillows. He closed his eyes and drew his hands down his chest and torso, feeling blood pool down to his groin.

He undid the towel, letting the cool air encompass him as he gripped his cock and stroked. Remus pretended that his own hand was Severus’, his lover’s name a chanted whisper exhaled as his cock hardened.

Then a hand gripped his wrist and he opened his eyes to meet Severus’. Severus took his other hand and moved them over Remus’ head and he felt his wrists be locked in leather cuffs. Severus checked the cuffs to ensure they were secure, but not dangerously tight, and kissed Remus’ forearm and down over his triceps and shoulder.

He stroked Remus’ right inner thigh as he kissed and licked his chest before pushing the leg up and another strip of leather with a soft fur cushioning latched around it under the knee. Severus pushed Remus’ left leg to the side and gripped the base of his cock, swallowing him down and sucking hard till Remus was certain he’d come again, then released him summoning lube and cast a cleansing spell on Remus before setting his wand back down and coated his fingers in the slick liquid.

He shoved two fingers in. Remus gasped, arching off the bed. His cock bounced against his abdomen and he moaned, shaking, as Severus stabbed him with those two fingers, taking short moments to stretch him open before thrusting his fingers in again. After a moment, he added the third finger and resumed stretching Remus open. With his free hand, he gripped the base of Remus’ cock and began sucking him again, bringing Remus to the edge and then back down.

“Fuck! Will you let me come?!” Remus demanded.

Severus grinned around his cock and slid off, licking the tip before pulling his fingers out and moving down to tease Remus’ ass further with his tongue. Remus whined, tugging at bonds. He screamed as Severus pushed his fingers back in and resumed rimming him till Remus gasped, back arching off the pillows as he came a second time, more violent than before.

Severus moved his tongue back over Remus’ perineum and kissed his scrotum, gently sucking one testis into his mouth and gently bit. Remus shook, closing his eyes and pressing his face into his arm. He cried out when Severus moved to kiss and lick his cock again with a sense of reverence and deliberate gentleness and worshipfulness.

Severus climbed up, dragging his tongue over a line of hair and dipped into Remus’ navel before moving further up his chest, pausing to tease his nipples with the free hand and his tongue. Remus glanced at him and came yet again at the intensity of Severus’ eyes bearing into him. It wasn’t nearly
as extreme as the first two, but the oversensitive skin made it seem intense. Remus hid his face in his arm again, unable to stop his eyes from watering at the oversensitivity.

“Baby?” Severus asked.

“I’m okay,” Remus replied, “Don’t you dare stop.”

Severus kissed his neck, dragging his tongue against Remus’ tensed neck muscles as he removed his fingers once more and gripped Remus’ free leg, thrusting, adjusting his posture just long enough to push into him. Remus focused on breathing, gasping affirmations and encouragement as Severus eased into him until he was fully sheathed. Severus gripped the restrained leg with the other hand.

“How are you feeling?” Severus asked, laying beside Remus and pulling him into an embrace.

“Well-fucked,” Remus said. “Probably won’t be able to walk properly for a couple days.”

“Not sure if I should feel bad or proud.”

“Proud,” Remus said. “I’ve a staff. If anyone notices, I’ll just say I busted my ankle and made it worse.” Severus brushed his knuckles over Remus’ cheek bone, wiping away a tear.

“You’re crying.”

“Just oversensitive,” Remus said. “I’m all right.”

Severus tucked a strand of hair behind his ear. “In that case, would you like a bath before we have to get ready for the feast?” Remus nodded. Severus kissed his forehead. “Be right back, Pet.” Severus moved stiffly rolling his shoulders and rubbing his neck. Remus got up on his knees and embraced him. “Thought you wanted a bath?”

“I do,” Remus said. “Just wanted to hug you, too.”

Severus turned to kiss him and once the kiss ended. He untangled Remus from him. “You’re
adorable, you know?” He kissed Remus’ hands and went to the bathroom. Remus picked up the pillow Severus had collapsed on and embraced it, face pressed into the cotton and smelling his lover’s musk over it as the bathtub filled.

“Remus?” Severus called. He stood and wobbled to the room. Severus dragged his fingers over the clear water. “Is it too hot?”

Remus joined him, dipping his hand in the water. “No,” he decided, reaching for one of the purple bottles. “Bubbles?”

Severus snorted. “Why not?”
Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

TRIGGER WARNING:
A couple brief discussions of abuse
Aftermath of bullying

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Outside the wind howled, pelting the students with rain and made them cover their heads with whatever they could, trying to crowd inside till Peeves decided to drop water balloons on everyone, cackling at the soaked students sputtering and shivering.

Minerva nearly slipped in her attempt at confronting the poltergeist, accidently injuring Hermione.

Remus cast a warming charm over the room and blasted Peeves through the wall. He caught the balloons with a floating charm and whisked them out the window.

“Thank you, Professor Lupin,” Minerva sighed, fixing her hat.

Remus nodded.

“All right, everyone!” she shouted, “go on in and take your seats! Dinner will be served soon!” As the students filed in, Minerva approached. “You seem in a better mood,” she said, smirking.

Remus blushed. “Well, I don’t know about that, but I am glad my condition isn’t a problem with the staff.”

“Sure,” Minerva said, grinning wider. “Just remember to put up some silencing charms next time.”

Remus’ blush deepened, feeling extremely mortified.

“Relax. You and Severus are not the only one who forget to do that sometimes. At least you have your own bedroom. It’s rather awkward running into students thinking their alone—”

“Minerva, spare me,” he snapped, following her into the hall. “I could do without you and anyone else teasing me and Severus about our sex life. I don’t need you telling me you heard us.”

“Need? No. Must be done? Yes. If only to remind you to have some discretion. My room is next to yours, you see.”

With that, she went to collect the first years and Remus approached the teachers’ table.

He sat down and hid his face in his hands, groaning. He wasn’t ever going to be able to look at Minerva in the eye again! A hand touched his shoulder and he looked at Severus, who eyed him with concern.

“Are you all right, Pet?”

“Minerva heard us,” Remus replied.
Severus winced. “Fuck.”

Remus glared at him. No shit, Sherlock, he thought. Severus squeezed his hand.

“I’ll put up some silencing charms before we go to bed. I’m sorry, Baby. I hope she didn’t embarrass you too much.”

“It’s not your fault. She didn’t have to say anything,” Remus said. “And I don’t think any students heard, so that’s good.”

Minerva returned with the first years trotting behind her. One by one, she called their names and placed the sorting hat on their heads. Once everyone was sorted, the hat was taken back to the Headmaster’s Office and Minerva took her seat just as Albus was about to stand.

A flash of lightening broke the ceiling, striking the wall. Remus yelped as a fat drop hit the top of his head and lightening hit the wall. The students screamed and some dove under the tables. A flash of white flitted over them and the rain ceased.

The room silenced as they looked at the caster:

Alastair “Mad-Eye” Moody approached them, limping toward the teacher’s table.

“Damn roof not the same as it used to be,” he growled as Albus approached and shook his hand.

“Thank you, Professor Moody,” he said, approaching the Podium as Moody took a seat beside Severus. Severus visibly tensed and Remus squeezed his hand.

It’ll be okay, he thought.

“I hope so,” Severus replied, squeezing back.

“To our first years, welcome,” Albus began. “To our returning students, welcome back! Before we dig into a hot meal, I do have some announcements to make.”

He started with the usual beginning of term announcements:

The forbidden forest was, as named, forbidden to all students.

Joke shop items that made messes were not allowed.

“Another thing: Professor Binns has moved on and so the position of our history teacher has been kindly picked up by Professor Lupin, who served on staff for Defense against the Dark Arts last year. As for the Defense class, that is now to be taught by Professor Alastair Moody.”

Albus eyed the school.

“I should not have to remind you all that respect for your teachers is of the most importance, no matter what sort of relationship you have with them. Any attack on a teacher, or even a fellow student, is grounds for suspension at the barest minimum.”

Remus had an idea why that was added, and from the silence, so did the students.

From there, Albus moved on to explain the Tournament and how that would work. As predicted, the students were upset at the lack of Quidditch, elated by the Tournament, then upset again at the restriction set on them. Albus calmed them and summoned the feast before heading back to his chair.
“I think that went rather well,” he said cheerily, scooping some potato au gratin onto his plate.

His first class of the year was the fifth year Gryffindor and Slytherin class. They sat at their seats nervously and Remus couldn’t blame them for it.

“How many of you read the Daily Prophet or some sort of news outlet?”

All hands raised in the air.

“So you might be aware what happened at the Quiditch World Cup last summer.”

This was met with nods and averted gazes.

“In which case, I will allow you to ask any questions you like in the last hour today, but after that, we will only concentrate on what is on the syllabus. Understood?”

This time the nods were more eager than reluctant.

With that out of the way, and ready for any questions that might come at him this day, he passed around copies of a two foot long roll of parchment. Following them were the whole first year class. He didn’t want them to panic, so he covered only what was on the syllabus for them before dismissing them for lunch and prepping for his fifth year class with the Ravenclaws and Hufflepuffs in the afternoon.

“I’m going to rip my hair out one of these days,” Severus growled, joining him in his office.

Remus arched a brow at him.

“They’re gone for two and a half months and they forget everything!”

“Which class are we talking about?”

“Third years,” he growled. “And I’m not much hopeful for the new batch of first years, either.”

“I don’t believe that,” Remus said. “You, my love, might not be suited for larger classes, but when it comes to something more akin to one on one, you become an amazing teacher. Especially when you put a little effort into trying to have the patience.”

“If you’re referring to when Harry caught me meditating downstairs, it partly also had to do with interest of his own,” Severus said.

“Are you sure? When we took him in this summer, I saw him start to think of you differently. Till then, you were just bitter and angry, but…” Remus shrugged. “You’ve changed, Severus, and I think for the better. Just…give it a shot. Be patient and calm. Maybe you’ll see that you can apply the level of composure you did that morning to your regular class. It might also help your migraines.”

“Is that a bet?”

Remus grinned. “I can make it one, but right now it’s more a challenge.”

Severus hummed. “Challenge accepted,” he said. “How long do I have to try for.”

“See if you can do it for a year,” Remus said. “I know there will be outbursts, so calm down. I don’t expect you to not get mad. Hell, I get mad. I just know how to control my temper. The point of this
challenge is to earn the respect of students without having to elicit fear. Just start with one class at a
time. Maybe one day you’ll find you’re just as popular as I am.”

“That I doubt.”

“Oh, I don’t know,” Remus said, leaning back in his seat. “If anything, it will be fun to see.” He
stood and grabbed his staff. “I don’t know about you, Severus, but I’m starving and would like to
have lunch before my third-year class.”

“Probably for the best. I’ve second-years next,” Severus said with a heavy sigh.

Remus took Severus’ hand in his own. “I know you can do it,” he said. “I’ve seen it, some of our
students have seen it already. And I think the rest of the school will appreciate how amazing you
really are.” He kissed Severus’ cheek. “Best of luck.”

“Don’t believe in luck,” Severus mumbled. “And I don’t expect it to really work. I just don’t have
the patience…”

“You do. You just need to relax a little bit, ensure that you have something for your headaches, and
remember that I’m here now and you can talk to me about what bothers you at the end of the day.”
Remus smiled. “It might also help to remember that not everyone in your class is a potions genius
like yourself.”

Severus nodded. “That won’t be hard.”

“And no threatening to poison their animals as a punishment.”

“I’m never living that down, am I?”

Remus paused and turned to him, frowning. “Severus, every time I remember that you tried that, I
get angry and I wonder why I’m still with you. Thankfully for your ass, the pros seem to outweigh
the cons,” he said.

Severus blinked, thinking on it. “You’re right,” he said. “I should know better than to even consider
doing that.”

Remus exhaled slowly. “I still don’t understand why you even tried to hurt Longbottom’s toad. What
would that have accomplished? Did you even consider thinking about what you were doing to that
kid? How terrified he is walking into your class?”

He let go of Severus’ hand go and ran his own through his hair. Severus could see that he was
shaking and he wanted to calm him down, but he also knew that if this had been on Remus’ mind for
as long as he thought, it would be for the best if he got it off his chest.

“I know you’re a good man, Severus,” Remus continued, shaking through his growing rage. “But
your students need to see that, too—especially students like Longbottom who struggle with your
class and end up struggling more because of their fear.”

Severus swallowed. “I’m not sure I can do this, but…”

“You can do it,” Remus said. “I know you can. I’ve seen it. There is so much kindness in you, Sev,
but it confounds me that you don’t let others know it.” He bit his lip. “Severus, is it…maybe it has
something to do with your father?”

The very word “father” sent a violent buzz through him.
“You don’t know anything about my father.”

“Because the only thing you ever told me was that he raped your mother,” Remus hissed. “I can’t imagine what that does to a child! I know you’re not him. I am not saying that. I know you’re stronger than that, but—Severus don’t walk away from me when we’re talking!”

Severus ignored him, striding away as fast as he could before the rage burst forth. Once in his office, he braced his hands on the desk, trying to breathe.

I am not my father, he thought.

I am not my father.

I am not my father.

I AM NOT MY FATHER!

Severus groaned, reflecting on various events in his life since the Potters died. He had vowed not to be like him and he tried so hard every day not to be, but…

He approached his pensieve, staring at the silvery glow and dipped his finger inside before falling into a memory.

He stood in the Potters’ living room and watched his younger self play with baby Harry’s little feet. In this memory, Harry was only a couple months old, still chubby and only communicating through whines and cries.

“I swear you’re half planning on kidnapping him,” Lily said setting a loaded tea tray on the coffee table.

His younger self scoffed. “I know from experience the mother’s handy with her hexes. Besides, I don’t think I’m equipped for parenthood even if I were to consider it.”

“You think so?” Lily asked, sitting beside him and smiling at the baby. “Because way I see it, you’re doing just fine with Harry. And I’ve told you many times before: you’re not your father.”

“I know I’m not, but…”

“Just because there’s a chance it can happen doesn’t mean it has to. You know what your family was like. You know it wasn’t normal. Add to it you didn’t have much of an escape from home or school, so it wouldn’t surprise me if things you don’t mean to let happen, happen anyway. You’ll just need to be more aware of what your actions cause and if you find yourself slipping, I’ll be there to talk.”

Severus approached the memory Lily. “You’re not here,” he said. “And I need you more than ever now because I’m afraid I have become him after all.”

His memory self continued to play with the babe’s toes. “It’s just scary to think I could be like him in the end,” he admitted.

“I don’t think that’s going to happen,” Lily said. “You’re stronger than that, Sev. Besides, I don’t know why you’re so worried about it. Your dad’s gone. You don’t have to let his ghost continue to affect you.”

“Ghost?”
“You know what I mean,” Lily ruffled his hair and pulled it into a lopsided ponytail. “His memory doesn’t have to haunt you anymore. And as for my idiot husband, how many times does he ask your forgiveness for the way he treated you? He’s definitely grown up since school. Still an idiot, though.”

“Yeah, still don’t like him much.”

“Well, he doesn’t like you much either, so he tells me,” Lily picked up her tea cup and took a sip. “But you’re both giving it an effort, so I would like to thank you for that.”

She set the cup down and smirked. “So, James and I were thinking…”

“Oh God,” Severus groaned. The baby giggled. Lily shoved him lightly.

“You and Remus—”

“Lily.”

“Double date.”

“No.”

“He still loves you and I know you still love him.”

“I don’t love him,” his memory self insisted.

Severus scoffed at that.

“How can I after what he did?”

“We told you what happened, Sev,” Lily said. “I don’t know what more to tell you.”

Severus heard the door open and left the memory to address the intruder: a house elf setting a tray down on his desk.

“What is this?”

“Lunch, Professor Snape, Sir,” the elf said. “Professor Lupin asked us to bring it to you, Sir.”

The elf bowed and with a crack, he disappeared.

Severus approached the food: chicken soup, a glass of pumpkin juice, and two bread rolls. Nestled to a corner was a note in Remus’ script. Severus picked it up.

I didn’t mean to upset you, Severus. I love you. – Remus

He glanced at the clock, noting that he had a half hour before the Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw first years came for their practicum double period. He would speak with Remus after the classes ended for the day. For now, Severus was content to let him worry.

Besides, if he was going to change, best to start now.

#

Remus’ fifth year Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw class were very inquisitive—yet more polite than the Gryffindors and Slytherins—about his condition.
So much so that some of them had stayed behind to ask more. He couldn’t exactly turn them away as it wasn’t as though clubs or after school activities were to start yet—not for another week or two as they sought out new members—and did his best to explain lycanthropy from his own point of view given what he knew about his condition and the effects of it.

After another half an hour, they dispersed and he slumped in his seat, rubbing the back of his neck.

“I’m pretty sure I won’t ever be as liked as you are, Pet.”

Remus turned to Severus, seeing him lean against the door. Severus moved closer and sat on one of the tables closest to the desk.

“And I know you didn’t mean to upset me earlier. I’m not ready to talk about my father with anyone. I’ve not talked about him since Lily died and to be honest, the only thing I can say is that I’m terrified to become him and I’m very scared that I have without realizing it in the way I treat our students.

“Lily was the only one I talked to about him because she knew what he was like. She saw what he did to me. She knew what he did to my mother.

“I don’t know if you noticed at all, uh, the scars on my back. They were from him hitting me with his belt whenever he was angry with me. The buckle always left cuts. He didn’t let me go to school until Hogwarts and even then, he didn’t want me to go, but my Mother managed to make sure I came.

“I partly think it was because he couldn’t afford it, but my mother taught me to read and write and arithmetic and…also protection magic. Mostly blood magic, which is often considered dark magic.

“It-it isn’t. When I met Lily, my mother also taught it to her, for the same reasons…to keep him from hurting me and her as much. Not that he could have, she had amazing parents, who did try to help my mother, too, even after finding out about magic.”

He sighed, blinking rapidly. “I…”

Remus stood and embraced Severus.

“I’m sorry for bringing up such memories,” he said. “I know it was easier to talk about it with Lily, but I’m here now, and I will listen when you need to talk about what happened to you.”

Severus returned the hug, fisting the back of Remus’ robes and shaking. Remus ran his fingers through Severus’ hair as Severus wept silently.

“I love you, Sev,” he whispered, kissing the top of his head. “Let’s eat in tonight.”

Severus nodded.

“I still can’t believe you’re defending Divination!”

Severus let go and dried his eyes as they went to monitor the growing argument between Lavender Brown and Hermione Granger.

“Trelawney is a hack!”

“She is NOT! She’s made many predictions that make perfect sense!”

Hermione turned to Harry and Ron. “Aren’t you going to say something?!”

They shrugged. “Easy O,” Ron said.
“Yeah,” Harry agreed. “All we got to do is predict each other’s horrific, bloody deaths and she’s happy.”

She groaned and glared at Brown. “Tarot cards, crystal balls, tea leaves, and all of that nonsense is no different from charlatans in the muggle world. It is not a proper magical practice and I refuse to listen to someone who reveres such humbug!”

“It is not her fault you couldn’t show off your way to an O, Hermione!” Lavender snapped.

Hermione shrieked and charged at her.

Remus waved his staff, stopping the girls from lunging at each other with an invisible hold raising them a couple feet off the ground.

“All right, now do I have to get Professor McGonagall or can you two handle this like mature young women without resorting to violence?”

The girls glared at each other, but nodded.

Remus set them down. “I’ll have to take ten points each, for attempting to start a fight in the hall, but otherwise, you’re free to go.”

Lavender seemed close to tears and ran off, probably to cry in solitude.

As for Hermione, she was frozen and required help from Harry and Ron to move.

“That was cruel, Professor,” Ron said.

Severus clapped slowly behind him.

“Don’t encourage that!” he snapped at Severus.

“Weasley, remember who you’re speaking to,” Severus said.

“C’mon, Mione,” Harry said. “You too, Ron, we can’t afford to lose another point.”

“Right,” Ron mumbled, helping Hermione move away.

Once they had turned a corner to go back to Gryffindor Common Room, Remus returned to his classroom. “I feel dirty.”

“Yeah, that might’ve been a teensy bit harsh on the first day of school, but I’m very impressed.”

“And amused, given that grin,” Remus added.

“You could’ve let them fight.”

“Would you have?”

“No.”

Remus shook his head. “So, what next?”

“Pray I don’t cause any fatal heart attacks on the fourth years tomorrow. In particular, the Gryffindors.”

“What time? I have them tomorrow?”
“Third and fourth period.”

“Oh, good,” Remus sighed, hand over his heart. “I thought there was a scheduling mix-up. I have them first and second period.”

“Ohh…good luck with my lot.”

“Thanks. If there’re any issues, you’ll be the first to know,” Remus assured him. He exhaled. “Are you okay, Severus?”

Severus crossed his arms.

“I just want to be certain. I never meant to imply that you could be like him.”

“It is certainly a fear of mine, but it is also known that I’m at a higher risk of being more like him since the abuse started at such a young age for me. I can tell myself I won’t, but…thinking on the things I’ve done, the anger and the hate I feel…yeah, I’m scared I have and I don’t know what to do. Just…it’s a horrifying feeling, to be honest. I’ll be all right. It’s just…I’ll figure out what I’m doing that mimics him, but this challenge you gave me…I will try. I don’t know how long it’s going to take…”

“You can do it,” Remus said. “I know you can.” He kissed Severus. “I’ll ring a house elf to bring tea.”

~October 1972~

Lily dabbed at the blood dripping down Severus’s back. He hid his face from her.

“You should tell a teacher.”

“No. They can’t help.”

“They can’t if you don’t say anything,” Lily said, reaching for the essence of dittany she brewed a few days ago. Severus sniffed as the sting ebbed. Myrtle sat on the sink, watching them.

“It’s not that easy to tell a teacher,” she said. “I did once and it just made the teasing worse because of it.” Lily glared at Myrtle.

“See, even the ghost knows what can happen if you rat.”

“Then you keep telling.”

“Oh right, sure, let’s make it worse than it already is,” Severus snapped. “It’s bad enough I get hit like this at home, but here? Lily, I’m sick of it. I don’t know if I can keep this up.”

“You can,” she said, placing the stopper back in the bottle. “And you will. Things will get better, Severus. You just need to hang in there and remember that I’m there with you.”

Severus sat up and put his shirt back on.

“But maybe I should go out with Potter.”

“No,” Myrtle and Severus chorused.

“He’s rude,” Myrtle said.
“And an arse,” Severus added.

“Conceited.”

“Disgusting.”

“Uncouth.”

“Stupid.”

“A bully.”

“A jock bully.”

“But if I do, maybe he and his friends will leave you alone.”

“I doubt it,” Severus said. “Potter might, but not Black. Besides, it’s not just them, Lily. I’m…I’m just…”

“You’re not an outcast or an outsider. You’re brilliant, Severus, and you’re kind. It’s Potter and his lot that should be treated as an outsider and seen for what he is!”

“Although, if something bad happens and you die,” Myrtle said. “You’re welcome to share my toilet, Sev.” Lily laughed, falling over and kicking her feet, and Severus scooted away from Myrtle.

“If that does happen, Myrtle, I appreciate the offer, but…let’s not make this more awkward than it already is. Okay?”

“Just offering,” Myrtle said, nestling up to him again and resting her head on his shoulder. “I’d make the same offer to Lily, but I think that would end up crowding up the u-bend.” Lily exploded in another giggle fit and Severus wished Myrtle wouldn’t flirt with him so much. It was just so awkward.

It’d be better if Lily didn’t encourage her either.

Severus scooted away from Myrtle again. “I think I’ll go back to my dorm, see if I can do some homework.” Lily stood and checked the hall.

“You’re good,” she said.

Severus stepped outside and leaned against the wall, appearing as though he was waiting for Lily to exit. Once she came out, herself, she gave him a hug and they went their separate ways.

Chapter End Notes

http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/when-the-abused-becomes-the-abuser

Chapter 9

~September, 1994~

The class ended fairly well, if Severus was to say so.

His students still seemed uneasy by his change in attitude and while some guessed accurately the change had something to do with his relationship with Remus, others believed he was imperiused, or Remus on Polyjuice.

That was actually a rather entertaining rumor…

Completely incorrect, but still amusing.

With the sound of a bell signaling the end of his fourth year class, he dismissed them, but there were two he decided to speak to before letting them escape.

“Granger, Longbottom,” he called at the end of class. They approached. Neville pale and quivering, and Hermione not so timid, but obviously nervous. Severus motioned for them to sit.

“I’m pairing the two of you for my class. Longbottom, the last three years, your work has been appalling and I admit perhaps I’ve not been…the most ideal teacher.”

He ignored the snort from Hermione.

“So, I think if you work with Granger, you’ll be able to improve your grade to an A by the end of the first term. I also would like you both to sit in the front of the class so that you have easier access to the board. Just follow what’s written and you’ll brew a manageable potion if not a perfect one. Sound fair?”

“Yes, Sir,” they said.

With that, he sent them off to lunch and did a count for the potions and locked the cabinet and went to his office, wondering what he’d eat only to see that a meal had already been sent. Remus grinned.

“What is this?”

“Lunch. I figured that was obvious.” He kissed Severus. “I heard you with Neville and Hermione.”

“Damn.”

Remus laughed. “Don’t be that way. I’m proud of you.” He wrapped his arms around Severus’ neck. “Of course, I get a little entertainment. My last class was more curious about what I did to you rather than my being a werewolf. I was a bit flummoxed at first.”

“Easiest answer is that I love you and want to make you happy,” Severus said. “Now I’m starving and have Third years in an hour. Again.”

“You can do it, Love.”

“I know, but there are other things I’d rather do.” He emphasized the suggestion with a firm squeeze to Remus’ ass and Remus scoffed.

“If you’re about to make a comment about how you’d rather be doing me, I would like to remind
“you that you already are,” Remus said.

He kissed him once more and released Severus, heading toward the food. Severus watched, fixated on the curve of Remus’ buttocks.

Remus sat down. “You can stare at me all you like, but all that will do is make me eat your food.”

“Good thing I’m hungry, then,” Severus said, finally approaching his desk.

“Apparently not for chicken,” Remus said.

“Shut it. Paws off my drumstick.”

#

He had looked forward to relaxing his first Thursday evening of the year, but having Hermione enter his office to report Alastor for performing the Unforgiveable Curses in front of them sort of sent that toppling over. Poor girl was talking too fast and that was all he got, but he wasn’t about to go and have words with his successor without a clear and coherent explanation.

“Breathe, Hermione. There you go. What happened?”

“He performed them,” she said. “In class.” His heart dropped.

“On a student?”

She shook her head. “On a spider, technically, but still! Neville’s beside himself, Harry’s sort of… out of it, Ron’s been sick in the loo for a bit now—mostly because he’s arachnophobic—but he can’t get away with that! Can he?”

Remus scratched the back of his head. “I’ll go talk to him. The Unforgiveable Curses aren’t supposed to be taught till you’re N.E.W.T. level. He might be extreme and even a little eccentric, paranoid, but he was one of the best aurors to be in the ministry for a reason. And as for performing them, well, I’ve performed them last year with a cockroach for our current seventh years.”

Hermione paled, glaring at him.

“Those curses…you do need to know them and how to recognize them,” he continued. “If he finds it necessary to teach you about forbidden spells and how to recognize them, that’s fine. Especially given the risk you and your friends constantly put yourself in.

“For instance, I didn’t know about the werewolf revealing spell till last summer and I’m an adult. Perhaps if my teachers had taught us about spells that are forbidden, I probably would have known how to defend myself against it.”

Hermione crossed her arms and stared at the floor. “It doesn’t feel right.”

“I understand,” Remus said. “I’ll talk to him, but in the end, it is his class now. I have no right or reason to tell him how to teach it. Now if he were to start using the spells on you and your classmates, that’s cause for concern.”

Hermione nodded. “Sorry to bother you, Professor,” she said. She stood and fled his office. Remus sighed, massaging his forehead. He could use some tea, but Severus would be up with his first Wolfsbane potion of the year and the potion was most effective on an empty stomach.

As if Severus could read his mind from the other room, he appeared out of Remus’ office and set the
steaming goblet down.

“Rough day?” he asked.

“Not really,” Remus said. “Alastor performed the Unforgivables for the fourth years. Bothered a few, according to Hermione. Including herself.”

Severus hummed. “I’d personally wait till they were fifth years at most, but eh.”

“I try not to demonstrate such spells for my students till they’ve passed their OWLs,” Remus said. “But then again... there are spells everyone should know that might not count as basic, but still important.” He picked up the goblet and pinched his nose, chugging the vile potion. Once finished, he grimaced and handed the empty goblet to Severus.

“You good?”

Remus nodded, if he tried to speak, he’d probably vomit. Once he didn’t feel like he would gag on it as much, he sighed. “I hate that potion. I love how it works, but I can’t stand its taste.”

“I know, Baby,” Severus said, rubbing his back. “I’m working on a way to make it more effective and taste better, but in the meantime, you’re stuck with the original brew.” He summoned a cup and filled it with cool water, placing that in front of Remus. “Just little sips for now to help settle your stomach and rid the taste from your mouth.”

“And it doesn’t have any effect on the potion?”

“No. Water is an essential base for pretty much everything remotely liquid. But like I said: little sips for now. You don’t want to drink too much and end up making yourself sick anyway.”

“Okay,” Remus said, picking up the cup and slowly drinking the contents. It was a slow process, but it did clear most of the taste of the Wolfsbane potion by the time he had finished drinking.

Severus leaned against the desk, peering down at Remus. “I was thinking that, since Hogsmeade weekends are about to start, we could take a stroll. Lunch at the Broomsticks, see if there’s anything good at Tomes and Scrolls.”

Remus hummed. “I’d like that. My ankle’s doing better these days, too.”

“Good,” Severus said, leaning down to kiss Remus. He scowled. “Ugh, now I really will work harder to get that potion to taste better. There’s still a bit of it lingering on your lips. Vile doesn’t even begin to describe it!”

Remus laughed as Severus sputtered, summoning a glass to fill with water of his own.

“Well, on behalf of the lycanthrope community, I would like to say thank you for your hard work,” Remus said. He stood and grabbed his staff. “I’ll go brush my teeth and then we can snog proper.”

“Please do,” Severus said. “I’d rather you taste like mint than wolfsbane and mandrake root.” Remus laughed again, heading to their quarters.

“I really fucking love you, Snape, you damn sexy bastard.”

“Don’t you forget it, Lupin,” Snape bit back, still grimacing.

#
He took Alastair’s cup, thanking him. Say what you like about the man’s temperament, he brewed an excellent cup of tea.

“Take it this meeting has to do with the unforgiveables with the fourth-year Snakes and Lions,” Alastair stated around his own tea cup.

“Miss Granger was rather disturbed,” Remus said. “But as long as none are performed on students, I have no qualms about it myself. They’d learn about those curses eventually, so what’s the harm in learning about them sooner?”

Alastair snorted. “You’re a right chap, Lupin, for a wolf.”

“So are you, for an Auror,” Remus retorted. Alastair stared at him and the awkward silence grew. “My apologies. I’ve had some bad run-ins regarding Aurors over time and not one was all that pleasant.”

“I understand.” Alastair sat down, sighing. “Werewolves don’t have the best reputation. And what with the potions, I bet your condition’s better.”

“It’s manageable,” Remus said. “Got through last year on it thanks to Severus. As long as no one else finds out about the Werewolf Revealing spell, nothing should go wrong this year as well.”

Alastair harrumphed. “Cowardly thing that was,” he said. “Not surprised Death Eaters would do it. They’re a yellow-bellied lot.”

No, not all, Remus thought. Severus wasn’t, but then again, he never truly was a Death Eater to begin with. “I agree,” he said. “The werewolf that turned me was most certainly a coward as well. Most of us wolves aren’t so bad. We might commit crimes, but it’s less out of cowardice and more —”

“Desperation,” Alastair said. “Makes a man, no matter what his state, do things they regret in the end. Now, remind me what the consequences are of using Unforgiveables on students?”

“You mean aside getting fired and going to Azkaban? Well, I kind of get a little protective of my students. But I would expect you’d know that, Alastair.”

“Course,” he chuckled. “Well, good thing I asked. Kind of like it here. Might even leave retirement to keep teaching if I make this year. Unless you broke the curse last year.”

“You know, I might have, and yet History of Magic works better for me given how my state can be, treated or not. And who better to teach Defense Against the Dark Arts than an Auror. Someone who has had experience in the field? Even if I did keep it, my range of knowledge is limited compared to yours.”

“Well, you did manage to teach Potter a decent Patronus, I hear. Still, it’s only been two weeks since term started.”

Remus finished his tea.

“Still time to see where it goes. And Lupin, next time, we ought to have real drinks. Bring Snape, too,” he said. “Us tough guys got to stick together, aye?”

Remus laughed. “I don’t know if I qualify as tough, but I suppose there’s some truth to that sentiment.”
Severus dragged the tip of his nose down Remus’ torso, glancing up briefly. Remus’ hands gripped the ropes binding his hands to the headboard and the red blindfold nearly matched the heat in his cheeks. Remus’ lower lip was caught in his teeth. Severus smirked, returning to his ministrations, gripping his lover’s cock. He gave it a couple pulls, spreading pre-come over the tip. Remus sighed, releasing his lip, and falling lax.

“Master…”

“You like that, Pet?” Severus asked.

“Yes,” Remus hissed. “Please, I need your cock, Master.” Severus hummed, continuing to stroke his Remus. “I need it, my lord, please.”

“Oh, Pet, no need to beg,” Severus said. “I fully intend to give you my cock, just not yet.” He licked the tip, relishing in the hiss emanating from Remus’ lips.

“My lord, I…oh…please kiss me.”

Severus chuckled, licking a stripe from the base to the tip. “A kiss? Is that all?” Remus shuddered as Severus dragged his nails over his side, and nodded.


“Master, you tease!”

“Teasing?” Severus said. “I’m not teasing you, my sweet boy. I fully intend to give you what you desire tonight. But how can I do that if you aren’t clear with me about what it is you want?” He moved his hand from Remus’ cock to rub a finger against his hole. “Perhaps here is where you want a kiss?”

Remus bit his lip again. He nodded.


“I want you to kiss my ass.”

“Very well,” Severus said, standing. He waved his wand, binding one of Remus’ legs to the headboard as well. He licked his lips and cast a cleansing spell before nuzzling Remus’ bollocks, relishing the musk before teasing the puckered entrance with his tongue. Remus wiggled, muscles tense and quivering. Severus hushed him before continuing to lick Remus.

Remus was silent above him, relaxing at each lick, breathing steadily as Severus stabbed him with his tongue. Severus squeezed the globes of Remus’ ass and pulled his tongue out, licking his lips.

“Did you like your kiss?”

“Yes, Master,” Remus replied. “Can I have another? Please, Master?”

Severus sighed, massaging Remus’ ass cheeks. “I spoil you too much,” he said. “But since you’ve been such a good boy, it’s hardly as if you don’t deserve a little spoiling.” He emphasized his point
by giving Remus’ hole a swift lick. “And yet, there are so many other places where I could kiss you.”

“I know, but I want your lips on my ass. Please, my lord,” Remus said. Severus hummed, closing his lips over one of Remus’ testes and nibbled. “Damn it, Severus, rim me!”

Severus arched a brow and released Remus’ bolocks.


The nearest gag flew into his waiting hand and Severus fitted it between Remus’ teeth. Once assured it wouldn’t hurt his lover too much, Severus stared at him, feeling very predatory.

“You’re so very fuckable,” he said, running his fingers gently over Remus’ scarred skin—many self-inflicted, some not—and kissed the bound leg. “I’ve half a mind to just put something up your beautiful ass and watch you be fucked by it for my own desire.”

Remus tugged on his binds, breathing deeply. Severus moved to around to the other side and kissed Remus’ forehead.

“One day, I want to make love to you, my pet. Just to kiss you and worship you. If you wish it.”

Remus hummed around the gag and Severus looked at him.

“You like that?” Remus nodded.

“Next time, hm?”

Remus nodded again, pivoting his hips up.

Severus chuckled. “Even with a gag in your mouth, you’re able to get your point across. So greedy tonight.” He summoned the lube. “And it’s the weekend at that. I ought to punish you and remind you the virtues of patience, but I’ve a feeling that’s what you really want. Whatever for, I’ll never know. No, your punishment is to wait and be patient while I prepare you good and well.”

Remus whined around the gag. He certainly wasn’t interested in being patient, eager for a rough fucking. Not that Severus minded that. Not at all. But when it comes down to it, Severus found he liked to savor his sub. Prolong the pleasure if he could.

And this was the first time he could since summer. Having a teenager around sort of meant there was need for some constant supervision less he wanted to run around, terrified what Potter broke in his inattentiveness. But now…

Classes were done for the week, they had finished grading homework assignments for the week, and now he was going to make Remus sweat.

Severus held onto the other leg as he opened Remus up for him, one finger at a time, making sure to massage his prostate between stretches. Just as Remus was certain to come, he would pull away and add another finger.

“You’re doing so good, Pet,” Severus said. “So very good.”

Remus wiggled, perhaps wanting to buck his hips. Severus merely snorted and kissed his cheek as he began to massage Remus’ prostate again. He watched Remus shudder and roll his hips, cock
leaking over his belly.

“Merlin knows you’re gorgeous,” Severus whispered in Remus’ ears. “You, my love, are going to be so wonderfully fucked tonight. Ah-ah-ah,” he pulled his fingers out and inserted the fourth, gently stretching the entrance open. “You’re not coming yet.”

The pathetic mewl Remus made almost had Severus give in and let him come. Almost.

“Poor puppy,” he purred, kissing Remus’ forehead. “Your master will give you what you want in a bit. Just a little bit longer.”

Remus huffed, squeezing around Severus’ fingers. Severus felt his cock twitch. And why wouldn’t it show interest? He’d been half hard since tying Remus to the bed after dinner anyway. “You’re not going to get me to fuck you faster, Pet, no matter how much you desire it.” Remus relaxed. “Good boy,” he said, and continued to stretch him open.

Satisfied the Remus was open enough, Severus at last divested his clothes and nestled between Remus’ legs’. Remus relaxed, exposing his neck for Severus to lick. Severus accepted the gesture, dragging his tongue along the salty skin over Remus’ Adams apple. He eased inside Remus, watching his face for signs of over-discomfort.

Assured that Remus wasn’t too uncomfortable, Severus stood on his knees and gripped Remus’ hip in one hand, the thigh in the other, thrusting deep and fast and pulling out slow and torturous. He huffed, his thrusts growing slowly more erratic.

Severus gripped Remus’ cock and stroked as he grew close to his own orgasm. Remus keened around the gag, muscles tensing. Then he arched, gasping and tugging at the bonds as his orgasm pulsed, tightening every muscle. Severus gasped, leaning over his lover as he came as well. He stroked Remus’ cheek, loosening the gag and removing the blindfold.

“Feeling better, Pet?” Severus asked. Remus nodded, wrapping his leg over Severus’ waist. “What are you doing?”

“Don’t want you to leave.”

“You mean you want my cock buried inside you a little longer,” Severus said, snorting.

“Don’t judge! You feel amazing.”

Severus laughed, resting his forehead against Remus’ shoulder. “As honored as I am that you want my cock nicely kept in place, we’ll eventually need to move apart and I would like not to be stuck to you, if you get my meaning.”

“Well now that you put it that way, get off!” Remus snapped. Severus kissed him and pulled out. He released Remus and stretched.

“You’re adorable, Pet, you know that?”

“I do,” Remus said, lying back on the bed. Severus entered the bathroom to start a fresh bath for them. “Oi! Sev! Can we have bubbles?”

“We’re almost out, Remus,” Severus stated, but grabbed the bottle and poured viscous liquid into the running water.
“We can get more at Hogsmeade tomorrow,” Remus said, entering the bathroom and leaning against the door frame. Severus arched a brow. “It’s not like we’re bound to the school, after all and I happen to like my bubbles.”

Severus snorted. “Should we get champagne, too? Maybe a few scented candles, my overly luxurious Pet?” Remus swatted his arm before stepping into the bath. Severus entered behind him, wrapping his arms around Remus and kissing his shoulder.

“So, you want to make love to me?”

“Do you object?” Severus asked.

“Not at all,” Remus said, leaning against him. “I want that, too. I’ve not had anyone I trust enough to have such an intimate experience with before, but if ever there was one, I can’t imagine it not being you, Severus.” He turned the water off and leaned back against Severus’ chest. “That is, if you’re willing.”

“If I wasn’t, I wouldn’t suggest it,” Severus said. “Besides, what sort of Dom would I be if I didn’t take the time to romance my Sub once in a while?”

“As if I need wooing or romancing,” Remus said. He turned around and straddled Severus’ lap. “You have me here, in your arms, and you have my heart. And until you decide you don’t want me anymore, my heart is yours and so is my loyalty.”

Severus hummed, scratching Remus’ back. “I can’t imagine letting you go, so I suppose I’ll just have to cherish anything you decide to give, heart, body, soul, loyalty…you name it.”

“And I thought I was being sappy,” Remus laughed. “I promise not to tell anyone.”

“Thank you for that,” Severus said with a sarcastic eye roll. “I would hate to see what would happen if our coworkers and students find that out.”

Remus turned around again, happily nestled against Severus warm, damp chest. Severus kissed him.

“Waffles?”

“Please! I’m starving.”

“You’re always starving,” Severus teased, sending the order through to the kitchen.

~October 1994~

If anyone was dreading the arrival of the school guests, it was mostly Filch. That said, everyone had a fit of both excitement and apprehension as the thirtieth came and now, as Remus smoothed down his shirt, wondering if there was much of a reason behind bothering with his appearance.

Severus wrapped his arms around him and kissed his cheek. “You shaved.”

“I try to,” Remus mumbled. “But it’s hard to sometimes, especially after a full moon.”

“I doubt anyone minds your five o’clock shadow, Pet,” Severus said. “But this is nice, too.” He kissed the soft cheek and squeezed Remus’ ass.

“Do you intend to grope me in front of our guests?” Remus asked. Severus hummed, kissing his neck.
“No,” he said. “But you look so fuckable I might go ahead and grope you anyway, guests be damned. If anything, it would let anyone else who might show interest know you’re mine.” Severus let go and slapped Remus’ ass. “Hungry? I’m famished.”

Remus linked his arm around Severus’.

“Always,” he said, grinning.

He squeezed Severus’ ass and ran off, laughing as Severus shouted at him. Of course, he couldn’t get far due to his ankle inflaming not long after. Severus caught him around the middle and kissed him.

“Don’t push yourself too much, Pet,” he said. “Let’s eat, then I have to go collect my pack of ungrateful overgrown rich brats to welcome the Durmstrang and Beauxbaton lots. And for goodness sakes, take it easy on your blasted ankle.”

“Sometimes I forget I even injured it,” Remus confessed, rubbing it. “But yeah, I don’t think I’m going to be running any marathons today, that much is certain.”

From there, they walked up to the Great Hall and ate decently enough to feel full till long past lunch. As they ate, Remus eyed the extended tables, granting more elbow room in the meantime. Over the main entrance were three banners rather than the standard four.

The Hogwarts school emblem was obvious, and he could guess which banner belonged to which.

After breakfast was a matter of helping Filch rid the school of any further nastiness if need be—no thanks to the Weasley Twins—and then aided Minerva in rounding up the Gryffindors. On the other side, he could see Severus snapping at his Slytherin charges to stand straight and look sharp.

“Ron!” Remus called, motioning for him to fix his tie. Ron did so and double checked with Harry who nodded, fidgeting with his own school tie.

“Thank you, Remus,” Minerva said. “Ms. Brown, get that ridiculous thing out of your hair!” Lavender pulled free the butterfly barrette with a scowl. “Probably wouldn’t have been able to get far without you, you know.”

“I’m not so sure of that.”

“Well, regardless, at least I feel assured that if ever there is a need for a new head of house, I can trust you’ll do well.”

“There are other Gryffindor teachers.”

“Aside from Albus and Hagrid? No. Not really. I like Hagrid, but I don’t think he’d make much of a House Head. Most of the teachers are Ravenclaw or Slytherin graduates. So my selection is slim—ah, here they come.”

Remus looked up, following Minerva’s line of sight to see a chariot drawn by a pair of white Pegasus horses. Once landed, Remus could see the Beauxbaton school crest on the door. The doors swung open and a man aided a large woman step out.

The woman in question was tall and broad, nearly as tall as Hagrid, and stern of face. Following her were a group of young men and women, shivering from the chill.

“Would think they’d know to dress for the weather,” Minerva mumbled to Remus.
“School’s in the south of France, right? Supposed to be warmer there.”

“Welcome to Scotland, aye?’”

Dumbledore kissed the woman’s hand just as a large ship broke the surface of the great lake, waving a flag with the Durmstrang banner. When the ship docked, a man led a group of young wizards and a witch up front.

“I thought all these schools were co-ed.”

“Durmstrang is known to have a higher acceptance rate toward wizards,” Minerva said, “But there are a few witches, of course. Used to be a lot more even, given that it was founded by a witch intending it to be a school particularly for witches only…well, as you see, things change here and maybe one day they’ll get it in the middle as it should be.”

Remus hoped so. It wouldn’t do to just have an abundance of wizards and a handful of witches…

Albus embraced the man, who then kissed the woman’s hand.

After which, they filed into the school as orderly as possible.
Dinner was an interesting affair.

Most of the boys seemed entranced by a few of the French girls. It was at least a little entertaining to watch a few make fools of themselves.

*Speaking of fools,* Remus thought as he felt Severus’ foot press against his own. *Shave just a little and you might get an overly affectionate lover. Well, two can play at this game.*

He pushed back, arching a brow at him. Severus smirked.

“What are you two grinning about?” Ponoma asked.

Remus pulled his foot away, and shoved potatoes in his mouth.

“Nothing really,” Severus replied. She rolled her eyes.

“You’re as bad as the students, the two of you.”

Remus swallowed. “I don’t know about that,” he said. “Those kids as soon as they hit NEWT levels seem to get rather randy in the halls.” Severus nodded. “We have our own room for that.”

“Well, keep it there,” Ponoma snapped. “At least *attempt* to have a little decorum.”

“Touchy,” Remus muttered.

Severus laughed and stabbed his chicken breast. “I highly doubt our guests will give a rat’s ass what we do as long as we don’t start humping on the table.”

Remus covered his mouth to prevent from spitting juice out.

Ponoma smacked Severus’ arms, despite her own grin.

“I love you,” Remus said, nudging him.

At the end of dinner, Dumbledore stood and approached the front of the teacher’s table to greet their guests again and to present the selection process for the tournament.

“I must reiterate, mostly for our Hogwarts students, that only those seventeen and older may compete. Hence,” he pulled his wand out and drew a line around a pillar holding a box. “An age line. In the next twenty-four hours, as many of you may put your names in this.” He tapped the box and it vanished to reveal a large cup with a blue flame floating above the rim. “The Goblet of Fire. I wish you all best of luck and as of this moment, the Triwizard Tournament will begin.”

#

Most of the students stayed in the hall after class to see who would be brave enough to put their name in the goblet. Several teachers, Remus included, stayed behind, taking bets.

Rolanda nudged him. “Would you put your name in?”

Remus hummed. “Given my condition, no, but I would have made all my friends do it and maybe Severus, too. He’s a damn good strategist.”
“Sickle on Diggory,” she said, nudging him.

Remus wrote it down. “We are horrible role models,” he said, setting his quill down.

“They don’t need to know that,” Rolanda said.

“Fair enough—and here comes the Weasley Twins.”

“Oh, this will be good.” The twins showed off the aging potion they completed and were about to drink it when Hermione spoke up:

“It’s not going to work,” she sang.

The twins approached, sitting on either side of her while she explained the flaw in their plan.

“Well, Granger, say it does.”

“It won’t.”

“But if it does, you go out with Fred next Hogsmeade weekend.”

Hermione looked at Fred, then at George.

“If it works, I will snog him,” she said, “In the middle of the Great Hall right here, right now.”

“Mione!” Ron shouted.

Harry was sniggering in his own textbook.

“Pity it won’t,” Rolanda whispered to Remus. “Send me to Azkaban, but Granger is becoming a fine woman and I would pay to see that.”

Remus stared at her. “You should go to Azkaban for that, Hooch. I should tell Aurora.”

“Please don’t,” Rolanda said. Remus snickered evilly and the twins jumped in, placed their names in and when nothing happened, Rolanda and Remus thought, perhaps, they had succeeded.

“Pucker up, Baby!” Fred shouted at Hermione. Then the fire turned orange and they were blasted backward from the goblet, hair gone white with beards to match.

“I suppose I don’t have to pucker up after all,” Hermione said.

The twins started wrestling and Remus sighed, setting the parchment down to go break it up. He pulled them apart.

“Off to the hospital wing, you two,” he said. “And no fighting.”

With that, they left, starting their hitting again once certain Remus wasn’t watching (unaware that he was). He turned to Hermione.

“You made that bet because you knew it wouldn’t work. Ms. Granger you know betting isn’t wise.”

“As if you’ve any right to talk about betting, Professor,” she said. “You and all the other teachers are betting on who’s going to get selected to as champions.”

“No we’re not. I’m insulted that you even think so,” he said.
The Durmstrang students came in right after, putting in their own names one by one. Ron slapped Harry’s arm, motioning at Krum, who spied them.

Remus wasn’t sure what to think of that look, but whatever it was, it connected with Harry. Almost like a direct line between them.

Then Krum left, school robes swishing behind him.

“What was that about?” Ron mumbled.

Remus wondered the same thing.

“I heard it was entertaining in the hall a few hours ago,” Severus said.

Remus snorted looking for a suitable robe. “You could say that,” he said. “Hermione almost got snogged by Fred Weasley.”

“Almost?”

Remus recounted the event for Severus, who found it terribly entertaining—in particular when Remus told him what Rolanda had confessed.

He shook his head. “Bloody Landa,” he said. “Of course she’d decide to say something like that.”

“She shut up when I threatened to tell Aurora.”

“That would shut anyone up,” Severus said. Remus kissed him. “Who are you betting on?”

“Warrington.”

“Slytherins got to stick together, aye? Well, in that case, I’m placing my money on Johnson,” Remus said. He finished donning the robe and took Severus’ hand in his own. “Ready to go, Love?”

“Indeed.” Severus kissed him and they left. “May the best man—or woman—win.”

~November 1973~

Lily skidded to a halt at the Slytherin table and slammed a piece of paper in front of him. On it was a painting of two foxes in period dress surrounded by other animals—rabbits, bears, and so on.

“Robin Hood is in theatres,” she said. “Mum’s taking us over the Hols.”

“No,” Severus said.

“What?” Lily said, pouting.

“Oh, come on, Lily, don’t pout! Don’t you think we’re getting a bit old for Disney movies?”

“We went and saw the Aristocats…”

“That was three years ago,” Severus snapped. “We’re turning fourteen this year. I am not subjecting myself to further object for ridicule.”

“This won’t do that! I mean its Robin Hood.”
“With animal characters, Evans!” Severus said, waving the flyer in her face.

Her lower lip started to wobble.

“Lily, do not do this to me. Do not…”

Her green eyes glassed over.

“IF you start crying, I am walking away.”

“Please, Sev,” She said. “It’s no fun without you.”

“No.”

“Please?”

“No. You have a sister. Go with her.”

“Absolutely not. Tunie is ghastly these days.”

“Take. Tunie.”

“No. I want to go with you.”

“Then you are going alone because I will not go see one more Disney movie. At least not until I have children of my own and it won’t be so embarrassing anymore.”

Lily glared at him, and he at her.

She tutted. “Oh how fragile the male ego.” She took the flyer. “You’ll change your mind. You always do. See you in class, Sev.”

Rosier nudged Severus. “I don’t get your friendship with her, but you are fucked.”

“Don’t remind me,” Severus growled.

“You’re going to go to that hooded bird thing aren’t you?”

Severus glared at him. He sighed, nodding. “Yeah.”

“She has you wrapped around her finger, Mate.”

“I know. I’m fucked whenever it comes to that witch,” Severus sighed.

~Halloween 1994~

Harry met Severus’ eyes and in that moment, perhaps Severus seemed too stern to Harry because he looked away very quickly as he headed to the waiting room where the other champions sat.

As soon as he was gone, the hall buzzed.

Severus followed Albus and the other headmasters into the room.

Harry sat down in a chair, ashen. He jumped up when they approached.

“Harry,” Albus said gently. “Did you put your name in the Goblet of Fire?”
Harry shook his head. “Did you have another student do so for you?”

He shook his head again, blinking. After a moment, he approached Remus and embraced him.

“I didn’t…I don’t…”

“This isn’t something he would do,” Remus reminded Albus. “There has to be a way to fix this. He can’t compete.” Severus gently cast a Legilimency charm to gauge how much was true—

Then he left before Harry could even notice his presence.

“It’s unlikely he would even want to compete,” he stated. “Headmaster, a word?”

Albus approached him. “What do you suggest?”

“That he not compete,” Severus said. “He doesn’t want to compete, he didn’t tamper anything, didn’t find a way around the age line, nothing that I could see.”

“You see?” Albus repeated, disappointment in his eyes. “Legilimancy, Severus? On a student? Regardless there may be no other option available.”

“Well, then in that case, everyone else should have two champions!” Madame Maxime said. “It would only be fair. Either that or the boy does not compete.”

“He will not compete,” Remus said in a measure of affirmation and finality. “Someone put his name in the goblet, that much is certain. We don’t know why. How do any of us know if there is someone among us loyal to You-know-who who has put his name in the goblet? Tricked it somehow? What school is it saying Harry is from?”

“Ilevormorny,” Albus said. “Which he is certainly not a student of.”

“Obviously. Add to it, Harry isn’t old enough. He is fourteen. By that alone, he ought to be disqualified. Thirdly,” Remus looked at Harry and pushed him back a little bit. “Harry, do you want to compete?”

“No.”

“Would that be different if you were eligible?”

“No, I don’t think so. I don’t…outside of Quidditch I don’t really…I’m not competitive much and I really hate being put on the spot like what this would do. I was actually kind of relieved that I wouldn’t need to compete or do anything. Let alone…”

“Okay. There we are.”

“Unfortunately, it’s not that simple, Professor,” Crouch said. “The Goblet binds the witch or wizard to a contract of sorts. It’s not…it’s not a simple thing to break as disqualification.”

“But it was not Harry who put his name in the goblet. It’s not even his handwriting! Clearly someone over seventeen had to have done it,” Remus said. “Shouldn’t that be enough?”

Crouch shook his head. “I am sorry. He has to compete in the Tournament.”

Remus moved Harry over to Minerva and Severus. “Crouch, you are not going to force a child to compete in a life-threatening tournament, especially when he doesn’t want to compete! It is unethical, it is irresponsible, and it is foolish!”
“If it was that simple, we would not be having this discussion, Professor Lupin,” Crouch said. “As it
stands, you are not Mr. Potter’s guardian, neither is your partner, and where I stand, neither is Sirius
Black! And until that changes, not one of you has any say in what will happen regarding Mr. Potter’s
involvement in the tournament! Speculations as to how his name came out regardless!”

Severus took Remus’ shoulders, a steady anchor holding him grounded—keeping Moony from
coming out, at least on an emotional level.

“We’ll figure something out,” he whispered.

He stepped forward. “Mr. Crouch, we may not be Potter’s legal guardians, but do not think for one
moment that means we won’t do whatever we can in our power to protect him from every danger
presented. Do not, ever, delegitimize or underestimate how far we will go to protect him.”

With that, Severus took Remus’ hand and Harry’s shoulder, leading them both away from the others.
Once in the hall, Severus released them both.

“Harry, do you want to go back to your house?”

Harry shook his head, biting his lower lip.

He looked at Remus. “If you’re all right with it, I am.”

“Sure,” Remus said. “I think all of us could use a bit of time away from this. And thanks. I was about
to do something probably would regret.” He groaned angrily. “Bloody Crouch! Who forces someone
to do something they don’t want to do?! Particularly a kid?”

“I know, Pet,” Severus whispered as they walked the hallway toward their quarters, Harry taciturn
beside them. “We’ll figure it out.”

The rest of the walk was silent till they arrived in their quarters. Remus transfigured the couch into a
bed and lent Harry a shirt.

“Professors,” Harry said. “Will I have to compete?”

Remus and Severus glanced at each other. Severus sat beside him.

“I don’t know. We’re going to do what we can to make sure you don’t have to. But if we can’t
prevent it and you do end up having to compete, we will help as much as we can to get you through
it alive.”

“Harry, is what I said earlier…could any of it be true?” Remus asked.

Harry nodded. “My first year, Quirrell tried to kill me a few times, I think, while also helping
Voldemort. He-he was incorporeal at the time and was surviving in the back of Quirrell’s head.”

“Really?” Severus asked. “That explains the turban.”

“Actually, Professor Snape, I thought you were trying to kill me that year.”

Remus and Severus stared at him, stunned silent. Severus sighed and moved Harry to face him.

“I would never hurt you, Harry. Never. I know you don’t remember, but your mother was like a
sister to me. We’re you’re uncles. We aren’t blood, but that doesn’t mean we’re not family. Okay?”

Harry nodded.
Severus embraced him. “You have always had family, even when you don’t know it, Kid.” He kissed the top of Harry’s head. “Get some sleep.”

Harry nodded, breath hitched.

Once Harry was in bed, Remus hugged Severus and kissed him. “You never knew he thought that?”

“No,” Severus said. “I knew he didn’t trust me and that he didn’t like me. It wasn’t my job to be liked, after all, and maybe I was harder on him at first…maybe I hoped he had his mother’s talent for brewing or…I don’t know. I never expected…that.”

Remus hummed. “Too bad we can’t have children of our own,” he said. “You’d be a hell of a dad.”

“So would you,” Severus said, “I swear you could’ve given Molly Weasley a run for her money way you went up against Crouch. I love you, Remus.”

“I love you, too, Sev.”

The news in the prophet just a couple days later covered Sirius having a go at Crouch. Add to that, Severus was taking the time to ensure that Rita Skeeter didn’t get a chance to talk to Harry alone.

“Are you sure, we can’t do this alone, Professor?” she asked, smiling coyly.

“Definitely not,” Severus snarled.

“Well, then, in that case, here will have to do,” she said, sitting on the provided furniture. “You don’t mind if I use my quick quotes quill, do you?”

“Uh…”

“Yes,” Severus growled. “Use that quill, Skeeter, and I will break it.”

Skeeter hummed. “Well I do have normal dicta-quills I can use.” She smiled at Harry and pulled out a quill. Her pad and quill floated in the air. “Now, Harry, how is it that you, just twelve years old—”

“Fourteen,” Severus growled.

Skeeter arched a brow at Severus, but otherwise ignored him and continued the interview.

Every so often, Severus would interject, demanding that she behave herself whilst interviewing Harry. In the end, she left, annoyed and huffy about interfering teachers.

“Was she really that bad?” Harry asked.

“Get a few old Prophets and find any article with her byline. That bitch is nasty and I’ll be damned if she messes with you, Kid. It’s bad enough when she hunts adults. But you are a child and I will be damned if she latches those horrid claws onto you.”

Harry hummed. “Professor Lupin’s starting a school paper, right?”

“Yes. Ah…he’s gotten a few students.”

“Maybe we can do something for the school paper instead,” he said. “I might be able to do that.”
“Better than the Prophet at any rate.”

~THE HOGWARTS REPORT~

Introducing the Tri Wizard Champions

By Luna Lovegood

On Halloween, the Goblet of Fire spat out the name of four champions instead of three as was originally designed. How this happened is yet to be determined by the staff.

Top theories name that an older student placed the fourth name in as a cruel joke, that a follower of You-know-who is involved, and that the fourth champion is lying.

Still, I figured it best to talk to the only witch among the Champions.

Mademoiselle Fleur Delacour is a fair beauty of part-Veela ancestry in her final year at Beauxbaton Academy. But beauty alone isn’t all she is. Mademoiselle Delacour intends to use her skill and cunning to bring honor not only to her school, but also to her family name.

Mademoiselle Delacour is in favor of disqualifying the fourth champion.

“I do not believe he entered willingly,” she said. “And a tournament such as this ought to be fought only by willing participants.”

After a delightful chat on Veela afterward – see page X – Mademoiselle Delacour was dismissed and I moved on to speak with the Champion from Durmstrang and Quidditch Star, Viktor Krum.

Many know Mr. Krum from his achievements as Seeker for the runner-up Bulgarian team at last season’s Quidditch World Cup. While they lost the cup to Ireland, Mr. Krum believes his selection is a chance to redeem his honor. Mr. Krum is the youngest seeker known to have been recruited for a country team, a skilled duelist and transfigurationer in the process of mastering his animagi form.

Mr. Krum is also in favor of disqualifying the fourth champion with this to say:

“There are rules to such events for a reason. Even if he did find a way to enter, he is too young to compete, and through that does not have sufficient knowledge or skill. I do not doubt his valor. He’s a strong boy, a brave boy, but still a boy – a child. That alone should be enough to keep him from participating, contract or no. It doesn’t feel right to me.”

Following Mr. Krum’s interview we had a good discussion on magizoology native to his country – page XVII – it was time to speak with the first of the Hogwarts Champions: Mr. Cedric Diggory.

Mr. Diggory is a seventh year student at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Prior to becoming the Hogwarts Champion, Mr. Diggory was also deeply involved in Quidditch as the Hufflepuff team seeker. His skill set, aside from flying, includes charm work and defensive spell casting. When asked of his opinion on the fourth champion, Mr. Diggory did not state to be either for or against his disqualification, but did have this to say:

“He’s a good bloke and I think he’s been dealt a few unlucky hands. What will happen will happen regardless and if he is able to compete, then I look forward to competing with him again. This or Quidditch...doesn’t matter much. Regardless, it would be a Hogwarts victory.”
And as for the fourth champion, Hogwarts Fourth Year Harry J. Potter, the Wizard World has been abuzz as to what could have happened.

There is speculation that despite Potter’s humbleness, there is a hunger for power.

After an illuminating talk, it is safe to say that Mr. Potter has no desire for power to add to his undesired fame. He fairly stated that he never intended to compete in the tournament.

For the most part, Mr. Potter had looked forward to watching the tournament with his classmates rather than compete, having this to say:

“It would’ve been nice not to be in the limelight for once. I don’t know how this happened or who would put my name in the Goblet, but if I have to compete, then I’ll compete. I would much rather have enjoyed watching it and cheering on Diggory, you know? Let someone else have the fun of being in constant danger for once. Okay. Maybe not fun but I’m just tired of it, really. A lot of people make assumptions about me that are just not true at all. I’d be happier without all this madness, you know?”

Mr. Potter’s talent lies in Transfiguration and Defense, having mastered a Patronus charm in the previous year due to the inclusion of the Dementors having an adverse effect on his person.

After this discussion, we had a nice talk about the Patronus Charm as well as how chocolate can aid in relieving the effects of being in close proximity of a Dementor – page IV.

Hermione arched a brow at Harry.

“Luna Lovegood wrote this? It’s not about obscure creatures that have no documentation or…”

“She is a bit odd,” Harry said, “but she’s not a bad person. Actually, it’s kind of a relief being around her. Just I don’t know.”

Hermione hummed around her carrot stick. “So, Harry,” she said, the corners of her lips twitching upward. “Should you be disqualified?”

“You know, I kind of want to be. I don’t want to be in it anyway, so…”

“You can do this, you know.”

“I can, but I don’t want to,” he sighed.

“Well, you have my support regardless what happens next. And Professor Lupin and Professor Snape are doing what they can as well.”

Harry nodded. “They’d been great. Sometimes I forget they aren’t my parents…it sometimes feels like they are.”

“Does that bother you?”

“No, it’s…I don’t know,” Harry said. “It’s a weird feeling, a good feeling but it’s…I guess I’m not used to it, I guess? I don’t know. I just don’t know. I don’t have parents, so the way they act at times, it’s hard because they aren’t my parents and I just…I don’t…”

“You’ve gone through more than you ever should have and you don’t know what it’s like to really be loved by people who are willing to sacrifice so much,” Hermione said. “It’s not just Sirius. It’s also Professor Lupin and Professor Snape and maybe you’re getting attached to them because you
have been around them more, so it’s like you’re seeing what it’s like to have actual parents for the first time, in particular parents who know what you’ve been through and are intent on making sure you never go through it again.”

She took his hand. “Harry, you know now that you have two adults, same age as your parents would be if they lived, who cherish you. I mean, Ron and I can’t ever imagine what living with the Dursleys was really like. But you don’t have to live with them anymore. And you feel guilt and fear because you don’t want to make Professors Lupin and Snape mad at you.”

Harry nodded. “I can’t explain it.”

“You want their approval,” she said. “And you want them to be proud of you. When they aren’t, you feel bad because you disappointed them. Everyone here feels that. The Dursleys didn’t care, but Professor Lupin does. And Professor Snape does as well. So knowing that you have people who care you’re afraid to lose them because you’re afraid that one screw up will lose that care and love.”

Harry stared at his plate for a moment, then he nodded. “That might be it.”

“Then stop worrying and finish eating. I’d like to avoid those arses that love flashing the Potter Stinks badges all over the place. Maybe after this,” she waved the *Report* in the air, “some of them will get their heads on right.”
Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

NEW TAGS ALERT

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The contract binding Harry to the tournament was too ironclad. Even with the limit of his age and the lack of magical knowledge, he would have to compete out of a technicality.

No one really liked this. Harry spent another night in Severus’ and Remus’ room. Severus, Remus, and Sirius spent the better part of that night arguing with Albus, Crouch, Bagman, whoever contested their authority that Harry not be allowed to compete.

In the end, Sirius joined them in their room, pacing and shouting how Crouch was an imbecile. Remus was more concerned with keeping Harry calm. Severus was looking at wizarding laws and bylaws to see if there was anything that could help them avoid sending Harry into the ring.

Severus shut the book. “I’m sorry,” he said. “There’s nothing in here that will help.”

“I refuse to believe that,” Sirius said.

“Then you go ahead and take a look yourself.” Severus pushed the tome toward him. “If you find something, then great! We’ll use it. But in the meantime, we need to figure out how to get him through this tournament alive.”

Remus squeezed Harry’s shoulder. “So there’s really nothing to stop this?”

“Not from what I can find,” Severus said, massaging his forehead.

“We’re not the only ones who don’t want this!” Sirius said. “Regardless other people’s thoughts as to why, it’s agreed that Harry shouldn’t compete, so why the fuck are they making this more difficult than it needs to be?!” He pinched the bridge of his nose, growling. “I don’t understand it. This makes no sense to me.”

“If I have to compete, then I have to compete,” Harry said. “I can’t say I’m not scared because I am…”

“There’s no reason for you to be strong around us, Harry,” Remus said. “It’s okay to be afraid.”

“I know, but what’s the use of letting it get to me? It’s not going to help me if I do.” He looked up. “And I have more help than I thought I would have. We just need to figure out the tasks and get through them alive, right? Well, if I have to compete, I have to compete so I’ll do my best to get through them.”

Severus arched a brow at him. “You’re allowed to throw a tantrum, Harry. Given the situation, you’re within your right.”

Harry shrugged. “Stuff like this seems to happen to me a lot. I just… I don’t know why, but it does. I don’t see much point in throwing a tantrum over it or getting angry. What good does that do?”
Severus approached, kneeling down before him. “Pent up anger and fear will explode at the most inopportune time, Harry.”

Harry looked at his hands. “I don’t know how.”

“You’ve never screamed into a pillow or punched something?” Harry shook his head. “Never even been to a beater’s cage?”

“Beater’s cage?” Harry asked.

Severus turned to Sirius. “You’re taking him to a beater’s cage this weekend. We have to catch up on grading,” he said. Sirius snorted.

“Sure. Grading. But yeah, I’ll take him to one. Could use it to decompress as well. If only to prevent taking a swing at Crouch again.”

Remus patted Harry’s back. “Try to get some sleep. We’ve only so much time to figure out the first task and get you ready for it.” With that, they bade Sirius goodnight and left Harry alone. Severus cast a silencing charm on their room and arched a brow at Remus.

“Go ahead, Pet. I know you want to scream and yell, so go ahead.”

Remus shook his head, sitting on the bed. “I don’t know if I can. I feel I already have said and done everything I can. I feel drained, Severus. I don’t know if this is what defeat feels like, but…”

Severus sat beside him and embraced him.

“He’s just a child and somehow he keeps finding himself in life threatening situations. How can we stop this if they keep happening…” his voice caught in his throat.

Severus combed his fingers through Remus’ hair. “He’s stronger than most his age and I understand your need to protect him. At this point, all we can do is help him get through the tournament as unscathed as possible. I hate that that’s all we can do and I wish we could have gotten him out of the tournament. For now, we’ll just have to hope we can ensure his survival.” Remus nodded.

“I know that’s all we can do, but I just…I wish there was more we could do to keep him safe.” Severus lifted his head and kissed him. Remus sighed, returning the kiss.

#

“Dragons?!” Remus shouted. “Of all the creatures they could have chosen, why dragons?!?”

Severus and Harry watched Remus pace and snarl, half-forgetting that they were supposed to be looking into the physiology of the dragons Harry had seen. He nudged Harry, who snapped his eyes back to the book on dragons.

“There was…oh! That one. Common Welsh Green. And this one, the Chinese Fireball. Um…the Swedish Short Snout. And the last one was the Hungarian Horntail.”

“Then why are you still here?” Severus said. “Get on with it. You’ve homework on top of homework. I want at least one foot of parchment on each of these dragons and their weaknesses in three days.” Harry left the room heading in the direction of the library.

“I’m going mad. I don’t care what you say or do about it. I am going mad,” Remus growled. “It doesn’t make any sense to me to go about bringing dragons to the school especially…it’s not just
Harry! It’s also the fact that we’ve more than enough children to feed all four of these beasts easily!"

“We have dragon tamers and breeders on hand. There’s more than enough ways to ensure everyone’s safety, Remus. Besides, I kind of always wanted to see a dragon up close.”

“Not funny, Severus.”

“I’m not being funny. I really want to see a dragon. What? You’re telling me you never thought about it? Never wanted to see a dragon before?”

“Well…okay, just a little.”

“Ah-ha!”

“But this is different! This is our nephew going up against a dragon. If it was a different situation entirely, like a vacation, I wouldn’t mind it as much. But they want him to fight a dragon!”

“Yeah, I understand…how many times has he faced Voldemort so far and lived? A dragon’s a piece of cake after that and they don’t even possess human intelligence.” Severus reached out and grabbed Remus’ robes, pulling him over to him till his lover straddled his lap. “And Harry’s doing his research on them. He’ll be ready for whichever dragon he faces if I have any say to it.”

“I hope you’re right.”

“I hope so, too.” Severus kissed him. “Do you doubt me?”

“Of course not. No more than you do me.” Remus rested his forehead against Severus’. “I love you, Sev. More than you know.” They exchanged another kiss. “I’m going to help Harry with the dragon shit.”

“You do that if you like. I’ve got potion essays to grade.”

“Try not to rip your hair out, Love.”

Severus grinned. “Actually, they’ve improved quite a bit since I took up your challenge.”

#

Harry suppressed a groan at the giggling around both him and Viktor Krum, seated a little bit a ways from Harry and Hermione as they worked. Hermione turned and glared at one of the groups annoying them. Harry patted her hand.

“No point in letting them know that they’re annoying us. They’ll do what they bloody well want. Besides, they’re probably more interested in Krum anyway.” He set the parchment on Welsh Greens aside to dry beside his work on Chinese Fireballs and began to work on Hungarian Horntails.

“Could be about for you, too,” she reminded him. “Want to see the Great and Humble Harry Potter.”

“Shut up, Mione.”

Interrupted by more giggling, Harry stood and approached the girls, casting a silencing charm around them much to their shock. He stuck his tongue out at them and returned to the table. Hermione grinned. “What? They were being noisy.”

That was amazing, Harry. Just amazing. Okay.”
“A simple thank you would suffice,” he said, cracking his neck. Hermione cringed. “Sorry.”

“I hate you.”

“I know.” Harry turned back to his book taking notes. Several minutes more pass and their pile of homework dwindled. Hermione gathered her bags and swung it over her shoulder. “I’ll see you in the common room?”

“Yeah,” he said. “See you later, Mione.” She waved goodbye on her way out of the library. Harry huffed, massaging his neck as he moved on from Horntails to Swedish Short Snouts and how best to defeat them. He set his quill down to turn a page and it jumped to life. Harry stared at it as it began to write. After one sentence, the quill fell back down, as inanimate as before.

Harry peered at the sentence written:

_Have you ever heard of the Dimidium Animae?_

Harry swallowed and picked up his _Standard Book of Spells Grade 4_ and went to the back. Not there. The quill came to life again and once it fell, Harry looked at the paper again.

_It’s not a spell or something you would read in a textbook._

_It’s a state of being shared between two people who are, in other terms, soul-mates. Some people are attuned to their soul mate._

_Not everyone is, though, so sometimes you never meet your other half. Because of this, some witches and wizards do not believe in the Dimidium Animae._

_But I think you know of some people who have encountered their other half and have formed a whole._

_I would ask them what they think of you encountering your other half so soon and so young._

Harry looked around, trying to gauge who might have wanted him to know of this. In the end, he folded the parchment and tucked it into his pocket, putting it aside, but the feeling of being watched never really left him.


“Hermione was here earlier.”

“I see.” He picked up the dry page on Chinese Fireballs. “I suppose you don’t need help?”

“No thanks,” Harry said. “I’ve got it under control.”

“Good.” Remus set the page down.

“I’ll see you at class, professor.” Remus squeezed his shoulder and left. Harry glanced at the quill and watched it, but it did not move against his will again.

#

“This happened after I left?”

“Yeah. I mean, I figured if anyone knew, you would, Hermione,” Harry said.
“Well, I know about it,” she said. “But it suggests talking to a pair who were brought together because of it, so why didn’t you do that?”

“Because I don’t know who they’re talking about.” Hermione shook her head.

“You might not know that they were, but I think you actually do know a bonded pair, Harry. Or do you think Professor Snape just decides to start being nice to his students after over a decade of being an absolute arse?”

Harry noticed one of the twins sneaking up behind Hermione, but thought nothing of it till he pulled the note out of her hand.

“Oh? Someone thinks you’re their other half, Mione?”

“No, Fred,” She said, reaching back for it. “It was for Harry.”

“Ah.” He handed it back to her. “Be careful, Harry. Wouldn’t want you getting a stalker now.”

“So you don’t believe in it?”

“Oh, I believe in it,” Fred said, “But I also know that celebrity wizards and witches have to be extra careful about it because sometimes a fan gets overly obsessed and all. Happened a couple years ago to one of the Weird Sisters. Got cleared up and all, but it does happen. Finding your other half…well, sometimes you know it and other times you don’t. Most people don’t. Not right away, anyway.”

Harry stared at Fred as Hermione excused herself to go to bed. “Fred,” he said. “Do you think Hermione is your…other half or whatever?”

Fred snorted. “I like her, that’s for certain. Snotty, know-it-all brat she is grew on me, I guess. But as to if it’s Dimidium Animae…no, I don’t think we’re close enough or know each other enough to really say that.” Harry narrowed his eyes at him. “What’s that look?”

“Fred, Hermione is like a sister to me. Even if you don’t think it that Dimidium Animae thing, you clearly want to date her at least and as Hermione’s brother, I have only one thing to say: hurt her and I will hex your balls off and stick them to your forehead.”

Fred slumped back, laughing maniacally.

#

The following days were spent mastering different spells in the History classroom (Severus decided that it would be much safer than his classroom given the potions and ingredients he had in there could end up having adverse and volatile effects), each meant to injure or incapacitate large opponents.

At the end of the last session, Severus cleared the room and had Harry sit down. “Focus on breathing,” he said. “In through your nose, out through your mouth.”

Harry obeyed.

“Forget that you’ll be facing a beast in front of an audience. Forget about what lies ahead in the future. The only thing you need to focus on is pulling as much magic into your being as you can. What will you focus on in the ring tomorrow?”
“Survival,” Harry replied.

“Exactly,” Severus said. He waved his wand, conjuring a Welsh Green. “Open your eyes.”

Harry obeyed. “The Welsh Green’s wings are particularly sensitive. If I face this one, I’m supposed to sever one of the tendons, keep it from being able to fly.”

It changed into a Horntail. “Horntails are too vicious to leave alive. I use the sword spell and mortally wound it no matter what the task is.”

The Horntail became a Chinese Fireball. “Chinese Fireballs have frail heels. Cut the tendons and it’ll be in too much pain to think.”

The Fireball changed into a Swedish Short Snout. “The hide of a short snout is extremely tough, tougher than most dragons, so go for the eyes or inside the snout or mouth.”

The image fell away, sparks vanishing before they hit the floor and Harry stood.

“Keep meditating and keep your mind clear,” Severus said. “If you keep your emotions cool, your head will be clear and you can fight.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“All right. Good work. Good luck. Eat. I can’t stress that enough. Now get out of here.”

Harry stood and thanked him, wrapping his bag over his shoulder. Once he was gone, Severus put the room back together and leaned against Remus’ desk. Harry was doing his best to act unaffected, but it was obvious he was nervous.

Aside from a calming draught, Severus doubted there was much else he could do to help Harry through this first task. Remus cleared his throat, pulling Severus away from his own worries.

“He’ll be okay,” he said. “He knows what to do.”

“Finally believe me?”

“I always believed you,” Remus said. He approached and kissed Severus’ cheek. “I know Harry can do it. I believe in him, but I also know that’s not enough sometimes. So yes, I’m scared. I’m worried, but Harry’s strong and he knows what to do depending on which dragon he faces. Of course, I’d rather he not face a dragon at all, any dragon. But as that is unavoidable…”

“Calming draughts all around,” Severus said. “They’ll be ready sometime after breakfast tomorrow.”

“Thank you, Love.”

#

For all the good advice they could give, Remus found he couldn’t follow it. He even had trouble keeping the calming draught down as they went to watch with the other teachers. He spied Sirius in the stands as well with Annabelle. Sirius looked just as pale as he had when he’d escaped Azkaban.

“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,” Bagman shouted. “WELCOME TO THE FIRST EVENT OF THE TRIWIZARD TOURNAMENT!!!” He waited for the screaming cheers to die down before continuing. “WE HAVE AN EXCELLENT TREAT FOR YOU TODAY, FOR EACH OF OUR BRAVE CHAMPIONS WILL FACE ONE OF FOUR VICIOUS, FIRE BREATHING DRAGONS!!!”
“Does he have to sound so pleased?” Minerva ground out.

“THEIR JOB IS TO GET ONE OF THESE GILDED, GOLDEN EGGS!!! WISH THEM LUCK AND HOPE TO MERLIN NO ONE GETS EATEN!!!”

With that, he went back to the judge’s stand and the Short Snout was brought out. The boom of the canon announced the beginning of the task and out stepped Cedric Diggory, looking particularly green. The dragon huffed, spouting smoke in his direction and he dove behind a rock as it sent a burst of fire his way. Once the fire subsided and the rock was subsequently charred, he transfigured a rock into a large dog, which began barking at the dragon.

While the dragon approached the dog, curious, Cedric raced for the nest and grabbed the egg. The Short Snout turned toward the nest just as he was about to make for the exit, mouth bloody with dog-blood. It roared and sent another blast of fire his direction, successfully burning him before he could get out. He made it and was brought to the medic’s tent as the tamers returned to calm the dragon down.

Remus groaned and Severus rubbed his back. A glance told him that Severus, despite his assurances, was starting to feel the same unease that plagued Remus.

The Short Snout was taken back to her cage as the field was cleared for the next participant.

The Common welsh Green was brought next and it took to sniffing about the nest, familiarizing herself with the eggs within before sitting beside them. Another cannon blast revealed that it was Fleur Delacour who would face this dragon.

The dragon stood and approached Fleur, snarling. Fleur did not move nor speak. If she felt any fear, she hid it well, and held her wand out, casting as sleeping spell on the Welsh Green, which then curled up and fell asleep. Fleur ran to the nest, narrowly dodging a snort of flames that caught hold of her robes. She ripped them off and kept running for the nest, seized the egg and left the field.

“Please let them have given him the Fireball,” Remus muttered.

Severus grunted his agreement as the field was reset once again. The Chinese Fireball flew out and landed at her first opportunity, sniffing around and growling. She roared at the cannon blast, hovering protectively over the nest.

But it was not Harry who stepped out onto the field, but Viktor Krum.

Remus turned to Severus, who squeezed his shoulder.

“Harry can handle it,” he reminded him. “He’ll be okay.”

Still, they wouldn’t be able to know for sure until Harry did his own task. The Fireball knelt in front of Viktor, perhaps wondering if he was worth eating. She snarled and opened her jaws. Viktor waved his wand, casting a strong conjunctivus curse.

The dragon screamed, flinging her head from side to side as he raced to get the egg. Her tail whipped about and slammed into his back, flinging him away from the nest. She stumbled back, breaking two of the eggs left about, but not the golden one, so he sent an incarcerating spell to bind her legs, and keep her from running around. He grabbed his egg and left the field to get his leg checked out.

“I don’t know if I can watch the next one,” Ponoma mumbled behind them.

Remus groaned, stuffing his head between his legs as a wave of nausea overcame him. He looked up
when the Hungarian Horntail was brought out into the field. She looked around, sending angry bursts of fire at the stands. When the cannon blast sounded for a final time, Harry stepped out, small and nearly too hard to see in the smoking field.

Harry dove behind a rock as the Horntail rounded on him. He cast the sword spell for the horntail’s throat, but it moved and he got the shoulder instead. The dragon roared and stormed after him in fury. He continued to dive behind rocks, trying to get a chance to adequately defeat the beast.

Severus gripped Remus’ shoulder so tight, he could hardly feel anything there…

At last the spell hit the dragon’s neck, severing an artery and it fell, slowly dying as Harry raced to the nest and grabbed the egg. He barely left the field when the dragon tamers were there trying to save the Horntail’s life.

Severus let go, and slumped back in his seat.

“He did it,” Remus whispered.

“He nearly killed her!” Hagrid snapped. “Since when is that something Harry’s capable of doing?”

Severus looked at him. “I told him to kill her if this was the dragon he’d face. If you’ve that big of a problem with it, Hagrid, then you talk to me. I’m not taking any chances where that boy is concerned. Especially not this year.”

Hagrid met him glare for glare. Then he sighed. “Well, poor girl’s gonna live if her keepers have any say and Harry’s all right, but mark me, Snape, we are having words about harming a living creature.”

“Fine by me,” Severus said. Remus nudged him.

“I’m going down to the tent,” he said. “Coming?”

“Yeah,” he said, following Remus down to the medic tent where all of them were. They met Sirius out front of the tent and stepped inside. Harry handed a vial to Poppy, who muttered about the madness of the task. Harry looked up and grinned.

“Hey,” he said. “Um…now what?”

“You get to rest,” Remus said. “I think we all could.”

“Certainly earned it,” Severus said. Sirius sat beside him.

“I don’t think your dad would have come out of that with dry pants.”

“Ew!” Harry said, crinkling his nose.

“You certainly wouldn’t have,” Severus said.

“I am man enough to admit you are right, Snape,” Sirius said. He gave Harry a one-armed hug. “Okay, Kid, you rest up. And the three of us need something stronger than butterbeer, I think. Firewhiskey anyone?”

“Sounds good to me,” Remus said, grinning at Severus. Of course, he had other ideas of how to spend their night and as they left, whispered his idea to Severus, who smirked and agreed, wrapping his arm around Remus’ waist.
Remus pushed Severus onto the bed and climbed over him predatorily. Severus smirked, crawling back till his head was lined with the pillows. Remus took hold of his shoulders and pushed them till Severus was fully pressed against the pillows and mattress.

“Stay,” Remus said. Severus did not respond save for an arched brow as Remus stood on his knees, pulling his shirt off and unbuttoned his trousers. Severus locked his hands together under his head. Remus leaned back down and ripped Severus’ shirt open.

“Careful!”

“We can fix it later,” Remus reminded him, kissing and licking Severus’ chest. He ground his hips downward against Severus’ cock as it began to tent beneath him. Remus moved down, running his torso over Severus’ groin. He hooked his fingers under the band of Severus’ trousers, unzipping them with his teeth. Severus hissed, sitting up to watch Remus tug the trousers and the pants down mid thigh.

Remus winked at him and closed his lips around the head of Severus’ cock. Severus laid back down, sighing, running his hand through Remus’ hair gently. Remus licked and sucked gently sending shivers all over Severus’ body. Severus massaged Remus’ scalp, closing his eyes.

“Do you intend to make me come?” he asked. Remus released him, teeth gently pulling the foreskin as he moved off.

“Not yet,” he said, getting off the bed and removed the rest of his clothes. “I intend to ride you first.” He climbed back up and rolled his hips downward. Severus rested his hands on Remus’ thighs, only for Remus to take his wrists and pin them to either side of Severus’ head. “Don’t touch. Not yet.”

Severus arched a brow, but obeyed, locking his hands under his pillow again. Remus grabbed his wand off the nightstand and cast a cleansing and lubricating spell on himself.

“If you’re going to open yourself up for me, I’d like to watch, Pet,” Severus said.

Remus shifted around to straddle his chest, ass displayed for Severus. He closed his lips around Severus’ cock again and reached around with his other hand, shoving two fingers into his hole. He pumped them as far as they’d go, but never out further than the first knuckle. Severus licked his lips.

“Not allowed to touch?” he asked. “Didn’t think you’d make such a demand, Pet. Didn’t think it’d be so hard to obey it. Fucking hell, I want to lick your ass open, make you come with my tongue driving inside you. Would you like that, Remus?”

His response was to wiggle his hips and insert a third finger, opening himself further.

Severus bit his lip. “I’d lick you open and once you’ve come, I’d keep at it till you were hard again. Then I’d put a ring and plug on you, make ‘em vibrate and tie you up till you’re screaming from overstimulation.”

Remus moaned and let off him. He removed his fingers and turned back around. He gripped Severus’ cock and eased down onto him. Once the head was inserted, Remus slid down swiftly. Severus hissed.

“Fuck!” He gripped Remus’ hip, and his hands were pulled away again, this time tied to the headboard. Severus glanced at his bound wrists, a little stunned.

“Not too tight?” Remus asked.
“No,” Severus replied, tugging gently. “Didn’t think you’d tie me up. Bit different from our usual games.”

Remus snorted. “I told you that you’re not allowed to touch me yet,” he said. “Figured this would help.” He wiggled, sighing as the tip brushed against his prostate. “I didn’t think I’d like tying up my dom in turn to being the one restrained myself.”

Severus smirked. “Well, let’s give it a shot, Babe,” he said, pivoting his hips up. Remus gasped, digging his nails into Severus’ chest, “If you’re going to ride me, then fucking start riding.”

Remus bit his lip and pushed up on his knees, then down, finding rhythm that they both enjoyed. He drew them both to the edge of orgasm, then slowed to prevent reaching climax. Severus grew silent, watching Remus with wide eyes as he bounced on Severus’ cock, gaining speed again. Severus felt the heat pool low in his belly, gasping as an orgasm electrocuted him.

“Severus…you…touch…oh fuck!”

He whispered a spell to remove the bonds and sat up, yanking at Remus’ hair as he kissed him hungrily and stroked him to his own orgasm which spurted over their chests. Severus rolled them over, yanking Remus’ hair violently. Remus mewled, dragging his nails over Severus back, leaving angry scratches on his skin.

Remus arched his back as he came again, squeezing around Severus’ newly hardened cock still deep inside him. Severus pulled out and eased Remus onto his stomach and pushed back inside. Remus screamed into the pillow as Severus drove into him and spread his legs wider, clawing at the sheets. Severus yanked his hair, pulling his head up and twisted it so to kiss him.

“Don’t you dare stop,” Remus hissed as Severus slowed. “Don’t you dare…”

Severus pulled out again and twisted Remus back around to lie on his back. Remus kissed him, biting Severus’ lower lip and pulling a hungry snarl from his lover. At last, Severus came, digging his nails into Remus’ thighs.

Once the high ebbed, he eased out, kissing Remus as he stroked him through a final orgasm. Severus kissed Remus chest, nibbling at the flesh.

“How are you, Baby?” Severus asked. “Good?”

Remus nodded, breathing heavily. Severus kissed him.

“Gonna start the bath.”

Remus shook his head, pulling him into another kiss.

“Just hold me right now,” he said. Severus hummed. “Okay, Pet.”

He cast a cleaning charm on them and the sheets, pulling the covers over them and embraced Remus, running a hand over Remus’ skin. He swallowed and reached for his wand, summoning a small box from the chest.

“What’s that?” Remus asked.

Severus opened it to show him the signet ring bearing his mother’s family crest. “I didn’t really care for this,” he admitted, “But…” Severus inhaled. “Remus, will you be my husband?”
Chapter End Notes

First, no animals were actually harmed in this chapter. :)

Second, that proposal was way out of left field!
Chapter 12

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Remus stared at the ring, tracing the image of the ocamy etched into the crest. Remus picked it up and slid it onto his finger, turning around and slid his lips against Severus’.

“Yes,” he whispered between kisses. “Yes. I don’t know where my family’s ring is, but I’ll find it if you’ll have it.”

“I will gladly take it if you find it,” Severus said, “but I don’t need it.” He laced their fingers together and kissed Remus’ hand. “This is enough for me, Remus.”

Remus sat up and straddled Severus’ waist. Severus grabbed his waist and pulled him closer to his head, moving Remus into the position he desired. Remus grabbed the headboard as Severus sucked him into his mouth.

“Wait!”

Severus released him. “All right?”

“Yes. I have a better idea.”

“Oh?”

“Scoot down a bit,” Remus said, getting off him. Severus obeyed, sliding down till Remus had enough room for his legs to fit on either side of his head.

“And?”

“Well, I was thinking I could suck you while you sucked me,” Remus said. Severus gripped Remus’ thighs. “I guess you’re okay with that?”

“Very.”

With that, Remus leaned over, gripping the base of Severus’ cock and closed his lips over the head just as Severus locked his lips around Remus’ in turn. Remus slid down to the base, humming. Severus released him, groaning.

“Fuck, Remus...yes…”

Remus slid back up to the head, running his tongue around the slit, tasting pre-come. He moved back down, sucking around him hard. Severus squeezed his thighs as he moaned encouragements… Remus swallowed as much as he could.

“Off,” Severus said.

Remus obeyed and Severus pushed him down and kissed down his torso before swallowing Remus again and sucked hard around him. Remus gasped, arching his back and grabbed Severus’ hair as his
orgasm edged closer.

But then he’d kiss lessen the intensity, kneading the underside of Remus’ cock with his tongue. Remus whimpered, spreading his legs wider for Severus to maneuver however he’d like…

Remus gasped, moaning madly as he came. Severus climbed back up over him, cupping Remus’ cheek.

“Beautiful,” he purred. “You are so beautiful.”

Remus kissed him, gripping the back of Severus neck. “I think I would like to take a bath,” he whispered.

“As you wish, Pet,” Severus replied.

#

“I don’t want to go to any stupid dance,” Harry muttered to Remus after his history lesson a few days after.

Remus arched a brow at him. “Where’d this come from?”

“McGonagall said I’d have to dance at the Yule Ball. Something about tradition,” he said.

Remus smiled pitiably.

“I don’t even want to go!”

“Well, there’s nothing any of us can do about that. Just ask one of your friends to be your date, open the dance, and try to have fun.”

“Easy for you to say, you’re probably looking forward to showing off with Professor Snape.”

“What you mean?”

“The ring, Professor,” Harry said. “Is that a family crest?”

Remus glanced at the ring. “Yes,” he said. “Severus’ mother was a daughter of the Prince family, it seems. I’ve actually one from my father’s side, too. I just need to find it.”

“So…” Harry sat on the desk in front of Remus’. “You and Professor Snape getting married or something?”

Remus hummed. “How about you ask Hermione to the dance,” he said.

“Don’t deflect!”

“I wasn’t deflecting, Harry. You were. And I think that an impending union between me and Severus is quite obvious.” Remus cleared the chalk board. “If not Hermione, maybe you could ask Ginny. Or Luna. I know you and she have been getting along quite well.”

Harry shrugged. “Hermione already got asked. Same as Ginny. Luna…Ron asked her.”

“Oh?” Remus waved the staff and the desks shifted to the formation used for the NEWT level students. “You and Ron are talking again?”
“Yeah. He finally unstuck his head from his ass long enough to realize I wouldn’t have fucking entered—ow!” He rubbed the back of his head where Remus flicked him.

“Language.”

“Like you’ve any real reason to talk. There’s no ickle firsties around.”

“Indeed there are not. They’re at the great hall having lunch.”

Harry shrugged. “Not hungry.”

“You won’t be able to eat later,” Remus reminded him. “Especially not in Severus’ class and you do not want to be hungry in Potions class.”

“I take it that’s from experience?”

“More Severus’,” Remus said. “Ask him about the 1973 third year potions fiasco. If you think Moody’s story about losing a butt cheek is interesting…yeah…this tops that.”

“What happened?”

“You have to ask Severus.”

“But I’m asking you.”

“No, no, no, Severus tells it better.” He caught a black shadow moving toward them and grinned. “Hello, Severus. Remember the 1973 potions fiasco.”

Severus paused and arched a brow. “I try not to.”

“Why? It was funny.”

“It was humiliating for all parties.”

“What happened?” Harry asked.

“Certain potions, when incorrectly brewed have very adverse effects. Granted they are not always going to be poisonous. They might explode in your face and the next thing you know you’re switching bodies with the nearest person. Remus, shut up.”

“It was funny.”

“For a week straight I was Lockhart! Lockhart, Remus! Have you any idea how terrifying that was!”


“He did, but I didn’t. I’m too bloody good with potions to risk it. However, I did make sure he didn’t get the byline of that article in Potions Weekly.”

“Good thing, too,” Harry said. “He was taking credit for other wizards’ accomplishments for years. That’s how he made his fortune and all that shit. Obliviated them and all. Now he’s in Mungo’s because of his own idiocy.” He stood and bowed. “You’re welcome.”

“That was the basilisk year?” Severus asked.

Harry nodded.
“Kid we need to do something about your continued death wish.”

“I don’t have a death wish. I just get swept up in all these random things. It would help if Voldemort actually died, and if his followers were all caught, and if someone didn’t put my name into a drawing for dangerous competitions. I’m out and I am NOT GOING!!!”

He left the room as Remus pinched the bridge of his nose and muttered under his breath.

“Well? Not going where?”

“Not going? Not going where?”

“The ball.”

“Oh. Yeah. Can’t say I blame him. I don’t really want to go either.”

Remus kissed him. “You’ll get over it,” he said. “We’ll have fun.”

“You don’t know that!”

Remus laughed. “Relax, Severus, we don’t have to dance or anything of the sort. We’ll just be monitoring everything. Chaperoning with the other teachers. Besides, how bad could it get?”

Severus grimaced. “I don’t like such functions.”

“You and Harry both, it seems. Kid’s just as introverted as you and if given half a chance, I’m sure he’d love to climb under a rock and stay there. Neither Lily nor James were like that, so I’ve no clue why he’s so introverted.”

“We introverts aren’t that uncultured,” Severus said. “And as for where he got it, I’d say that would be his grandmother. Lily’s mother wasn’t exactly a social butterfly for all that she was a gracious hostess when the occasion arose.”

Remus snorted. “That makes sense, then. Now, Love, you ought to eat too or else there may be a repeat.”

“Not if I can help it.”

#

“Have you seen this?” Hermione asked angrily, shoving the magazine under Harry’s nose.

Harry took the magazine and blanched:

**HARRY POTTER’S SECRET HEARTACHE**

A boy like no other, perhaps — yet a boy suffering all the usual pangs of adolescence, writes Rita Skeeter.

Deprived of love since the tragic demise of his parents, fourteen year old Harry Potter thought that he had found solace in his steady girlfriend at Hogwarts, Muggle-born Hermione Granger. Little did he know that he would shortly be suffering yet another emotional blow in a life already littered with personal loss.

Miss Granger, a plain but ambitious girl, seems to have a taste for famous wizards that Harry alone cannot satisfy. Since the arrival at Hogwarts of Viktor Krum, Bulgarian Seeker and hero of the last Quidditch World Cup, Miss Granger has been toying with both boys’ affections.
Krum, is openly smitten with the devious Miss Granger, has already invited her to stay with him in Bulgaria over the summer holidays and insists that he has "never felt this way about any other girl."

However, it may not be Miss Granger's doubtful natural charms that have captured these unfortunate young boys' interests.

"She's really ugly," says Pansy Parkinson, a pretty and vivacious fourth year student, "but she'd be well-up to making a Love Potion, she's quite brainy. I think that's how she's doing it."

Love Potions are, of course, banned at Hogwarts, and no doubt Albus Dumbledore will want to investigate these claims.

In the meantime, Harry Potter's well-wishers must hope that, next time, he bestows his heart on a worthier candidate.

“But you’re going to the ball with Fred,” Harry stated. “Where’d she get this idea?”

“Who the bloody hell knows?!” Hermione snarled. “Probably got this idea after I hugged you in the tent before the first task. Still, I’m hexing her hideous wig off that head and making it tap dance next time I see her.”

Ron pulled the article away. “Krum is openly smitten? Not with you, Mione.”

Hermione grinned. “Don’t I know it,” she said. “I’m not his type. But I know who is.”

“Same.”

Harry looked from Ron to Hermione, perturbed by their grins.

“Why are you looking at me?”

“Remember at the cup you were doing some coaching and all that fun stuff?”

“Yeah…”

“Would it surprise to know that the teams showed?”

“Not really. There were a lot of people watching us. But most were parents.”

“Most,” Hermione agreed. “Not all. You might not have noticed, then, but I think that would be when Viktor Krum first laid eyes on you.”

“Sorry mate, bloke’s besotted.”

“I’m not gay.”

“You’re not straight, either,” Ron said.

Harry took the magazine back and rolled it into a rod to hit Ron with. Ron blocked it.

“Don’t get mad at me for speaking to truth. You’re not straight.”

“A little louder, Ron. I don’t think the whole school heard you.”

“There’s nothing wrong with being bisexual," Hermione added. “No one is ever one hundred percent straight or gay. And even if it was possible, no one cares. We love you, Potter. You’re stuck
“You’re mad, Mione. Bonkers. Should be committed, you mad witch!”

“Don’t make me quote *The Princess Bride*.”

“As you wish,” Harry sighed.

Hermione snorted, taking her bag and slung it over her shoulder. “I’ll see you in class. And Harry, don’t be too surprised in Krum asks you to the dance.”

“It would solve your date problem,” Ron added.

“True, but I don’t want to lead anyone on.”

“Harry, it’s a dance,” Hermione stated. “Not a marriage proposal.”

With that, she left the great hall and Harry pushed his food away, laying his head on the table.

“Krum, huh?”

“Not that surprising, is it?” Ron asked. “I mean, he’s famous. You’re famous. If the press wants a field day, give them something real. Besides, Mione’s right: it’s just a dance.”

Harry glanced over at the Slytherin table where the Durmstrang students sat. Krum was talking to one of his classmates. Harry turned away before Krum noticed and focused on finishing his own lunch.

*Dimidium Animae*, he thought.

He still had the note from some weeks ago. He never did figure out which “two halves” he knew… unless. Harry glanced at the teacher’s table. Of course they weren’t there. Remus and Severus rarely were at the great hall during lunch. Well, he could ask Severus after class.

Or…

He bade Ron goodbye and headed to the Potions classroom.

Unfortunately, the bell rang signaling the beginning of the next class just before he got there. As such, he distracted himself from his questions about the Dimidium Animae by concentrating on the potion at hand.

“Potter, you’re whisking the potion, not stirring,” Severus snapped.

Harry slowed his arm and Ron added the next ingredient. With that, Severus moved on to the next. Harry looked up at the board and stilled his arm, removing the ladle and drying it.

“Professor, I think we’re done,” he said.

Severus returned after a quick word with Lavender Brown about her potion and returned as the potion began to turn a powder blue.

“Bring it to a simmer and keep a watch over it,” Severus said. “You’ll want it to be silver when it’s ready.” They mumbled *yes, sir*, and Harry took the time to find the note he’d received, glancing up every so often (though Ron was staring at it intently) to make sure it didn’t turn white or brown in the process.
He found it and smoothed the parchment before rereading it:

*Have you ever heard of the Dimidium Animae?*

*It's not a spell or something you would read in a textbook.*

*It's a state of being shared between two people who are, in other terms, soul-mates. Some people are attuned to their soul mate.*

*Not everyone is, though, so sometimes you never meet your other half. Because of this, some witches and wizards do not believe in the Dimidium Animae.*

*But I think you know of some people who have encountered their other half and have formed a whole.*

*I would ask them what they think of you encountering your other half so soon and so young.*

Ron nudged him when the potion was done and they bottled vials and labeled them. Once placed on the desk, Severus grunted that they were dismissed.

“Um, Professor, can I ask something off subject?” Harry said.

“No,” Severus said curtly without looking up from the essays.

“After class, I mean.”

“Then yes,” Severus said, still not looking up from the essays. “I’ve time at six while Lupin is handling the school paper.”

Harry thanked him and decided to spend time in the library finishing his homework. It would at least be productive… granted, talking to Severus was almost like confronting a charging hippogriff sometimes. It certainly felt that way this afternoon.

Not that it meant anything.

Severus, Harry noted, was a lot like a charging hippogriff anyway even on his best days.

He did what he could to ignore the drones of witches giggling around him, but as the time passed, it grew more aggravating.

“May I sit here?”

Harry looked up at Krum. *Well, this is just a day of synchronicities.* “Sure.”

He moved some of his books out of the way for the older wizard to set his belongings down. The giggling from the girls in surrounding areas increased with some whisperings.

Harry groaned and debated casting another silencing charm. He never really was as studious as Hermione, but he was studious enough to know that he couldn’t work like this. Not with all this noise!

Where was Pince when she was needed?

“Um…Potter.”

Harry looked up at him.
“Have you figured out what you’re doing for the ball yet?”

“Um…no. I’ve not.”

“Same…”

_Well this is uncomfortable_, Harry thought.

Viktor rubbed the back of his neck, looking around. He jotted a note and slid it to Harry before making his escape. Harry waited for him to return before taking the letter in hand.

_I don’t know if you’re gay or not, so I’m not really sure how you’ll receive this. But if you’re willing, I would like to take you to the Yule Ball._

_If you are okay with going with me, please meet me under the clock at 7:30 Saturday night._

_If you don’t show up, then I’ll take that as a “no.”_

Harry swallowed, feeling far too warm for his liking. He glanced at the clock and groaned.

#

Severus had just put the last vial away as Harry knocked. He shouted permission to enter and Harry stepped in, shut the door and sat down.

“Help. Viktor Krum asked me to the ball and I don’t know what to do,” he blurted out. “And I got this note a few weeks ago and I checked the handwriting and they match—”

Severus held his hand up. “Slow down. Breathe. All I got was that Krum asked you to the ball.”

Harry obeyed, breathing deeply. He started with the first note he received.

“That was what I originally wanted to talk about,” he said as Severus read it. “I think it came from Krum.” Severus set it down.

“Well, first of all, this is true. Remus and I were brought together by _Dimidium Animae_,” he said. “Though it’s not always obvious for everyone. It was for your father, but not your mother. And it’s not as rare as stated. There are many people around you who find their soul mates early in life. Remus and I weren’t always certain, but we actually first got together in our sixth year.”

“What happened?”

“Ask your godfather,” he said. “He wasn’t happy about our relationship then. He grew up, but back in school, we were the worst of enemies you could imagine. And yet, Remus and I are together again. If that isn’t _Dimidium Animae_ at work, then I don’t know what is. So, yes, you could find your other half as a young adult. But also no, no one really knows if they’ve met their other half until later in life.”

Harry hummed, and then handed over the new note. “Viktor Krum gave this to me about an hour ago.”

Severus read it. “This is your decision to make,” he said, setting it down. “You’re old enough to make a decision like this yourself. Now, do you know for sure what your sexuality is?”

Harry shook his head.
“It’s okay not to know. Some people don’t know till they’re middle aged. Some don’t even embrace it till they’re old men and women. You can always come to me or Remus or Sirius if you need to. My only problem is the age difference between you and him. He may still be in school, but Krum is an adult. So I want to talk to him first before you take any action. And if he doesn’t like that, then I don’t want him near you. Understood?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“In that case, you have time to figure out what you want to do about Krum. Now,” Severus leaned against his desk. “Have you taken any time to figure out the second task?”

Harry grimaced, shrinking.

“Harry.”

“I open it and it shrieks! I don’t know what to do with that.”

“Shrieks?”

Harry pulled it out of his bag and handed it to Severus, who opened it.

A piercing scream came from the egg and Severus shut it immediately.

He rubbed his ears, trying to rid the ringing. Harry’s glasses actually broke as the acoustics of the dungeon magnified the voices. He put the egg down and went to the storage cabinet to grab a potion meant to relieve the effects of tinnitus.

He tilted Harry’s head to the side to administer it for him before himself.

“Now you know why I haven’t figured it out yet.”

“Well, there is a way to eliminate the obvious,” Severus said. “I suggest sticking it and your head under water.”

“What would that be.”

“That would narrow it to aquatic creatures. There’s plenty of them in the lake. If there’s still shrieking, that means it’s non-aquatic.” He handed Harry the vial. “Good luck and enjoy your bath.”

Severus was certain it was mermaids. Certain enough that he would be surprised if it wasn’t. But he wasn’t about to tell Harry that. He knew the kid was smart enough to figure it out on his own if he applied himself properly.

As for Krum, well, Severus was suspicious. Especially if he was claiming Harry was his other half of a Dimidium Animae. So for that, he would need to talk to Karkaroff. That in of itself didn’t sound good. Karkaroff wouldn’t want his own golden boy alone with Severus.

Granted, Severus wouldn’t leave any of his students in Karkaroff’s presence either.

“Hey, I found it,” Remus said, holding out a signet ring of his own.

Severus took it, examining the Lupin family crest. He shouldn’t be surprised of it being a wolf and moon. He slid it on his finger and pulled Remus into his arms. Remus locked his arms around Severus’ neck and kissed him.
“I love you,” Remus whispered.

“Love you, too.”

They kissed once more and Remus stepped away. “So, I heard some screaming earlier. What was that about?” Severus gave him a synopsis of his meeting with Harry and the egg. He also added Krum’s request toward Harry to attend the ball with him.

“Want to give an internationally famous quidditch player a shovel talk with me?”

Remus grinned. “Gladly.”

“Good, because I was about to write Karkaroff to arrange a meeting with Krum so that said shovel talk can be administered as quickly as possible.”

“Good,” Remus said. “I’ve a few words already going on in my head.”
He had seen Viktor Krum many times before but never had the time to really observe him. And with Karkaroff here, well, he wouldn’t want to think Severus and Remus were threatening him. They weren’t doing so. Yet. He wanted to gauge Krum’s intentions first before making any promises. Karkaroff entered first, eyes fixed on Severus and Remus.

“I want to know what this is about before I let you speak with Viktor,” he said. “I am not about to let any of my students near a werewolf.”

“Not the full moon,” Remus said. “I don’t think you need worry about me any more than you do Severus. One Death Eater to another and all.”


“Technically I’m not, being a half-blood, but that’s beside the point,” Severus said. “Nor are we here to discuss loyalties and any apparent trust issues we may have concerning each other. This is about Krum asking Potter to the ball we’re all looking forward to.”

Karkaroff snorted, crossing his arms. “You have shown to be the calmer of his parents, Severus.”

“Parents? Hardly,” Severus said. “We are not his parents. Uncles at best. However, we are rather protective of him. Harry has a bit of a permanent sign taped to his forehead, you know? A proverbial target for a number of dangers. You, for instance. Any other follower of the Dark Lord still loyal to him. Reporters like Skeeter. Perhaps you can relate. Krum is your student. You seem to think of him as your own personal golden boy as much as Harry is Dumbledore’s.”

“We only want to talk to Krum about his pursuit of Harry,” Remus said. “Until we know for sure, we won’t let Harry go to the ball with him. But we want everyone to have fun. As Krum is a young adult, he isn’t just risking his heart to get a date, but also his neck. He and Harry could really get in trouble with the media and other parents who might think that Krum is taking advantage of him, or vice versa. I would think that you would like to prevent any strife between our schools as well.”

Karkaroff shifted from foot to foot, scowling. “You have good points, both of you,” he said. “Still, I do not like letting you threaten him. Viktor is a good wizard and a better man. Honorable. I do not believe he wishes your boy any harm.”

Severus arched a brow. “Perhaps you do, but we need his word. Not yours, Igor. I want to talk to Krum before we let Harry accept his request to go to the ball with him. You’re welcome to stay in the room,” he said. “It won’t take long.” Karkaroff grunted and went to the door. A few hushed words in Bulgarian were exchanged and Krum entered. He stood tall and met Severus’ gaze with one of his own.

“You don’t approve of me?” he asked.

“No that,” Remus said.

Krum looked at him.
“It’s not a matter of approval yet. We just want to have a talk before we let you take Harry to the Yule Ball. You understand why Professor Snape and I want to discuss it first, don’t you? For now, our main issue is the age difference. Harry is a fourteen year old. You’re eighteen and legally an adult. Why would you want to escort someone so much younger than you? You have your own fans, both men and women who would die for a chance to go to the ball with you. So why Harry?”

Viktor swallowed and stared at his hands for a moment. He met Remus’ eyes. “Dimidium Animae,” he said. “I think Harry is my other half. I don’t know for sure yet, but I would like to find out. I would think another pair brought together by Dimidium Animae would agree.”

“Not necessarily,” Severus said. “But we do know how strong that can be. You’ll be going back to Bulgaria at the end of the year. Harry won’t be of legal age for at least another three and a half years. How do you know you’ll still think its Dimidium Animae then?”

“I don’t. There’s no way to know. But if it is, well, wouldn’t we get back together eventually?” Severus and Remus glanced at each other.

“Yes,” Severus said. “Yes, you would.”

“I have no intention of hurting Harry. I just want to find out, be certain. If nothing else, maybe become a friend and mentor. We’re both famous. For different things, but I could help him weather the storms the media sends his way. Even if just as a friend.”

Remus hummed. “I’m convinced.”

“I’m not, but that’s good enough for me,” Severus said. “All right, you can escort Harry to the ball, but I don’t want you with him alone. I want a teacher with you and him. Not just us. There’s Madam Pince in the Library, There’s all of the Hogwarts Staff, and there’s your own headmaster as well. So there is no reason for you to be alone with Harry. I understand this sound strict, but if you want to spend time with him after the ball, that’s what it will take while you are here. If all goes well, we’ll allow correspondence over the next three years. You can write, you can visit as long as a guardian or teacher is available to chaperone. And when Harry is seventeen, the chaperoning will stop—but not a second before his seventeenth birthday. Are we clear?”

Viktor nodded, grinning. “I accept your terms. It is clear. Thank you, Professors. Good men, both.” He shook their hands and bade good bye, shutting the door behind him.

“That went well,” Remus said.

“I wonder how long he’ll accept those terms,” Severus said. “I didn’t get the chance to tell him in detail what would happen if he did anything to Harry.”

“I think the media would crucify him,” Karkaroff said. “That can more than enough for anyone. Is all that is needed sometimes. Now if I might speak with you alone, Severus.”

“No. Whatever you want to tell me you can say in front of Remus.”

Karkaroff stared at Remus, then undid the buttons of his coat, pulling them up to reveal the mark. Severus arched a brow at him. “And?”

Karkaroff fixed his sleeve. “He is not dead. I am sure.”

“We know,” Remus said.
Karkaroff turned to him, stunned.

“He went after Harry three years ago,” Remus explained. “We also think that he is attempting to use the tournament to get to him. How, we don’t know. From what we know, he’s not very strong right now, but he plenty of fanatics willing to do his bidding. We’re certain it has something to do with that.”

“You think you can stop him,” Karkaroff muttered, shaking his head. “It matters not how weak he is. He always finds a way.”

“Maybe,” Severus said. “But I don’t care.”

“And you say you are not Harry Potter’s father. Family, I know, is not blood only. You may not be his blood, but you have become his father, Severus. Both of you, from where I stand, have become his fathers. Better fathers than most can hope to be. Especially given what we all are. But we cannot fight the Dark Lord. No one can.”

Severus narrowed his eyes and his lip curled into a sneer. “I will.”

“We both will,” Remus agreed. “No matter what it takes.”

“You’re both braver than I,” Karkaroff said, shaking his head. “If I were you, I would take the boy and run as far as I could.”

“That wouldn’t stop Voldemort,” Remus said. “Nor would it do us any good. If he is involved, we will stop him, even if it means breaking whatever moral and ethical code we live by.”

Severus took his hand and kissed it. Karkaroff scoffed.

“Mad men, both of you. Must be Dumbledore’s influence.”

“Could be,” Severus said.

“I will depart,” Karkaroff said. “But we should not ignore this, Severus. If he is alive, he will be out for blood. Not just the boy’s but yours and mine as well.”

Harry set a scroll in front of Severus after classes had ended for the day. “Mermaids,” he said. “Definitely mermaids. That is a foot summarizing the task, merperson physiology and ecology as well as possible ways for me to survive under water for an hour.”

Severus opened the parchment and reviewed it briefly. “Gilliweed would work, yes. Bubblehead charm, too…good work.”

“There’s just one problem with most options I have.”

Severus lowered the parchment. Harry fidgeted with his bag and inhaled deeply. “I don’t know how to swim,” he admitted.

“Yes, that does pose a problem,” he agreed. “Remus and I aren’t going to be able to make you a strong swimmer by late February, so I would go with consuming gilliweed. It will give you the ability to breath underwater and let you tap into the dormant genes of our earliest ancestors before we walked the earth. As for the mermaids…I don’t know what sort of merpeople would be there. Could be Marrows, Selkie, or Siren. In which case, I want you to write another one of these,” he waved the
parchment about. “Detailing each type of mermaid and their non-lethal weaknesses. That aside, there are a number of creatures that can easily be dealt with: dugbogs, grindylow, the squid, flying seahorses, kelpie, lobalugs, mackled malaclaws, murtlaps, plimpies, and perhaps a number of other creatures. All of which can be easily dealt with via basic spellwork. However, if you manage to catch a few, I would greatly appreciate that. Catching lobalugs are tedious when you have to watch for the venom.”

Harry blanched. “Venom?”

“I’m kidding. If you need to, you kill it. Though, I suggest not killing the mermaids. That would be most likely disastrous and some students really like swimming in the lake without worrying about vindictive merpeople drowning them in retaliation.”

Harry nodded. “I guess I can get a start on the mermaid thing—oh! Um…have you talked to Krum?”

“Remus and I both did. If you want to go with him, you can go.”

Harry grinned. “Great.”

“You want to?”

“Well, I knew I’d have to wait for you to talk to him and that gave me a little time to think about whether or not I’m comfortable with other men wanting to have a romantic type relationship with me. I figured that, well, I don’t know entirely if I am or not, but I know two women and two men could have a decently healthy romantic relationship together, so I figured why not see if I can.”

“That’s a fair assessment,” Severus said. “And a mature one.”

“Thanks, Professor.”

“There is one other thing: if you decide to pursue a romantic relationship with Viktor Krum, given the age, Remus and I do not want you alone with him. There must always be a teacher or some sort of guardian available. Any teacher will do aside from Remus and myself. Sirius will do as well.”

Harry wrinkled his nose at that.

“I get that it’s harsh, but you are possibly entering a relationship with someone much older than you. Most parents and guardians would not allow it. Period. But after meeting with Krum, I’m convinced enough, and so is Remus, that he won’t take advantage of you.”

“Because he thinks his attraction could be this Dimidium Animae thing?”

“That is completely different. There’s no way to know. It’s not…it’s not obvious. It’s very rare for anyone to know. But it is a factor, I’ll admit. You might eventually think the same. You deserve to develop an opinion yourself on that matter at least. If he is, in fact, the other half of your soul, you’ll then have three years to develop a relationship as well as figure out if it is the Dimidium Animae.”

Harry hummed, leaning against one of the desks. “When you put it that way, it’s actually quite fair. And it’s not like chaperoning is unheard of. So I guess, in a way, it’s a positive outcome.”

“I don’t recall you always being so rational and mature.”

“Neither do I,” Harry admitted. “It’s scary. I think I’m turning into you.”

“Perish the thought,” Severus said. “Though, you might benefit in connecting with your inner
Slytherin.”

Harry shrugged. “Probably. I almost was sorted into Slytherin, so it’s not so ‘inner’ that it’s ignorable.” Severus stared at him.

“You almost got sorted into Slytherin?”

Harry shrugged. “I thought Slytherin was the bad house. Like, you don’t want to be in Slytherin and all that. Ron and Hagrid sort of…got to me before I started my first year. I know better now, though.”

“Well, I’d hope so. Actually, most students that get into Slytherin are either the children of pureblood extremists, or they legitimately have the traits of a Slytherin: quick of mind and cunning. Kid, you got to choose your house. Not everyone does. I didn’t. The hat barely touched my head when it sorted me. I was hoping to get into Ravenclaw. For most of the same reasons you didn’t want to be in Slytherin. From my own preconditioning at that age, Slytherins and Gryffindors both were bullies. Different types, but still bullies. For that reason, I didn’t want to be either. So of course, when you’re best friend is a Gryffindor and you’re in Slytherin, you try but there’s going to be clashing anyway.”

“I can see where that can happen,” Harry said. “I just…I don’t know.”

“Hey, either way, I know you now. You’re the son of Lily Evans more than you will ever be the son of James Potter. And that’s something to be proud of. Now, I believe you have some free time before dinner and I’d like some of this finished,” he motioned at the stack of essays. “One of these days I’ll stop torturing myself by assigning so much homework.”

“You could just stop with homework all together.”

“Don’t be cute.”

#

Hogwarts at Christmas was always beautiful.

But to see it become akin to an ice palace was breathtaking. Snow covered trees covered the walls. A few feet from the walls were sets of round tables that easily fit eight to ten bodies. In the back of the hall was the champion’s table to be shared with the judges and their dates. One side of the wall, facing the east, was a stage for a band—and the Weird Sisters when they made their appearance. Remus could not recall the last time the great hall had looked so resplendent. Severus handed him a glass.

“Fire whiskey,” he said. “Merry Christmas.”

“How did you manage that?”

“A ferret owed me,” he said. Remus sniggered.

“A ferret, eh?” He found Malfoy walk in with Pansy Parkinson on his arm. “I suppose he does owe you after being turned into one by Moody. Pity I wasn’t there to see it.”

Severus nodded, smirking around his own glass. “I wish I had seen it, too. On the bright side, we’ve alcohol, we can watch the clumsy sprogs trip over each other, and maybe…” he wrapped an arm around Remus’ waist. “After the dance ends…”
“You think I would say no?” Remus asked, kissing him. “Most certainly not. However, I think I’d be more obliged if you danced with me later. At least once.”

Severus huffed, scowling. “Fine,” he said. “Knowing Albus, we might as well if only to get him off our backs.” Remus finished his glass and waved it under his nose as the band entered and took their places.

“You better have more fire whiskey in those robes, Love.”

Severus pulled the robe back and revealed a bottle. “Extendable charm. With sobering potions in the other pocket in case we get caught.”

“I love you,” Remus said as Severus poured him another drink.

“Well I’d hope so. Add to that, being a bit pissed should make it easier to go on the dance floor. Otherwise we’d never do it.”

“We might want to keep that in mind for the wedding,” Remus said. “Just get everyone drunk first and we’re good to go.”

“That sounds about right.” The lights dimmed and the music struck, filling the halls with melodious holiday music. The Champions entered with their partners. First was Fleur Delacour with her date, followed by Viktor and Harry, then Cedric and Cho Chang.

“Looks nervous,” Remus said.

“Like any other fourth year at his first dance,” Severus replied with a shrug. “Looks the part a bit, too.” Remus snorted and they clinked their glasses together before having another drink. Viktor took the lead, perhaps for Harry’s benefit. A few minutes pass and Albus entered the dance with Minerva. From there, others stepped onto the dance floor. Remus glanced at his glass.

“Not drunk enough, yet.”

“Nope,” Severus agreed.

They sat down. Harry swallowed and removed his outer robe to lie on the chair. “So, Harry,” Ron said, sitting beside him. “A word for the school paper?”

“Really? Haven’t you better things to do?” Harry asked.

“Just answer the bloody question.”

“Fine. What’s the question?”

“How’d you score a date with Viktor Krum?”

“He asked, I said yes.”

“You’re fans will be disappointed.”

“My fans or his?”

“His fans are also your fans and vice versa. At least give us a decent article.”
“Schedule it with Mione,” Harry said. “She’s my PR manager.”

“I’m your best friend,” Ron said, pouting.

“And liable to be biased.” Harry and Ron stared at each other, then burst into laughter. “Imagine it! We could’ve been moping in the corner having asked people we don’t even like much!”

“That would be a pain! I’m going to go see if Luna’s back from the loo. And really, Harry, give us a real interview.”

“You’ve really gotten into the role of a reporter.”

“Well, someone’s gotta kick that Skeeter bitch’s butt. Who better than your best friend? See you, mate.”

“What was that about?” Viktor asked, handing Harry a glass of cider.

“Just Ron being Ron,” he replied, taking the glass. “Thanks. For asking me to the ball, that is. I don’t know what I’d have done otherwise.”

Viktor hummed. “I almost asked Hermyon.”

“Hermione?”

“Yes.”

“I was worried you would not want to be with another man. I figured she would be safer.”

“Well, I’m glad you decided to take the risk,” Harry said. “Saved us both some trouble, I guess.” He blushed when Viktor tucked a bit of his hair behind his ear and stared at his cup.

“I am glad, too,” Viktor said.

“Viktor!” The female Durmstrang shouted, waving him over.

“Come, meet my sister.”

“Sister? I didn’t know you had a sister.”

“Twin sister. Older twin,” he said. “Not well known. She is more…uh…less sporty.”

“Oh. She’s more academic.”

“Yes.”

Harry stared at the girl. There was nothing that would indicate she and Viktor were related. He was brunette, she was blonde. He had dark eyes. Hers were blue. He was tall. She was short. Viktor’s feet were more flat and duck like. Hers were fairy like. His face was more oval. Hers was circular.

She arched a brow at Harry and then glanced at her brother, saying something in Bulgarian that made him scowl, then she turned to Harry again. “Good to meet you, Harry Potter,” she said, holding her hand out. “I am Venera Krum. Do well to kick his arse. He needs it sometimes.”

Harry grinned. “I like your sister.”

“She is a pain,” Viktor muttered, glaring at her. Venera reached up and patted his head.
“You love me anyway.”

“Doubtful,” Viktor growled at her. She just rubbed his hair a little more.

“I steal your date for a bit. Have many stories about you and your foolishness. Like the floo accident.” Venera linked her arm around his and dragged him to the dance floor. Harry let himself be dragged away, glancing behind his shoulder to stare at Viktor, who had gestured a sign of good luck before heading back to their table. Harry bit his lip and swallowed, praying he wouldn’t make a fool of himself and step on her feet as he led her through the dance. “I take it you know he thinks you are his other half,” Venera said. Harry nodded.

“I do. I don’t know what to think of it myself, yet…”

“You are not trying to rush your emotions. Very good. I suppose you know what it’s like to be hunted. So does Viktor and I would had to see him hurt because he put his trust in the wrong person. Viktor is not openly affectionate to people outside our family. So imagine the surprise I had when he said he found his other half last summer.”

“At the World Cup.”

“Yes.”

“You were there?”

“Of course I was. Our whole family was. Of course you were cheering Ireland.”

Harry blushed. “Well…”

“So cute! I tease a lot. Annoys him much. I digress, though. All I can say is I would be glad to see my brother with someone he can trust, other half or not. Good luck with him. He can be stubborn as a mule when it suits him.” She backed away. “Enjoy the rest of the ball. I best go find my date before he wonders where I went and before my brother decides to cut in.”

Harry looked at Viktor as Venera left and went back to him. “She didn’t tell me any funny stories,” he assured him.

“Good,” Viktor said. “She annoys me.”

Harry hummed and took his hand. “Dance with me again?” Viktor relaxed a little bit and pulled Harry back to the dance floor. He didn’t know how to define the feeling of Viktor’s warm hand on his back. Nor the way their clasped hands really seemed to meld together. Harry didn’t think it was love. Affection, for sure, but love? He didn’t know if he knew how to love.

Not the way Viktor wanted from him. Nor the way it seemed to be for Severus and Remus. He glanced over at his uncles, who’d taken a break from chaperoning some time ago and were slow dancing out of the way, content and nearly in their own world. He looked away before he could react to Severus squeezing Remus’ ass.

“You’ve gone red. Something wrong?”

Damn it. “My uncles are being dirty old pervs.”

Viktor glanced over at them and cringed. “I did not need to see that. Does Snape usually…”

“I think that would be a yes, but I’d rather not know.”
Viktor hummed and led him away from their line of sight. “There,” he said. “Now we do not see them and they cannot scar us with their butt-grabbing.”


“Too much?” he loosened his grip and allowed room between them. “Sorry.”

Harry shook his head and laid his head against Viktor’s chest, listening to the elder’s heart pound and breathing in the scent. The song ended and Harry backed away. “Erm…I, um…I’m going to get some fresh air. Bit stuffy in here.”

“Would you like something to drink, too?”

“Yeah,” Harry said. “I’ll be under the clock.”

Viktor let him go and Harry went to grab his coat to protect from the worst of the cold. Outside, the air stung enough to hide that his blush was from liking another male’s scent. He leaned against the wall and shivered, watching puffs of his breath form in the air.

He didn’t think it was love. Not yet at least.

“Harry?” He turned to Viktor and thanked him for the water. It was crisp, cold, and stung his throat as it traveled down his throat. “Did I make you uncomfortable?”

Harry lowered the glass. “No. I miss flying. Not being able to fly is…”

“It’s almost like losing something that is a part of you,” Viktor surmised. “You miss becoming the wind and smelling the cleaner smells above the trees.” Harry nodded.

“What is stopping you from flying now?”

“Well, can we? I mean, the ball’s for us.”

“Our part in the ball is over,” Viktor said, removing his wand and summoning his broom. “Fly with me?” Harry nodded, ignoring the warning in the back of his mind that Severus and Remus would kill them if they were alone. He summoned his Firebolt and once both brooms arrived, they mounted them, racing high above the castle towers.

Viktor laid on his broom hovering. “You play Quidditch, yes?”

“Yeah. I’m the Gryffindor team’s seeker. Hate to brag, but I am pretty good.”

“Better, you think, than me?” Viktor challenged, smirking.

“Who knows? Maybe I am.” Viktor straightened and looked around. He pointed at the tallest tree.

“See that?” Harry replied affirmatively. “Whoever grabs the highest cone or nut and gets back to the tower wins.”

“Oh? And what’s the prize for the winner?”


Harry scoffed and willed his firebolt toward the forest. Viktor cursed and fled after him, easily
catching up. The tree came closer and closer into sight. He could grab the topmost pine cone and then veer back toward the castle. Harry figured he’d at least have height advantage on Viktor… He nearly grabbed the cone when Viktor seized it, grinned, and sped back toward the school. Harry cursed and tried to intercept him and get the cone back if he could, trying to bat the cone out of Viktor’s hand unsuccessfully due to that he was not a chaser nor was a cone anywhere near the same size as a quaffle. Viktor arrived to the tower and balanced the cone on the topmost point.


“Me? Cheat? I tried taking easy.”

Harry huffed. “Whatever, what is it you want?” Viktor let the cone go and it fell, rolling off the roof and down the tower.

“Come over,” he said, motioning Harry closer. Harry floated closer till his left knee bumped and Viktor’s right. Viktor cupped his cheek. His hand was as cold as Harry’s own. “I won’t hurt you. Never. I would like to kiss you if you would let me.” Harry nodded and Viktor pressed their lips together. Below, the clock chimed midnight.

He had half expected there to be a spark of magic that would make it clear to him. A sort of Oh, I get it, this is right moment. But no such thing happened aside from feeling a little fuzzy and warmer than he probably ought to. It wasn’t a bad kiss, in particular for his first kiss. Viktor ran his hand through Harry’s hair, cradling the back of his neck. Too soon it broke. “We must go,” Viktor mumbled. “Your uncles might find out we are gone. I want to stay on their…how you say…good side?”

“Yeah,” Harry whispered. I could get used to that, he thought, wishing to kiss him again. They drifted down to the ground and landed under the tower. Viktor cast a shrinking charm on both their brooms and whispered the counter-spell in Harry’s ear.

“Goodnight, Lyubimi,” he whispered, kissing Harry’s cheek.

“G’night,” Harry replied. With that, they parted ways. Back in his dorm, Harry had pleasant dreams.

Chapter End Notes

If there are any readers who know the Bulgarian word for "beloved," please let me know if this computer translation is off in any way so I can fix it! Thanks!

EDIT
Thank you, bonnifacius_de_montferrat, for helping with the translation!
Chapter 14

~Christmas Day~

Remus woke late Christmas morning to kisses pressed to his back. He hummed, groggily turning around to face Severus...only Severus was moving down under the covers, pushing his legs apart and closing his lips around Remus’ cock. Remus laid his head back on the pillows, enjoying the warmth of his lover’s body engulfing his own.

“Fuck, Sev...”

Remus curled his toes as an orgasm built—then the need passed as Severus released him, kissing Remus’ inner thigh instead for a moment. Remus pulled the covers over his head to glower at Severus, whose eyes gleamed wickedly up at Remus before licking a strip from the base of his cock to the tip.

“You’re intent to torture me today, aren’t you?”

“Has merit,” Severus admitted between kissing Remus’ pelvis and abdomen. “And you usually have no objections to a little torture.”

He nipped at the V of Remus’ pelvis and crawled back up over him. Remus wrapped his arms under Severus’ armpits and gripped his shoulders. Severus kissed him, rolling his hips down to rub their pelvises together. “I should make you walk all day with a stiffy,” he whispered, biting the shell of Remus’ ear. “But I think I’ll do that later. Even brats get to have whatever they want on Christmas.”

He yanked Remus’ hair back, nipping at his exposed neck before letting off and directing Remus to lie on his front, their cuffs latching onto his wrists. He heard Severus cast a summoning charm, followed by the heavy feel of his collar around his neck.

“Have you been a good dog this year?” Severus asked, sticking a couple fingers between the collar and Remus’ skin, massaging his neck without tugging too much to block his airway.

“I have, Master,” Remus said, shuddering. “I have been a very good dog. Haven’t I been?”

Severus moved his fingers away from Remus’ neck and dragged them down his spine. “Indeed you have been a good boy.” The fingers left their trail down Remus’ spine and he yelped at the unexpected slap against his ass. Remus pulled his knees toward his torso and propped them up for Severus, who hummed appreciatively. “You like being pet, don’t you?”

“Yes.”

Severus squeezed his ass and parted the cheeks. “Such a good boy you are,” he said. Remus bit his lip, unsure what his lover had in mind (but quite eager to be pulled along for the ride). He felt Severus’ thumb press against his hole and tut. “Poor baby hasn’t had his treat yet.”

“Yes.”

Severus purred, easing a couple fingers inside Remus and opened him up just enough to fit a small vibrator inside. “There you are, Sweet,” Severus said. Remus wiggled, annoyed by how the toy barely touched his prostate. He slumped, glaring at Severus, who smirked. “You’ll thank me later, Pet,” he said, squeezing Remus’ ass before he went to their chest. Their favorite toys floated in the air for Severus to decide on.
Remus sighed, rubbing his leaking cock against the mattress.

*Crack!*

He gasped, arching toward the riding crop with each hit against his legs and ass. Coupled with the vibrator...Remus whined a curse, spreading his legs wider.

“Beautiful,” Severus growled, “And as much as I enjoy watching you rut against our bed, I have other ideas for today. Perhaps we’ll save that performance for another time.” Remus pressed his forehead into the pillow, pulling on his cuffs.

“Please, Sev, I need to come.”

“Oh, I doubt that you *need* to, Pet,” Severus said, dragging the strap of the crop over Remus’ skin. “I think you *want* to come, but patience.”

*Crack!*

“Is.”

*Crack!*

“A virtue.”

*Crack!*

The crop dragged over his sore ass and over his back, sending shivers over Remus’ body. “And believe me, Remus, you’ll be glad you waited,” Severus dragged the strap back down between Remus’ legs, rubbing the leather against his balls, then back up. Remus gasped, pushing back against it, whining.

“Please, Master, let me come. I wanna come.”

Severus shushed him, setting the crop aside and positioned himself behind Remus. He spread Remus’ cheeks again and twisted the vibrator around, pulling it free only to drag it against the puckered skin and down over the perineum before securing it with a charm to Remus’ skin just behind his scrotum.

“Fuck!” Remus hissed, knees buckling, as Severus dragged his tongue over Remus’ hole, easing fingers back inside and stretching him a little wider. “Oh gods...Sever...Sev...Fuck...”

Once convinced he was stretched wide enough, Severus straightened and gripped Remus’ hair as he thrust his cock inside. Remus vision blurred as Severus slammed into him, hitting his prostate, and from the vibrator stuck to his perineum.

Severus pressed his torso against Remus’ back, groaning. “You want to come, Baby? Come for me. Now.” Every muscle tightened and his breath caught in his lungs as his cock pulsed soiling the sheets. Above him, Severus cursed and his thrusts grew more static as he released inside Remus.

They collapsed, breathing deep and hard, onto the sheets. Severus pulled out with a hiss and Remus shivered. Severus muttered the command for Remus’ release and his wrists fell free and limp onto the pillows. The vibrator also shut off and fell onto the bed between Remus’ legs. “You were amazing,” Severus said. “As usual.” Remus hummed. “Passed out?”

“Almost...”
Severus kissed his back. “I’ll have waffles brought, okay?” Remus hummed again, smiling against the pillows. Before drifting back to sleep, Remus felt Severus’ hand in his hair. “I love you, Remus.”

#

When he woke, the bed was cleaned and he was dry of sweat and semen. A pair of sweats was left out for him to don when he woke with a note:

Had to go: problems at Slytherin House.

Put a warming charm of the waffles for you. Be back soon. – Sev

Remus grabbed the pants and donned them before getting out of bed and stretching. He still felt the hum of a good shag vibrating through his skin as he walked to the small kitchen where warm waffles awaited him. After pouring a glass of pumpkin juice, he sat down and began to eat.

He heard a hissed curse from the living room. “Let me guess: some little chit thought a classmate’s gifts were better than the one their mummy and daddy got them?”

“I would have preferred that than finding Slytherin alumni in the common room.”

“What?”

“Skeeter. She’s gone. Had to threaten both bodily injury and a trip to Albus to get her out, but it worked. What she wanted with my students, I haven’t a bloody clue. Especially on Christmas Day.”

“Well, that would have to do with a particular Gryffindor student under your care, Severus,” the trilling voice said, grating Remus’ ear.

Severus spun around, revealing Skeeter donned in a crisp holiday suit with pumps to match.

“After all, I figured I’d at least give you and your sweetums a little heads up before I decide where to publish this.” She handed them a scroll and Severus began to read. He grew paler and tenser through the article before Remus took it from him:

Earlier this week, I have been privy to discover a potentially pedophilic relationship brewing between the overly popular Boy-Who-Lived Harry Potter and Quidditch bonbon Viktor Krum.

Not only that, the relationship was allowed with a rigorous set of guidelines by Potter’s current guardians: Professors Remus Lupin, History of Magic teacher, and Severus Snape, Hogwarts’ primary potions master. It seems, however, that neither Potter nor Krum have any respect for either professor.

One of the primary rules they were given was to not be without a chaperone of any sort. A teacher, a parent, or a guardian fell into these categories.

While Krum and Potter seemed to, at first glance, accept such a rule that most teenagers today would deem too much, they rebelled against it at the soonest opportunity—the Yule Ball held on Christmas Eve at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

In the last half hour of the night, they snuck out and went flying high above the school.

Perhaps it was the excitement of the night. Perhaps it was a need for fresh air. Surely taking a moment out of the castle would have sufficed, would it not?

Thankfully, I was there to keep an eye on them before they took off and when they returned after the
One can only speculate what happened between the two and while, outwardly, young Potter seems fine, this humble reporter wonders if there had been a more nefarious event between the young hero and Quidditch Seeker.

“First of all,” Remus growled, ripping the page apart. “I assure you will not get our consent to publish this. Second, Harry is a minor and your constant barrage of these articles you’re writing is something no self-respecting adult would dare to write! As you state in this rubbish you write, he’s underage. So, Skeeter, tell me: what exactly gives you the right to destroy the reputation of a child?”

“I’m a journalist, Lupin,” she said. “It is my job to write the truth and make the truth interesting. As for dear Harry, he is the Boy-Who-Lived. Everyone wants to know everything about his life from his future intents to his class schedule. If I recall, you and Snape did smash a few of my coworkers’ noses.”

“Skeeter,” Severus growled. “If you dare publish that article—as I am sure you are devious enough to have copies—I will hunt you down.”

“Is that a threat?”

“Oh, yes,” Severus snarled, smirking. “It is most definitely a threat.” With that, he flicked his wand and Rita shrieked, flying out the door. It slammed and locked. Remus sat down.

“And it was such a good morning.” Severus repaired the parchment, rereading it. “We’ll have to talk to them about this?”

“Indeed we will. As for Harry, I am about…ninety-five percent sure he wasn’t thinking, but Krum is less likely to be able to use that excuse.”

“Well, it’s not that unheard of, is it? An eighteen year old having a lapse of judgment?”

“True. We all have had a lapse of judgment in our teenage years.” Remus didn’t verbalize how he noted Severus glancing at his arm. Remus stood and approached him.

“I think it was a lapse of judgment on both of their part. I’m not saying let them think they got away with it—not at all—but at least remind them. We can’t really punish Krum, but Harry, well, grounded and detention with Filch I think would be enough.”

“Grounded?”

“Two months.”

“And I thought I was harsh.”

“Well…it will ensure that he knows not to risk going against us again.”

“That was not a critique, Pet,” Severus said. “So…detention for a week with Filch and two months of doing nothing but homework or practicing for the tournament,” he stated. Remus nodded. “Good, we’re agreed.” Remus sighed.

“I don’t want to discuss that with him tonight, though.”

“Neither do I. Tomorrow?”

“That would feel better. Now, I’m going to finish my waffles, then take a shower…how’d you clean
“the bed when I was so…you levitated me.”

“Yep.”

“Why do I feel that you had more fun with that than you’re letting on?”

“Because it was,” Severus admitted. “Just a little.” He sat down and reviewed the article again.

“How did she know about that agreement we had with Krum?”

Remus shrugged. “Wouldn’t know what to say to that. How much do you trust Karkaroff again?”

Severus lowered the parchment. “You don’t think…”

“I wouldn’t put it past him,” Remus said, “no matter how he feels about Krum. He isn’t happy with Harry participating. Not many people are, of course, but even if he were to do so, why? This doesn’t just affect Harry, after all.”

Severus set the parchment down, glaring at it. “I’ll ask him what he thinks. At the same time, I…” He placed a hand over his mouth. “Invisibility cloak? Chameleon charms?”

“What is it?”

“What if she was there?”

“That would make me feel violated and awkward,” Remus said. “And thank you for that horrible idea. I’ve lost my appetite.” Severus hummed.

“Makes you wonder what else she’s seen, and yes, that is a very terrifying thought. I admit that. I would hate to find out what she might have seen.”

“Just stop.”

“Sorry.”

Remus shuddered, looking somewhere between green and white. He exhaled and grinned. “So, what’s the plan for today? Flooing over to Sirius’ for dinner and presents, right?”

“Yes…”

“Excellent. I’m going to go take a shower. Thanks for breakfast.” Remus stood and kissed Severus’ cheek and left the kitchen.

*I guess he really doesn’t want to think about how Skeeter’s getting her information…*
“Have you ever gotten drunk before a full moon?” Harry asked. Sirius pulled the fire whiskey out of his hand. “Really?”

“There is butterbeer in the refrigerator for you, but I’ll be damned if your mother haunts my ass because I let you have whiskey. And that’s if these two don’t kill me.”

“Which we would,” Severus said. “Or at least I would.”

“Or you can let him live and let Mum haunt him.”

Sirius shook his head. “It’s a lose-lose situation for me,” he said. “I either die and then I have to deal with Lily chewing me out or I live and she chews me out anyway. Moony, this is not fair.”

“Well, better Lily than James.”

“Maybe for you guys,” Harry said. “I wouldn’t mind being haunted by my parents.” With that, he reentered the kitchen. Sirius turned to them.

“I still say stag party.”

“I don’t want one!”

“Get the werewolf drunk!” Harry shouted. “And film it! I want to see that!”

“Film?” Sirius repeated. Severus snorted.

“Muggle thing.”

“Oh. Cool.”

“And it would be interesting. Don’t worry; it should be okay as long as you have taken your wolfsbane potion, Pet. Think of it as an experiment. Can a werewolf get drunk and remain drunk while in wolf form?” Severus grinned around the rim of his glass.

“I second that motion,” Sirius said. “I’d like to be there just to see what happens. Granted, what would happen to us as animagi if we were drunk in animal form?”

“We could find that out any time,” Severus stated. “But the drunk werewolf one has to be during a full moon. No way around that.”

“Yep.”

“I’m convinced you just want to get me drunk to see if what a drunk wolf looks like,” Remus snorted.

Harry returned and Sirius grabbed his butterbeer bottle, taking a swig. He nodded and handed it back to him. “Just checking to make sure you didn’t spike it,” he said.

Harry grimaced, wiping the lip of the bottle. “Why would you think I’d do that?”

“You’re dad would have,” Remus said.

“Well, I’m not my dad,” Harry snapped. “So please refrain from drinking my butterbeer.”

“Happy Christmas, Harry,” Sirius said, raising his glass up. “And before I forget.” He summoned a thin package. It fell in Harry’s lap. “Open up.”
Harry ripped the parchment apart and stared at the document. He flipped through it. “Is this…”

“Yep.”

“You won?” Harry asked.

“I did,” Sirius said. “As soon as school ends, this will be your home.” Harry jumped up and embraced him. Remus and Severus exchanged a glance.

_How does this affect us?_ Remus thought.

_“We’ll discuss Harry and Krum’s relationship with him later tonight and get his input. Granted, our custody was a temporary one anyway.”_

_Fair enough._

From there came time to open presents. It was agreed that Harry would spend the night and return to school after breakfast.

He finally conked out around eleven, giving Severus and Remus time to inform Sirius about Krum.

“I knew about it,” Sirius admitted. “Harry wrote me a few days ago about it and your agreement with him. I think I’ll manage as long as he keeps—” Severus handed him Skeeter’s article. “What’s this?”

“Skeeter caught them outside without a chaperone.”

“You believe this?”

“I don’t know,” Severus said. “But I think all three of us will need to have a talk about it with him.”

“Yeah. And I’ll see what I can do to have her censored. This…it’s one thing, but if Harry’s anything like his parents, this would really hurt him.”

“Which is that bitch’s goal,” Remus said. “She’s…she’s amoral. It’s one thing to attack an adult. If it were you or me, we could handle this. Harry shouldn’t go through this.”

“And he won’t,” Severus said. “Not with the three of us watching out for him. As for Krum, I’m sure he knew the risk he was taking when he decided to pursue a relationship with someone so much younger than him. I don’t think he’s a pedophile or anything like that. He admitted that Harry’s his other half and I don’t think he’s the sort of man to lie about Dimidium Animae.”

Sirius read the letter again. “Let’s talk to them both all five of us together.”

“We were thinking of grounding Harry if this was true and detention.”

“If it is, then by all means,” Sirius said. “Better you two being the hatchet men than me. As for letting it continue…I would say give it one more go, it was Christmas and that tends to set off some high spirits here and there, but if they break the agreement one more time, then done. They can be friends and pen pals but nothing more till Harry’s seventeen. All in all, I think we’re being more than fair in the matter.”

Remus hummed, glancing at Harry’s blanketed form on the couch (as he had no room set up yet). “I have to agree. It may have been a lapse of judgment on both parts, but…”

Sirius clapped his shoulders. “You got in touch with your inner dad, haven’t you?”
“We both have,” Remus said. “Even if he denies it.” Severus rolled his eyes. Sirius snorted.

“Well, I’m sure he’ll like to spend time with you two here and there anyway. In particular if I’ve a date over or not.”

“I thought you were trying to get with your therapist,” Remus said, frowning. Sirius shrugged. He sighed. “You or her?”

“Me,” he said. “She’s told me she doesn’t care that I’m broken, but…”

“You’re an idiot,” Severus said. “Everyone’s broken in some way. It’s a matter of finding someone who doesn’t give a damn how broken you are and who might actually be equally damaged.”

“Perhaps so, but a part of me wonders if I’m sound enough as it is to even raise Harry. Especially at this stage in his life,” he admitted.

“You wouldn’t have won custody of him if no one thought that you could do it,” Remus said. “And I think it’s the same with Anna. Little by little, mate. You’ll get there.”

~Boxing Day, 1994~

“She’s done it again,” Ron said, throwing his copy of the morning paper down in front of Harry as soon as he returned to the common room. Harry picked up the article and wrinkled his nose.

~Yule Ball Bombarda~

Rita Skeeter

Christmas Eve at Hogwarts was as magical as ever with the exciting events of the Yule Ball held in honor of the Triwizard Tournament. Opening with a grand dance of the champions and their dates, I was surprised to find that two of the champions went together.

As one might think, it was not the lovely Fleur Delacour that engaged in a dance with one of her competitors. Rather, what shocked me was the arrival Harry Potter on the arm of Viktor Krum!

Perhaps the lads had united as a front against the deceitful Hermione Granger, or perhaps to show solidarity in the spirit of the tournament.

Neither of the sort, I was soon to discover!

“I always thought Krum was queer,” an anonymous source revealed. “He never did stay long in the room when around an attractive bloke. Never liked to make eye contact if he could.”

Such is not enough to claim one is a homosexual, of course, but it begs the question to whether Krum is truly of sound mind. After all, what business does a young man have with a boy?

“Then again, I didn’t think he’d go for younger men—or boys for that matter,” aforementioned source added. One does wonder if our tragic Mr. Potter is as innocent as we hope…

Harry set the article down, gnashing his teeth. “She’s a cow,” he declared. “A fat, horrid, wretched cow.”

“You think what she said about Viktor was bad?” Hermione asked, joining them on the couch. “You should see this one,” she handed him another page from the Prophet.

~Dumbledore’s Giant Mistake~
Albus Dumbledore, eccentric Headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, has never been afraid to make controversial staff appointments.

In September of this year, he hired Alastor “Mad-Eye” Moody, the notoriously jinx-happy ex-Auror, to teach Defense Against the Dark Arts, a decision that has caused many raised eyebrows at the Ministry of Magic, given Moody’s well known habit of attacking anybody who makes a sudden movement in his presence. The previous year, the position was held by Remus Lupin, a known werewolf, who has left the post in favor of teaching History of Magic.

Mad-Eye Moody and Lupin, however, look responsible and kindly when set beside the part-human Dumbledore employs to teach Care of Magical Creatures. Rubeus Hagrid, who admits to being expelled from Hogwarts in his third year, has enjoyed the position of gamekeeper in the school ever since, a job secured for him by Dumbledore.

Last year, however, Hagrid used his mysterious influence over the headmaster to secure the additional post of Care of Magical Creatures teacher, over the heads of many better-qualified candidates. An alarmingly large and ferocious-looking man, Hagrid has been using his newfound authority to terrify the students in his care with a succession of horrific creatures. While Dumbledore has turned a blind eye, Hagrid has maimed several pupils during a series of lessons that many admit to being “very frightening.”

Harry continued to read the article, getting angrier at each vile word written about Hagrid. He glanced at Hermione, who nodded.

“Skeeter is a bitch and cow and I’m sure there are far better words to describe how awful she is,” Hermione stated. “In the meantime, what do we do?”

“Panic,” Ginny said, slamming Witch Weekly down in front of her, Harry, and Ron. “You’re caught up on the Prophet? Good. This will make you hate her more.” She pointed at the third damning article.

~Party Boys Flaunt Disregard for Rules~

Rita Skeeter

Earlier this week, I have been privy to discover a potentially pedophilic relationship brewing between the overly popular Boy-Who-Lived Harry Potter and Quidditch bonbon Viktor Krum…

“We raced!” Harry snapped. “That’s all!”

“We believe you, mate,” Ron said. “But you did kiss, too.”

“Ron…” Hermione sighed.

“And what’s wrong with a kiss?” Ginny asked. “Last I remember, Harry was on cloud nine. Anyone with a brain knows nothing nefarious happened between them. Only…what about the professors?”

“Well, if there’s any god or goddess or divine figure that’s got any sense of mercy, they’ll never find out about this article,” Harry said. “I don’t exactly fancy getting my ass handed to me because I went flying with my date.”

“Who thinks you’re his other half,” Ginny said, smiling at him. “But I hope the same. Otherwise, you and Viktor won’t be able to figure out if there’s any possibility of you and he being Dimidium
Animae before you’re seventeen.”

“Thank you, Ginny. Just what I needed to hear.”

“Weasleys are a brutally honest bunch,” she stated. “You’ll never hear us tell you what you want to hear. Drives Mum and Dad both up the wall with their own honesty.”

“Yup,” Ron agreed. “But here’s the thing, if you do get caught and you aren’t able to date, you’ll still be friends. Add to it—”

“Actually, I’m a bit worried about this,” Hermione said, reading the article again. “She’s crucifying Viktor. Some of this is just…She’s trying to make it seem like he’s a pedophile. It’s not his fault if you’re truly his other half. Rita Skeeter is a…a…”

“Cow,” Harry growled.

“Bitch,” Ginny added.

“Evil,” Hermione hissed.

“Twisted,” Ron agreed.

They glared at the three articles laying on the table. Harry half expected them to burst into flame from their concentrated energy alone. Hermione gathered them up and sighed. “In the meantime, we hope the Professors don’t find out.”
To Harry’s chagrin, the gods or any divine beings had no mercy.

He cowed under Remus’, Severus’, and Sirius’ stares as they reminded them of the agreement.

“You can still date, but next time you sneak off alone, done,” Sirius said, making a slashing motion with his hand over his throat. “At least till Harry’s seventeen.”

“In the meantime, Harry will be in detention with Filch.”

“Why not Professor Lupin? Or you, Professor Snape?”

“Because clearly it won’t work. Filch at least does a good job with detentions.”

Harry groaned and banged his head against the desk.

“From there, Remus and Severus will enforce your grounding.”

Harry lifted his head, staring at Sirius. “I’m grounded?”

“Two months.”

Harry blinked. “So…”

“You go to class, then straight to the library. Do your homework. Practice for the tournament after, then done. You go to dinner or to bed, whichever comes first. This includes Hogsmeade.”

Harry placed his forehead on the table again.

“Um…what about holidays?” Viktor asked.

“As long as one of us is present and you tell us first, then its fine.”

Viktor nodded and excused himself. Once gone, Harry stood again.

“We didn’t do anything. Just raced. What is wrong with that?”

“We were clear,” Severus said. “You could not be alone with him. You can trust Viktor all you like, Harry. We don’t trust him. Not yet. Until we do, you are not allowed to be alone with him. You agreed to that. It doesn’t matter to us that nothing happened. How do any one of us know that he won’t turn on you if given a chance?”

“We want to believe he won’t hurt you,” Remus said. “But we just don’t know him well enough to be sure that we can trust him. Especially when you’re engaged in a romantic relationship with someone who’s an adult. Harry, you’re lucky we’re even letting him near you.”

“You can fight us, hate us, be angry at us, and that’s fine,” Sirius said, sitting beside him. “It’s not our job to be liked. Our job is to keep you safe from any and every potential threat. We don’t think Viktor is a threat. Not at all. But he could become one and we cannot ignore that or pretend it’s not a possibility.
“If anything were to happen to you, that’s on me now. Okay? You know that. You’re old enough to know that. And you’re old enough to understand that. We’re not punishing you to be mean. That’s never going to be the case.

“I understand that you were unable to really rely on adults. You can rely on us. And we expect that you’ll trust our judgment. If we say you cannot do something, you’re welcome to ask us why, but always know we’re trying to keep you safe. Okay?”

Harry nodded, scowling.

Sirius hugged him and with that, he was dismissed. Viktor waited for him.

“Okay?” he asked.

Harry shrugged. “It’s not fair,” he said. “I know you won’t hurt me, but they’re…”

“Worried,” Viktor said. “Not all parents and guardians are like yours. I understand their fears. It’s not like we intended to go against them, after all, and I don’t regret it. I am sorry that you are being punished so heavily, but I feel it could’ve been worse.”

Harry nodded, walking beside him back up to the main levels of the school, keeping a few inches between them.

“I’m sorry about Skeeter. I don’t even know how she got in and—”

“She is Paparazzi pig,” he said with a shrug. “I am used to her kind. I worry more for you.”

“She’s making you look—”

“I am not first to be targeted by false words such as hers. I will be all right. I’ve dealt with this before. As for that Witch Weekly article, I would like to know how she found out about our agreement with your uncles. That is only thing I worry of. I was not thinking when we went flying. I merely thought about spending time with you and doing something we both loved as opposed to being in spotlight.”

“That’s really it? That’s all that bothers you about this?”

“She will tire of her game sooner or later. They always do. In meantime, be strong. Do not let her get under your skin.” He took Harry’s hand and squeezed it. “It will pass.”

Harry stared at their hands.

What about her accusations about this relationship being pedophilic. I don’t think it would ever go that way, but…those sorts of accusations are more than enough to ruin a person, even one who isn’t anywhere near as well known as us.

Viktor kissed his hand.

“I will do what I can to prove to them I am trustworthy, Harry. In the meantime, be glad you have good uncles to rely on. Not everyone is so lucky.”

With that, he let go and went his own way. Harry shoved his hands in his pockets.

He still wanted to find Skeeter and get rid of her if he could.
Remus offered Sirius a drink.

“You did well for your first time dishing out discipline.”

“I feel dirty,” he admitted.

Severus laughed.

“I do! I feel like I’ve gone against everything I stand for.”

“Yeah, you get used to that,” Remus said, patting his shoulder. “Besides, given how his aunt and uncle were.” Sirius hummed his agreement and took a swig.

“Yeah. I would think they’d not care what he does at school,” Sirius growled.

No one liked the Dursleys and they were more than glad to surrender guardianship to Sirius once everything went through.

“Well, I best get back to work. My place for New Years?”

“Where else?” Remus asked.

Sirius finished his drink and thanked them before flooing back to the Ministry.

Remus slid into Severus’ lap and kissed him. “That went better than I thought it would.”

“Indeed it did,” Severus agreed, wrapping his arms around Remus waist. “How long do you give him till he decides to rebel again? Two days? Three?”

“Have some faith. Harry’s smarter than that.”

Severus hummed uncertainly at that and the resulting pinch made him laugh. “Ow.”

“Be nice.”

“It’s not like he’s a maddening little Pureblood who can barely spell his own name. Handwriting’s still atrocious though. So I take it that’s a no to a bet.”

“I’m not betting. Besides, he is smarter than that. From what I’ve heard before we fully immersed in his life, he’s definitely smarter than he acts.” He pressed his forehead to Severus’. “I trust him more than I probably should. I just wish he used that smart brain of his a little more. He’s impulsive, that’s all. But he’s not a bad kid.”

“So…before his grounding is finished?”

“You’re being an ass!”

“You love me anyway.”

~New Years Eve, 1994~

Severus snorted at the discovery, setting his butterbeer down.

Tom Lehrer.

To think the records were still in the attic!
He thumbed through them and picked out one record.

He tapped it with his wand and snickered at the merry tune echoed off the walls.

Spring is here, a-suh-puh-ring is here.
Life is skittles and life is beer.
I think the loveliest time of the year is the spring.
I do, don't you? 'course you do.
But there's one thing that makes spring complete for me,
And makes ev'ry Sunday a treat for me.

All the world seems in tune
On a spring afternoon,
When we're poisoning pigeons in the park.
Ev'ry Sunday you'll see
My sweetheart and me,
As we poison the pigeons in the park.

When they see us coming, the birdies all try an' hide,
But they still go for peanuts when coated with cyanide.
The sun's shining bright,
Ev'rything seems all right,
When we're poisoning pigeons in the park.

“What are you listening to?” Remus asked.

Severus snorted again, wiping his mouth and met Remus’ concerned gaze. “Poisoning Pigeons in the Park,” Severus said, “By Tom Lehrer. Oh come on, it’s funny!”

“Animal abuse is funny?”

“No! That…”

Remus snickered. “Sorry, Love. I know this song. James and Sirius thought it was hilarious. Till my mum shut it off and told us to do something more productive.”

Severus sniffed. “Not everyone appreciates good comedy.”

“Depends on the comedy, I suppose. I can’t say I’m surprised you like dark comedy.”

“Of course I do. Dark comedy usually seems to be the only kind of comedy that’s worth a damn sometimes.” Severus stood and approached Remus. “So, Remus.”

“Yes?”

“Would you go to the park with me next Sunday to poison pigeons?”

Remus pressed his forehead to Severus’ shoulder, laughing too hard to respond.

“I guess that’s a yes.”

“I love you, but I would rather avoid potential arrest you know what I mean?”

“Eh, we’d be doing London a favor.”
“We’re not in London.”

“You. We’ll be there this evening.”

Remus shook his head, laughing. “I love you, you mad bastard.”

“Since when was I both?”

“You were always both, Severus,” Remus said, kissing him. “And yes, I fully intend to poison pigeons and quite likely other rodents with you, flying or earthbound, with you. No need to worry there.”

The song ended.

“You think the *Oedipus Rex* song is in that stack?”

“Bloody hell, Sev!”

#

It was not surprising to find Harry there with Ron, Hermione, Viktor, and the one Durmstrang witch seated beside each other as Viktor and Sirius discussed quidditch.

Harry and Ron listened raptly, occasionally drinking his butterbeer if not interjecting his own opinion or question.

The girls looked bored, but the unknown witch would speak up here and there, earning a curt reply from Viktor in response that would make Harry snigger.

“This will be interesting,” Severus mumbled.

“As long as they don’t wander off together, I don’t care,” Remus said. He kissed him. “Go on, I’ll get you some whiskey. We might need it to survive the night.”

“What about peanuts and cyanide? Think he has those in his pantry?”

Remus punched Severus’ shoulder, trying not to laugh (and failing).

“Do I want to know?” Sirius asked.


“We do,” Sirius said. “Okay, I’ll leave it at that.” And the discussion of quidditch continued.

Severus joined Remus in the kitchen and wrapped his arms around him, kissing his neck and gently biting his ear lobe. Remus turned around and held a glass tumbler out to Severus.

“To another year,” he said.

“A little early, don’t you think?” Severus asked, knocking back the drink.

“Well, I have a feeling we’ll be stuck in bed tomorrow, so I figured why not wish 1995 in early.”

“You have a feeling?” Severus asked, arching a brow at Remus.

“Tell me I’m wrong. Seems to be a theme of ours, if you’ve not noticed before.”
“Having sex on holidays?”

“I’m not complaining. Far from it,” Remus set his own glass down to wrap his arms around Severus’ neck. “In fact, I wouldn’t mind having sex more often.”

Severus swallowed, blinking. “Well, in that case,” he lifted Remus onto the counter. “I am glad to oblige—”

“OH MY GODS!!!” Sirius shouted, rushing out of the kitchen.

“We weren’t doing anything!”

“Yet.”

“Not helping, Severus,” Remus growled.

Severus shrugged and Harry poked his head in.

“Oh good, I thought it was really nasty or something that would make Sirius dive under the furniture.”

“As a dog?”

“Yeah.”

“That doesn’t surprise me,” Remus said. “Is he coming out?”

“I don’t think he has yet. What were you doing?”

“Honestly, nothing.”

“Yet.” Remus twisted Severus’ ear. “Ow!”

“Will you stop?”

“Let me torment them a little.”

Remus glared at him and Harry shifted foot to foot.

“Fine, I’ll try to get him out from under the furniture.” Severus left the kitchen.

“We really weren’t doing anything when he walked in.”

“Yet, apparently.”

“Harry, have I mentioned that you seem to be…a bit…snarky?”

“I’ve been told.”

“Yeah. Stop it.”

#

“Come on, Black,” Severus said.

Sirius backed closer to the wall under the couch.
"We were just flirting. We weren’t going to do anything."

Sirius snarled.

"Really, Cujo? Fine, we won’t do that in your house again."

Sirius kept baring his teeth at Severus. Severus sat up.

"Remus!"

"Not coming out?" Remus asked.

"Not for me. You’re his best mate. You try."

He stood and sat down, letting Remus have a go. If nothing else, it gave him a bit of a view of Remus’ lovely ass.

For fuck’s sake, focus, Severus!

He glanced at the trio, who were still in close view of all Severus of them if need be, laughing over something Severus couldn’t hear.

He figured he’d let Remus reason with Sirius, wolf-man to dog-man, and decided to usher the boys and witch outside for fireworks.

Several of them were of Weasley make, which meant insanity in fiery sparks shooting off into the sky. He watched them whoop and laugh as the fireworks shot into the sky.

"Looks like they’re having fun," Remus said.

"Gave up on Sirius?"

"For now," Remus leaned against Severus, and Severus wrapped his arm around his shoulder. "He’ll come out when he’s ready to be an adult rather than a puppy. Literally. And them?"

"Enjoying the holiday while they can," Severus stated. "I wonder what would have happened if Harry hadn’t been selected."

"He’d be having a better time of things, I’m sure. And I doubt his being in the tournament would have deterred Viktor from asking him out. Hermione and the girl jumped back, shrieking at sparks that flew at their robes, running over to Severus and Remus.

"All right there? No need for a fire-dousing spell?" Remus asked.

"No, Sir," Hermione said. The witch held her hand out.

"Venera Krum," she said. "Viktor’s twin."

Remus took her offered hand. "Nice to meet you."

"Likewise."

She offered her hand to Severus as well, who shook it. "Tell me, isn’t there more ladies at Durmstrang?"

"Loads," she said. "But Headmaster Karkaroff only wanted best and brightest for tournament," she
said. “Most of our girls can’t make his standards. He’s pig, as far as I’m concerned. Prefers strength and power to the subtle magic of witches.”

“He does give off that impression,” Hermione agreed. “But Durmstrang was originally a school founded by a Witch.”

“Doesn’t mean wizards don’t continue to oppress witches,” Venera said. “Especially at our school. Thankfully, Viktor insisted I could make it in tournament if selected.”

“I’m sure you’d have been an amazing champion,” Hermione said.

Vernera grinned. “Thank you, Hermoninee.”

They jumped at a loud bang and the boys jumped back as a variety of loud fireworks flew above the sky. Hermione punched Harry’s arm in retaliation for setting them off without warning, only to get a barrage of laughter in response.

Remus rested his head on Severus’ shoulder, letting the students banter.

Not yet perfect, but pretty damn close.

~January 1973~

“How do you expect me to want to go out with you at all?!” Lily shouted, standing between James and a bloodied Severus. “You’re horrible, Potter! I hate you!”

With that, she helped Severus up, still foggy and aching from the hex that sent him down a flight of stairs, and helped him to the infirmary wing.

“You need to tell Slughorn,” she said, “Or McGonagall.”

“He’ll grow tired of it.”

“No, Severus, he won’t,” she helped him lean against a wall and faced him. “He’s been going on for months now. I’m tired of this.”

She blinked, tears pooling around her eyes. “I can’t watch him hurt you anymore.”

Severus took her cheeks in his hands and pressed their foreheads together.

“You can’t let him bully you into being his girlfriend. If this is how he acts when he doesn’t get his way, what will he do if you let him get his way?”

“But at this rate, he might kill you, Severus,” she said, hiccupping. “And that’s if your dad doesn’t.”

“Lily, no one is going to kill me. Not Potter. Not my dad. I’m stronger than both of them. We both are. Please don’t cry, Lily,” he wiped her tears away and ignored the wincing pain when he smiled. “We’ll get through this. All of it. You’ll see.”

Lily sniffed and with that, they continued their way to the infirmary.

Madam Pomfrey fixed his nose and offered him a blood replenishing potion to alleviate the worse of the blood loss. She insisted he stay the night for monitoring and shooed Lily out of the wing.

Once alone, Severus ducked under the covers and gnashed his teeth, vowing to make Potter pay for making Lily cry.
“I love you,” Remus said once they were finally alone—ushering Harry and his friends back to their dorm ended up being more difficult as they were still high on the adrenaline of setting off explosives in the center of the street.

Severus pinned him to the wall, holding Remus’ hands above his head. “So, where were we?” he asked. “Before we were rudely interrupted by Black? Requesting more quality time, if I recall?”

Remus swallowed. “Pretty much,” he said, “By my reckoning we’re clothed too much for fiancés.” Severus kissed Remus’ neck.

“What do you want me to do to you, Pet?” Severus whispered. “Tell me what you want.”

“Rim me,” Remus stated, grinding his hips against Severus’. “Make me come with just your tongue.”

“Will you need your hands bound?” Severus asked. Remus grinned.

“Quite certain I will.”

Severus snorted and backed away, letting him go. “Turn around, Remus. Hands against the wall.” Remus obeyed, bracing himself against the stones. He heard Severus cast a spell that sunk his hands into the stone, keeping them in place. “Not too uncomfortable, is it?”

“No really. No.”

“Good. Evanesco.” Remus shivered as his clothes vanished from his body, leaving him naked and exposed without a way to hide or escape. Severus cast a cleansing charm at last and placed his hands on Remus’ hips. “Now, just my tongue, correct?”

“Yes.”

“In that case, Pet, Would you like a spreader?”

Remus shivered again and nodded. “Yes. Yes, I would like it.” Severus released him and went to retrieve one of their bars. When he returned, he knelt down and locked Remus’ ankles to the bar. He helped Remus get into as comfortable a position as allowable.

“Merlin, I love your ass,” Severus said, squeezing the cheeks in both hands. Remus lowered his head, biting his lip as Severus knelt. “Just fits perfectly in my hands.” Thumbs pushed the globes apart. Remus hissed when Severus licked the puckered skin.

Time grew irrelevant as Severus rimmed him. Remus pressed against the stones, panting as he grew more aroused. His legs shook beneath him and his cock leaked pre-come. Remus rocked his hips in an attempt to gain some stimulation. Severus stilled him, moving away from him.

“Please, Sev…I’m close.”

“Indeed you are,” Severus said, “And by the gods, you are gorgeous like this.” He tapped his wand against the stone and Remus was released. “But I think…a little quid pro quo is in order.” He spun him around and grabbed Remus’ hair, pushing him down to his knees.

Remus rubbed his nose against Severus’ bulge. He quickly undid the trousers and pulled Severus’ cock free, swallowing it down as far as he could. This situation had a distinct déjà vu feeling about it. He looked up at Severus, blinking.
I remember our first time together. Like this, he thought.

Severus did not reply right away, but they almost never seemed to properly disconnect from each other. “I do, too,” he replied.

Back then, it was convenience only. They were heartbroken. They were angry. Shagging was just a way to make it easier to watch Lily and James together until it had become love. It wasn’t long after that everything fell to ruin between them.

And yet…

Remus sucked and swallowed Severus’ seed, relishing the curse leaving his lover’s throat. At last, he released him and pressed his cheek against his knee. Severus helped him back up, unlocking the bar and pulling him into a bruising kiss before dragging him to the couch. Severus had him sit on his lap and stroked him to completion.

“Fuck, Remus, you’re beautiful.” Remus crashed their lips together as his orgasm overcame him. Severus laced his fingers in Remus’ hair and pulled him back. “Merlin, I love you,” he growled. Remus fisted his clothes and kissed him again. Remus’ stomach growled loudly, pulling a laugh from Severus’ throat.

“Hungry?”


Chapter End Notes

Link to "Poisoning Pigeons in the Park" by Tom Lehrer:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59tKpTFlaME
Chapter 16

~February 1995~

Remus woke to the smell of bacon and eggs and went to the kitchen to see Harry shaking where he sat as Severus cooked. “Everything all right?” he asked.

“Just nerves,” Harry said, managing a smile, albeit an unconvincing one. “I’ll be fine.”

Right, Remus thought. Second task’s today.

Severus set the plate down.

“Eat as much as you can handle,” he said, squeezing Harry’s shoulder. “You’ll do fine.”

“You say that now.”

“The Gillyweed will work, lad. I’ve dished out enough to last you exactly an hour and five minutes. Enough to eat it, dive in, let the affects take place, and you’ll be able to swim and breathe under water easily. And Harry, whatever you find down there, focus on your task.”

Harry nodded, nibbling at his bacon strip. Remus arched a brow at him.

You know what’s been taken?

“I do,” Severus thought back. “But only because I’m a head of house, apparently.”

You’re not going to tell me, are you?

“And spoil the surprise? I think not.”

Is it a person?

“Don’t try to trick me into giving it away.”

Well, can’t blame a bloke for trying anyway, right?

Severus kissed him and placed a plate in front of him. As for Harry, he still looked rather queasy for his comfort.

“Not going to spew are you?”

“I’ll try not to,” Harry said. “But I can’t shake my nerves.”

“You’ve been in higher stress situations than this,” Severus reminded him. “You’ll do fine.”

“Easy for you to say,” Harry said. “Half of those situations were luck.”

“Was it? Or was there at least one teacher or guardian about trying to make sure you don’t get your ass killed with half the stunts you did. There were days early on when I wondered if I would just drop dead of a heart attack because of your own antics. Like going into the forbidden forest when you weren’t even allowed out of your dorm after dark and nearly getting yourself killed by a bunch of acromantulas.”

“But the car…”
“Who do you think fixed it? Oh, and who do you think found you after you went after Quirell?”

“I thought that was Dumbledore.”

“Nope. Face it, Kid, one day, you’ll be the death of me.”

“I feel bad,” Harry said.

“You’ve been causing trouble since you were at least six months old,” Remus said. “I remember we were in the muggle world, around Christmas time in ’80, you managed to unlock yourself from your stroller and got yourself lost in some Muggle toy store.”

Severus nodded.

“‘Toys R Us,’” he said.

Harry stared at them, sinking in his seat.

“Scared the absolute shit out of everyone! Lily was crying, James was panicking to the point where even slapped him didn’t help, Sirius was ready to bring in the bloody Ministry…not to mention how insane we were. Everyone was in a panic. We didn’t know if you were kidnapped by Muggles or other wizards or if you just magicked yourself away. In the end, we did find you after half an hour thanks to a security P.A.”

“We found you sitting on Santa’s feet inside the Toys R Us,” Remus said. “Thank Merlin for Holiday elves and reindeers.”

“The point is, you’ve been causing trouble for us since you were a tot,” Severus said. “Granted I hoped you grew out of that, but still. I’m sure you’re parents would have conniptions of their own if they were able to. As for this, you’ll do fine, Lad. You’re prepared. You know what you’re doing. And certain people will have hell to pay if something does go wrong despite all your preparation.”

Harry shoveled eggs into his mouth then swallowed.

“What about you two?” he asked. “Did you ever do anything to make your parents worry?”

“All the time,” Remus said. “One misstep and my dad would panic: what if someone finds out you’re a werewolf?! Took ages to convince him I could go to Hogwarts. Even wrote letters to Dumbledore once I realized that I might not be allowed to attend.”

Severus shrugged. “My dad wasn’t the kind of bloke to care much what I did. And my mum was the same half the time. It was more fun messing with Lily’s parents. Nearly broke my neck once and her dad nearly stripped the skin from me, he was so fucking mad.”

“My grandfather?”

“Yep.”

Harry set his fork down. “What happened to them? My grandparents?”

“Both sets or just your mum’s parents?” Severus asked.

“Both,” Harry requested after a moment.

“You’re paternal grandparents were Fleamont and Euphemia Potter,” Remus began. “They were an older couple, having had trouble conceiving, so when your dad was born, they doted on him.
Continued to dote on him for ages.

“They were heirs to a vast beauty and pharmaceutical empire in the Wizard World—either Fleamont or your great-grandfather Henry had invented the sleekeasy hair potion. I think you still get royalties from it, even though the company was sold. I’m not entirely sure.

“They died before you were born. They were old and contracted Dragon Pox, which, given their age, it was a pleasant way to go.” He hummed. “I remember visiting every so often. Half the time it felt like visiting’ my gran’s place.

“Your grandmother always made sure we were fed and hydrated. They were wonderful people, if not for spoiling your dad, but I can’t blame them for it, given how bad they wanted children.”

He nudged Severus, who glared at him and sighed.

“You’re mother’s parents were a classic fifties/sixties couple. Collin Evans was your grandfather, worked as a college professor.

“Josephine, your grandmother, was a housewife and a very talented gardener. Loved flowers. Might by why she named both her daughters after flowers. They were as functional as a family could be. Not to say they didn’t have problems, I’m sure they did, but they kept that from us kids.

“Collin and Josie were the closest things to real parents that I had. As for what happened to them… they were meeting your father at the Leaky Cauldron, getting a tour of Diagon Alley. Death Eaters attacked and…they were caught in the line of fire. Petunia never forgave us for failing to protect them.”

“You would have been adored, Harry. You and your sister,” Remus said. “For now, focus on how proud they all are of who you’ve become.”

Harry nodded. He stood.

“Thanks for breakfast, Professor Snape.”

“You’re welcome.”

He took care of his dishes and left. Severus and Remus exchanged a glance.

“It’s a difficult subject any way you look at it,” Severus concluded.

“Perhaps he thought there was a chance someone else in his family still lived,” Remus mused.

“If they did, Dumbledore wouldn’t have left him with the Dursleys.”

Gathering out on the docks, Remus sneezed, wrapping his scarf tighter around him.

Severus held a vial out for him.

“Pepper up potion,” he offered.

Remus thanked him and took a sip. He instantly warmed up and settled in his seat.

“Can’t say I blame the champions for what they’re about to do.”
Neither could Remus. Harry was finishing the last of the gillyweed shaking where he stood. The others were just as cold—none as much as Delacour, but the witch was a skinny, bony thing anyway.

The cannon sounded and they jumped into the water.

“Well, this is going to be boring,” Severus said.

Remus shot him a deadpanned look.

Harry stared at his webbed feet and hands, then brushed a finger against his gills. With that, he began his journey to find the mermaids, swimming deeper into the lake.

Save for a few fish, the lake was calmer than he expected it to be. Even the giant squid was nowhere in sight. Perhaps it was too cold for the certain creatures? Harry pushed the thought from his mind, reminding himself to focus on the task.

Something gripped his ankle and he twisted around to see a school of Grindylow. Harry pulled his wand free and pointed it at them.

“\textit{Impedimenta!}”

The grindylow released him and he swam off before they regained their senses.

Finally he found them:

They were of a Selkie variety. They simply watched him as he approached. In the middle of their colony were four people bound—there was Cho Chang and Ron as far as his own classmates. Between them was a little girl, much younger than any of the rest of the captives. And the fourth was Venera.

He looked around, wondering where the others were.

\textit{Focus on your task,} Severus’ voice echoed in the back of his head.

But nothing ever mentioned that it would be a \textit{person} that was to be taken!

He couldn’t just leave them all there…

A shark swam by him, and an arm attached to the shark grabbed his arm, pulling him closer to the group. He noticed that the shark was merely attached to a human body and a wand, which spelled out in fiery letters:

\textit{Finish task.}

Then it broke the bonds binding Venera.

“Viktor!” Harry shouted.

Viktor turned back to him, holding Venera in one arm.

“What about the others? We can’t just leave them here.”

Viktor glanced at them and then spelled out:
With that, he sped on toward the surface. Harry glanced behind again, waiting for Cedric and Fleur to arrive. Next to come was Cedric, who released Cho and continued on his way without another glance at Harry. He turned back to the hostages and ground his teeth.

“Come on, Fleur.”

Minutes passed and still he saw no sign of her. In the end, he cut Ron free then the little girl. A hand grabbed him.

“You are only to take one.”

“I can’t just leave her!” Harry shouted.

He pushed them off and cast another impediment charm before grabbing both of them and swam back up. He glanced back and cast a shield charm around him, Ron, and the little girl.

The merpeople shrieked and scratched at the magical shield as he propelled them back to the surface. Once the water broke, Ron and the girl woke, looking around, spitting out lake water.

Harry, still under the effects of the gillyweed, kept underneath the water, peering at them over the water’s surface. Ron glanced at the girl, then at the dock before punching Harry in the shoulder.

“You just had to play hero, again, didn’t you?”

Harry lifted himself over the surface and tried to explain, but his voice came out in screeches. Not as bad as merpeople’s, but still bad. He clutched his throat, eyes wide.

“Come on. I’m sure Snape’s got something to take care of that.”

They swam back to the docks.

Ron and Harry helped the girl tightly embraced by a hysterical Fleur.

Ron came up next, tightly wrapped in a towel. Harry shied away from Madam Pomfrey’s outstretched hand, then poked his head up, trilling at her.

“Oh dear,” she sighed. “Someone fetch Severus!”

In the meantime, Harry swam about lazily and when Severus finally arrived, he glared at him.

“Here,” he said, holding out a vial for him. “This will rid flush the remnants from your system safely.”

Harry approached and took the vial and drank it down. Moments later, he transformed and pulled himself out of the lake. Severus wrapped a towel around him and led him away.

“Where are we going?”

“The loo. You’ll need it a few seconds.”

Severus rummaged his storage room, grinding his teeth and feeling another headache coming on.
He growled and looked through the bottles once more, compiling a list of the missing potion ingredients. Once finished, he reviewed the list and went back to his office to review his books.

He mumbled a hello to Remus on entering their room and went to his office. Remus followed.

“Everything all right?”

“Someone’s stealing from me,” he said, pulling out book after book letting them flip through till they found the potion in question. “If I figure out the potion, I’ll probably be able to find out who.”

One of the books finally slowed it’s flipping and he looked at it.

“Polyjuice potion.” He slammed the book closed. “Harry.”

“Severus, we don’t know that.”

“Perhaps not,” Severus snapped, leaving the office. Remus followed. “It could be Granger. They’ve both admitted to having made it before.”

“Doesn’t mean they would again,” Remus said, taking his hand. “We’ll ask them, but they aren’t foolish enough to do that again, don’t you think? And for what reason would they use the potion anyway?”

“Excellent questions,” Severus said. “I’ll be sure to ask them that.”

“Hey, calm down, Love. We don’t know what’s going on yet.”

Severus glanced at their hands and sighed.

“Right, thank you, Remus,” he said, kissing his cheek. Severus sat at the table and massaged his head while Remus set to brewing tea.

“Headache?”

“Yes,” Severus admitted.

Remus grabbed a vial of the headache remedy and handed it to Severus, who thanked him and downed it, shutting his eyes and massaging his temple.

“Tea will be ready in a bit,” he said.

Severus hummed, eyes shut and still trying to figure out which of his blasted students would be able to brew such a potion. It wasn’t even one he taught given how many bloody horny teenagers roamed about willing to do whatever they liked if it meant getting the person they were currently crushing on to pay attention to them.

In the end, he would at least ask Harry and Hermione rather than accuse them as he had been so sorely tempted to moments ago. Remus set a tea cup in front of him. “Now, you have several students who can decently brew it, don’t you?”

“Some, yes,” Severus admitted, “But not that many. This level of brewing could only be a student of NEWT levels…unless we’re talking about geniuses like Hermione Granger.”

“Add to it our guests.”

“I don’t think anyone from Durmstrang or Beauxbatons would be able to find my private stores.” He
sipped. “We might also want to consider teachers. Karkaroff knows where my storage room is…”

“You doubt our coworkers?”

“Only one,” he said. “But to approach him could be risky. I’ll see if I can get any leads from my NEWT students tomorrow. If none of them know anything, I’ll collaborate with Minerva to find out if Harry and Hermione had anything to do with this.”

“Still on them?”

“Not as much as before,” Severus admitted. “But I cannot rule them out just yet.”

~February 1973~

Severus glanced at the ashwinder in the cage he procured.

He charmed it to give off enough heat to allow the serpent to survive. He swallowed and glanced at the Gryffindor quartet laughing at something Potter said, looking particularly smug.

He set the cage down and bit his lip, hesitating. He shook it away, recalling the tears streaking Lily’s face. Conviction renewed, he pointed his wand at the ashwinder.

“Imperio,” he whispered.

He released the cage and the ashwinder slithered over to the Marauders. He kept to the shadows, watching and waiting as the ashwinder did his biding.

It latch onto Potter’s calf and he cried out, shaking it off. The serpent was flown off and burst to dust against a wall.

Severus left, fighting down a very satisfied smirk, listening to the other boys scream for a teacher, even as he strode down another hall and into the boy’s lavatory. He transfigured the cage into a fake sneak-o-scope whilst hidden in a stall. He didn’t want to beget suspicion if he could help it, after all.

Besides, he couldn’t very well leave the room if he was still smiling like a smug bastard.

~March 1995~

Harry and Hermione stared at Severus and Minerva with wide eyes.

“This is the first time we heard that anyone was stealing from you, Sir,” Harry said.

“We have no reason to make a Polyjuice potion,” Hermione added.

“But you had made one before?” Minerva asked, eyes narrowed. “Two years ago?”

“Yes, Ma’am,” they said.

Hermione sighed. “I was the one who stole the ingredients then.”

Minerva’s eyebrows rose.

“Harry and Ron had nothing to do with it and we were convinced that the heir of Slytherin was Draco Malfoy. We wanted to be certain. But we never made it again since.”

Severus and Minerva exchanged a look.
“I believe them,” he said. “They know me well enough now to ask if they want to take on extracurricular projects.”

“In that case, you’re both free to go.”

“What about when we did make the potion?”

“After two years, I think the need for handing you two detentions for a past transgression is rather redundant,” Minerva said. “Not to say I am not disappointed, as I am, but as long as you never steal from a teacher again…”

They nodded their heads almost so violently that Severus feared they’d knock their eyeball out of their skulls. Minerva dismissed them and they fled as fast as they could.

“Well, that narrows it down to...about ninety-eight possible culprits.”

Minerva sighed, pinching the bridge of her nose.

“I’d confront your Slytherins if I were you. And I’ll certainly be having a meeting with my Gryffindors. I’ll suggest to Ponoma and Filius to do the same for their houses as well. That should help eliminate the students as culprits or draw them out.”

“You really think they’d come forward.”

“With the right persuasion,” Minerva stated, standing. “I’m going to go get some tea if you’d like a cup. Perhaps with something a touch stronger.”

“Thank you, but I’m good. I’ll see you at dinner, Minerva.”

“In that case, I hope you enjoy the rest of your day, Severus. As much as you can, given the situation.”

“I will.” He paused. “Actually,” he turned back to her. “Why not confront the school at dinner. The culprit might not be a Hogwarts Student.”

“True, but you really think Albus would suggest it?”

“I would think so. It could very well alert the culprit one way or another that we will find them out. I would not have them out themselves. I’d give them a chance first to come and return my ingredients first. See if anyone looks particularly guilty or acts strangely.”

“I’ll see what he thinks, but somehow I doubt he’d go for it,” Minerva said.

Severus shrugged and left, pausing again at the doorway, glancing at Hermione and Harry to his left. He arched a brow.

“Um…” Harry grinned sheepishly. “Hi.”

He took them both by the arm and pulled them toward Gryffindor House.

“You are not going to do anything. You are going to go back to your dorm, do your homework, and spread the word.”

“What?” Hermione asked, stunned.

“You heard me,” Severus said. “I might as well put your snooping to use. Go.”
He let them go and the two of them ran off.

He figured all of Hogwarts and the guests would know by dinner if not lunch tomorrow. If Albus refused to announce it at dinner, the word would get out anyway.

He was going to flush out the thief one way or another.

#

On returning to their quarters, Severus found Remus sleeping on the couch, a book on his chest. It was too cute not to smile at, so he left him alone and removed the book, marking the place with an unused quill and went to get a blanket to lay on him.

Severus kissed Remus’ forehead and Remus mumbled, shifting a bit.

“I love you,” he whispered in Remus’ ear before heading to the kitchen to brew some tea and do some grading in peace.

Time grew irrelevant as he went through essay after essay. Some were good. Others were excellent. The majority made him want to bash his head against the wall as they chipped away at his hope in humanity.

Fingers brushed his hair aside and lips pressed to his neck. “Doing all right?” Remus asked.

“I am tempted to strangle a select group of brats with their own essays,” he admitted. “Unfortunately, parchment does not make good cords.”

“I know the feeling,” Remus said, kissing Severus’ neck again.

Severus turned to face him, catching his lips and pulling him into his lap. Remus grinned then slipped his tongue into Severus’ mouth, deepening the kiss as Severus slid his palm over his groin, steadily building Remus’ arousal in time with his own.

Remus rearranged himself over Severus’ lap so to straddle him, rolling his hips against Severus’ pelvis. Severus groaned, seizing Remus’ hips.

“Merlin, I want to fuck you,” he growled against Remus’ mouth. Remus bit Severus’ lower lip, gently sucking the wound. “You want that, Sweet Boy?” Remus shuddered as Severus dragged a finger down his spine and nodded.

“Yes. I want that, Master.”

“Then you will have it,” Severus said. “But not yet. Dinner will be interesting tonight in the Great Hall. Or so I hope.”

“You never want to eat there if it can be helped,” Remus said with a sigh, climbing off Severus’ lap. “So it better be interesting, Severus.”

“Well that is entirely on Albus, so we’ll see what happens.”

Remus blinked. “What did…Does this have to do with whoever is stealing from you? I thought you weren’t going to make a scene out of it.”

“I won’t be. Albus will.”

“Okay, I’m going to shower and then we’ll go to dinner, which is in, oh, half an hour.”
“You do that, Pet.”
Chapter 17

Dumbledore wouldn’t announce it at dinner.

Didn’t want to set a snit among the guests as well, most likely. But it at least Harry and Hermione’s eavesdropping allowed the news that he was hunting down the person stealing from him to spread.

Within a week, he was certain it wasn’t a student. Especially a student in one of his NEWT level classes. It narrowed down the suspect pool significantly, but he still wondered.

Who was making Polyjuice Potion? For what purpose?

“We aren’t exactly inspectors, Severus,” Remus said setting another graded paper aside. “I’m sure the culprit will show himself, or herself, soon enough.”

“You can say that. But how do we know that they haven’t already finished it? Who knows when they actually stole from my stores? Sooner I find them out, the sooner I can punch a nose in. Or at least hand out a lengthy detention.”

“I thought you ruled out that it was a student.”

“I’m ninety percent sure it’s not, but some of those blasted brats are expert liars.”

Remus set his quill down and stood, approaching Severus and snaking his arms around his waist. Severus kissed him, resting his hands on Remus’ shoulders.

“We will find the thief, Severus,” Remus assured him. “I know we will.”

Severus kissed his forehead. “I’ve remedial lessons with Harry.”

“Ugh. Or is this tournament related.”

“Tournament,” Severus said. “We haven’t any idea what the third task will be, so I want to make sure we cover as many bases as we can.”

“All right,” he said. “I’ll finish this up and have the kitchen bring us some steak. Medium rare good?”

“Medium rare but well cooked, if you don’t mind. I don’t fancy any pink centers.”

“All right, then, love.”

They exchanged one last kiss and separated. Remus back to his desk and Severus down to his classroom. Harry was sitting at his usual seat, despite having the whole room to himself. He looked around.

“Evening, Professor Snape.”

“Good evening. Stand up and move the tables out of the way.”

Harry obeyed, waving his wand. The chairs slid on top of the desks as they slid to the walls.
“Accio,” Severus said, summoning the cushions.

They sat down across from each other.

“So, this time, there are no clues to the third task. You’ll only have to rely on your own knowledge and wit. We will review the spells you’ve already mastered, I don’t expect that to take long, but there are a few more advanced spells I intend to teach you.

“Some are my own design, such as the severing curse, others are not. Most of these spells your competitors have mastered years ago. Two of the spells I will teach you will enable you to block out unwanted intruders trying to read your mind. The other will allow you to read other minds. You’ve been practicing your meditations?”

Harry nodded.

“Good. Those habits you are developing are used in mastering those two spells. Let’s begin.”

At seven o’clock exactly, Remus heard the door to the potions classroom click open and snap shut. “Dinner’s ready,” he called.

“Excellent,” Severus said. “I’m starving.” He shrugged his outer robes off and sat down at the table, stretching. “I take it remedial potions went well.”

“He’s getting better, if nothing else. Though a little over eager to learn legilimency and occlumency.” Remus frowned at him, setting a glass of wine in front of Severus. “What?”

“It’s bad enough that you read minds. What makes you think I’d enjoy a fourteen year old doing so?”

“I’ll make sure he behaves.”

“ Severus, Love, I do love you and I love Harry, but that does not mean that you have my complete trust when it comes to your ability to read minds.”

“You don’t always mind and it’s a handy skill to have. Definitely makes our bedroom escapades easier to navigate, I think.”

Remus snorted, setting a juicy slab of steak in front of Severus. “True that may be, Love, but I fear what Harry would do once he has mastered it. Useful skill or not.”

“If he tries anything, just traumatize him. I’m sure there are things he would rather not know about. Particularly in regard to our sex life.” Remus tossed a baby carrot at him. It hit the center of Severus’ forehead and down onto the plate. “Mature, Remus. Very mature.”

“Maturity is for the weak and the boring,” Remus recited. “Such is the Marauder Motto.”

“Marauder Motto. That’s cute,” Severus scoffed. “And here I thought it was I solemnly swear I am up to no good.” Remus grinned.

“That’s the official motto. There are a number of other mottos that didn’t make the cut, of course.” Severus scoffed and shook his head. “You know,” Remus said. “We’re engaged.”

“I’m well aware. Be strange if I forgot that, given I asked you in the first place.”
“Indeed. It’s just, with everything going on we hadn’t really discussed what we’re going to do about that. Wedding. No wedding. Honeymoon and all that…”

Severus hummed, chewing contemplatively.

“I’ve just been…wondering. With everything going on, I know any planning had to be put on hold, so…”

“Honeymoon for sure. As for a wedding, I don’t really care, I hear that Las Vegas in the States has floo-in chapels if that works for you.”

“We are not eloping, Severus. I don’t think that, um, certain friends of ours would like that. But let’s at least keep it small, hm?”


Remus almost spat his wine over his robes. “What?”

“And a honeymoon in Barcelona coinciding with the new moon.”

“Don’t you think that might be a little hot?”

“It’s very hot. In every aspect of the word. Unless you’d rather stick with France, but I feel that everyone would go to France. Why not Spain? Or Portugal?”

“A beach wedding, I presume?”

Severus laughed. “I’d rather not have naked people in our wedding photography, you see. No. There are a few forests where we could have a nice handfasting ceremony. And an air conditioned reception after that. With ice cream cake.”

“I don’t know Spanish.”

“¿No habla español?”

“No.”

“Well, you know some. Spanish is not a hard language to learn.”

“Maybe for you, Love, but you’re excellent at nearly everything.”

“No. Not everything.”

“Name five things you’re terrible at.”

Severus hummed and raised a finger. “Quidditch, I know the game well enough to referee, but I couldn’t play it to save my life.” He paused.

Remus ate, watching Severus think.

“You’ve four more, Snape.”

“I’m thinking. Leave me alone.”

~March 1973~

“Look who came back,” McNair said.
Severus twisted around to see James Potter being greeted by his friends.

“I guess you can survive getting bitten by an Ashwinder.”

“I guess,” Severus said, frowning as Potter approached Lily. Severus ground his teeth. Something solid but not heavy hit his head and turned back to McNair.

“Calm down, Snape. Just because he’s back doesn’t mean Evans is going to throw herself at him. Thankfully, the Mud—”

Severus narrowed his eyes at him.

McNair cleared his throat: “Muggle born has better sense than that.”

“Yes, she does,” he said. “I’m not worried about that. I’m worried what he’ll do now that he’s back.”

“Well, given you’re his primary target…”

“You are not helping, McNair.”

“Fine, Snape. Go check in on your girlfriend.”

“She’s not my girlfriend,” Severus said, standing.

“Still going to check on her, though,” McNair stated.

Severus sent him a rude gesture and left the Great Hall. He leaned against the wall, scowling. It wasn’t long till Lily came out and grabbed his arm.

“Myrtle’s,” she said.

“Come on.”

“I need girl time and at least Myrtle understands, Severus.”

“Why do I have to come?”

“Protection,” Lily said. “Potter’s back.”

“I saw.”

“Yeah? Well you didn’t hear him over across the hall, I’ll bet. Evans, been too long. Want to go on a date later? It’s not been nearly long enough, the arrogant, boorish nut job.”

“Well, you’re not wrong,” Severus muttered. “Are you sure that Myrtle’s the best option, though.”

“So she has a crush on you, it’s cute.”

“No it’s not,” Severus whined. Lily ignored him, pulling him up the stairs. “What about classes?”

“As if I can go to classes with Potter about,” she muttered. “And I’m not leaving you in a room with him and his posse if I can help it. So what bothers you more? Four bullies or one ghost who has a crush on you? Personally, I’ll take the ghost over the bullies any day, thank you very much.”

Severus hummed. “Well, damn, that’s a tough choice,” he said.

Lily turned to him, glaring.
“What? Myrtle makes me uncomfortable.”

“And Potter would sooner beat your head into the wall.”

Severus blinked. That was a good point. “I’ll take the ghost.”

“Wise decision.”

~March 1995~

“One of these days, I may very well snap,” Severus announced, glaring at the essays in front of him. It was taking all his will power not to rip the worst of them to bits. Remus hummed noncommittally, glowering at his own essays for history.

“I’m sure they aren’t as bad as the slop I’m getting,” he said. “Cuthbert might as well have stayed rather than move on to the afterlife.”

Severus winced. “Really? That bad?”

“Given I caught McLaggen dozing off in the back, I’m sure it is. I still say we should switch.”

“Best not to, but the idea grows brighter and brighter each day. Oh. Wait. I can’t make a Polyjuice potion. Someone’s been stealing my ingredients for it.”

Remus hummed. He’d forgotten that.

Whoever was stealing from Severus had yet to be caught and it seemed that the awareness of it hadn’t deterred the culprit.

They jolted at the sound of a slamming door.

Setting their quills down, they peered in the living room to see Harry lying on the couch, hugging a pillow and glowering nastily at the wall.

Severus nudged Remus.

“What are you doing?” Remus hissed.

“This is your area. Not mine.”

You have more experience with him when he’s angry.

“Usually I’m mad at him back and we’re in a screaming match. He’s not mad at me and I doubt my presence would make it better.”

Why not get Sirius?

“Because Sirius’ emotional range is half of a teaspoon. He’ll most likely fuck it up and stick his foot in his mouth before actually helping him. And I might make things worse, too. So, that leaves you, Remus.”

I bloody hate you.

“The ring on your finger says otherwise, Pet. I know you can handle him in these matters. I’ll be in the kitchen if you need back up.”
Fine. You owe me.

“I’ll make it worth your while.”

Remus inhaled and approached Harry. “Evening, Harry,” he started. “Is everything all right?”

“What’choo think?” Harry muttered, hugging the pillow tighter?

Remus sat in Severus’ arm chair. “Want to talk about it?”

“No really.”

Okay, then. Remus sat, twiddling his thumbs as Harry continued to scowl.

“It’s Malfoy.”

“Oh?” Remus prompted.

What did that kid do this time?

“I don’t know what came over me. I usually don’t let him get under my skin. He’s just goading most of the time, but in a real fight, Malfoy’s a pansy.”

“Then why did you let him rile him this time.”

Harry sat up. “He targeted my relationship with Viktor.”

“In front of you and Viktor?”

He shook his head. “I’d been studying in the library with him near Madam Pince’s desk earlier. He was helping me with some Charms homework and after that, he went back to the ship and I was going to head to the common room.

“Malfoy followed me, I guess. I don’t know if he came from in the library or saw me and Viktor or whatever. But he…” Harry shut his eyes, inhaling deeply. “He accused Viktor of being a pedophile.”

He set the pillow down and turned his dark gaze to Remus.

“Ever since that Skeeter cow published her article about us going flying on Christmas, he’d been getting a lot of backlash. We aren’t even doing anything! You and Snape and Sirius won’t let us! And even if you weren’t so fucking over-protective, he’s too noble to try anything!”

Remus arched a brow at that.

“Well, kissing doesn’t really count. We kiss all the time.”

“As long as hands are above the waist.”

“Again: too noble. Also, I should mention that his sister sort of became an honorary chaperone. Venora’s presence really ruins any mood. It’s fun to watch them banter, though…”

“Was she in the library today?”

“Yes,” Harry said. “Not for the whole time, but she was there. Madam Pince got mad at her for laughing at a joke too loudly, so she kicked her out.”
Remus hummed.

“It’s not fair to Victor. They don’t know him or me and we’re being careful. We’re listening to you and Sirius and Professor Snape, so…” Harry sighed. “I don’t know what to do. I don’t know how to get them to stop when we’re being careful.”

Remus hummed, wondering what to say. “Well, does Draco Malfoy’s opinions matter to you?”

“No, but—”

“Then don’t listen to him. You know he’s trying to goad you into a fight. The only people who have any real say about your relationship with Viktor is us. As it is, we know he’s not a pedophile. We know he’s treating you well, and as long as he continues to treat you well, then we’re all right with you being with him. Do your friends care about your relationship with him?”

Harry shook his head.

“Good, because next to the three of us, their opinions are just as important. If they don’t care and if they like your partner, that’s what matters.”

“Those who mind don’t matter and those who matter don’t mind.”

“Exactly.”

“That was Dr. Seuss.”

“Sounds like a wise man,” Remus said.

*Note to self, find out who Dr. Seuss is.*

“So, did my parents and Sirius accept it when you first got with Professor Snape?”

“You parents did. Sirius…no. He didn’t. Nearly destroyed our friendship because of his attempts to break Severus and me up.”

“I’m surprised you still friends now. Glad, but surprised,” Harry said.

“He accepts us now, but there was as time he was convinced that I was his other half.” He shook his head. “Codswallop, that was. Truth was, he hated Severus so much back then that it didn’t matter to him who got in the crossfire if he could hurt him. Thankfully, we’ve all grown up since we were teenagers.” Harry sniggered. “What?”

“Just trying to imagine you all as teenagers. I can’t see it. Well, save for my dad since I’m told I look like him.” Remus nodded.

“Frighteningly so, at times,” he said. “Now, hard though it may be, I do suggest you just ignore him. Or at least cast a langlock on him. But you know he’s jealous of you. You know he’s just trying to get a rise from you. Best you can do is try and ignore him. Now,” he stood, “Have a cup of tea.”

“Sure. And Professor?”

“Yes?”

“Thanks.”

Remus grinned. “You’re welcome, Harry.”
“Te amo,” Severus whispered in Remus’ ear. He wrapped his arms around Remus’ waist and kissed his neck. “¿Podemos tener nuestra boda en España?”

“I have no clue what you’re saying,” Remus said, trying and failing to sound cross. Severus moved to his shoulder. “Sev…”

“Eres hermoso, mi amor.”

“I doubt I’ll learn Spanish if you just talk to me in Spanish.”

“Nunca lo sabrás a menos que lo intentes.”

Remus set his quill down and turned to Severus. “How do you say bugger off in Spanish?”

“Uh…closest would be largarse.”

“Lar-gar-seh.”

“Prefiero follarte,” Severus said. Remus shook his head. “¿Qué?”

“I won’t be able to learn Spanish if you keep speaking in Spanish the way you’re going.”

“In that case,” Severus sat across from him. “Let me teach you.”

“Have we time?”

“I think we do. I’m getting no where finding the thief and Albus thinks it’s a hoot. I’m only meeting with Harry for his training a couple times a week…you know how I used to always compare him to his father? Not anymore. I’m starting to wonder if he’s more like Lily than we all think. Sometimes he’ll just say something that is distinctly…Lily-ish. Add all that to the hours at work, grading, the school paper, and other shit, we are left with…”

“Sleep,” Remus said. “Work, including grading, is at least 10 hours a day. You meet with Harry twice a week for two hours to help him train for the tournament. I meet with the paper daily for an hour. Add the hours we do some grading, then dinner.” He shook his head. “I don’t see how you’ll have time to teach me another language.”

“I do. Maybe not during the week days, but maybe on Saturday or Sunday I can teach you.”

“You really want to go to Spain, don’t you?”

“Yeah.”

“Would you even be able to survive that?”

“Probably not, but the same could be said for you.”

“Valid point.”

“I am willing to risk my life for this, Remus. At the very least we’ll end up sunburnt and dehydrated,” Severus said. He grinned. “However, no one ever said we’d need to leave our air-conditioned suite. Sure, we’d leave, go to a sight or two. See the running of the bulls or what not.”

“And what else would we do?” Remus asked. “If I caved and agreed that we should hold the
Severus grinned. “Accio notes.” A book flew over to the table and opened in front of Remus, who arched his brows at him.

“I see you’ve been thinking about this for some time.”

“Museums. Palaces. Parks. Music, art, tours. I’m sure we’ll figure out something to do. As for a forest for the handfasting, the Herrería Forest could be a good option. A room at La Choza De La Bruja… Uh… The Witch’s Hut is the English translation of that particular venue. Kind of like the Leaky, but fancier. Good for receptions. We could stay a night there before we go to Barcelona and check in at El Nido de Cuervo. Another nice inn, the English translation being the Raven’s Nest.”

“Now, how long exactly have you been wanting to go to Spain?”

“Not long,” Severus said. “After I proposed I’d given it a little thought.”

“I see that,” Remus said, flipping through the book. It was filled with notes and clippings of possibilities for what to do. He closed it and looked at Severus. “When did you have time to look into all this between everything?”

“I’m good at what I do. Also, I prefer the library at night. Especially when I can’t sleep. So I took the time to do some reading and this is the result.”

“Huh. And here I thought you were grading papers till one in the morning.”

“You never asked and I thought you were asleep.”

Remus hummed. “Before I agree to Spain, I want to look at this. However, if you’re going to choose the locations, then I want to choose the food and clothes.”

“That’s fair, I suppose. Be kind, love. There is a reason I stick with black.”

Remus stood, picking up the book, and kissed him. “I’m going to look through this and pick my favorite places to go.”

“Okay, have fun, Remus.”

Harry jumped at the cool touch against his neck, spinning around in his seat. He hid his smile with a grimace. “Don’t do that. Nearly jumped out of my skin,” he snapped at Viktor.

“Sorry,” he said, sitting down beside him. “Couldn’t resist.”

“Goof,” Harry said before kissing Viktor.

Viktor deepened the kiss, cupping Harry’s cheek in one hand, holding one of his hands in the other, and nibbling Harry’s lower lip. Harry gasped, allowing Viktor to slide his tongue inside.

Harry sighed, leaning into Viktor. In the back of his mind, he remembered his uncles’ threat and it was the only thing that kept him from climbing into Viktor’s lap.

To his chagrin, Viktor broke the kiss and laid his forehead against Harry’s. “You are gorgeous, Harry,” he whispered, kissing his forehead. “So beautiful.” Harry couldn’t look him in the eye, staring at the Durmstrang school crest on Viktor’s uniform. He could smell the sea and the air on
him. “I love you, Lyubimi.” Harry lifted his head, turning to kiss him again.


“Try to keep your hands to yourselves, lads. I do not think we need more gossip about either of you, don’t you think?” Harry nodded. Viktor shrugged. “No more snogging. Like that. Ever.” With that, he walked away. Once out of sight, Harry and Viktor exchanged a glance before snickering.

Chapter End Notes

Translations:
I love you.
Can we have our wedding in Spain?
You’re beautiful, my love.
You never know until you try.
Bugger off.
I’d rather fuck you.
Severus flicked his wrist and the room went back to its normal arrangement. “Good work,” he said. Harry grinned.

“Really?”

“As far as I’m concerned you’re as ready for the final task as we can hope. You’ve mastered some magic that isn’t even taught till you’re in your seventh year.”

“Not Occlumency, though.”

“No, but that’s a difficult type of magic anyway. Keep practicing your meditation and it’ll come easy for you soon enough. Go on, now, it’s a nice day and I think you earned a bit of a break.” He guided Harry out of the room. “Just be careful around the lake. I heard some of the Durmstrang lot has been aggravating the squid.”

“Yes, sir. See you at class tomorrow.”

With that, Harry sped off back up the stairs to the main floor.

Once out of sight, Severus returned to the classroom and unbuttoned the top buttons of his overcoat and cast a cooling charm on the room. Sure, his area was underground, so it was naturally cooler than the rest of the castle, but he still felt too warm. Severus attributed that to practicing and tutoring Harry as much of what he now mastered required a little more athleticism than Severus was usually inclined.

He stretched, yawning, and looked down at the pile of papers in need of grading. He sneered at the pile and opted for seeking out Remus. He was certain that the school paper had ceased their meeting some time ago…

Severus entered their quarters to see Remus lightly dressed in shorts and a t-shirt, hair pulled out of his face and secured by a hair tie, and sandals on his feet. He was dishing out chocolate ice cream in a bowl. Severus approached him and rested his hands on Remus’ waist.

“No,” Remus said, swatting Severus’ hands away.

“No?”

“Too bloody hot.”

“Cooling charms exist, Pet. Or did you not bother to grab your wand?” The lack of response told him such was the case. With a short wave, Severus cast another cooling charm.

“Now it’s too cold.”

“Ever difficult to please, you are,” Severus teased. Remus put the ice cream carton away and sat at the coffee table. Severus shed his outer clothes and grabbed another spoon. He sat across from Remus. “It is a bit warmer than usual, isn’t it? Could be a rather unbearable summer.”

“Damn,” Remus muttered. Severus scooped some ice cream on his spoon. “Perhaps we should travel
north or something. Just to escape the heat.”

“I would agree except I think there would be two protestors to such a vacation.”

“Harry and Sirius. Right. They’d sooner drag us off to Africa if it meant swimming.”

“Well I’d hope not,” Severus said. “I work hard to keep this rosy complexion.” Remus snorted, nearly spitting out his ice cream. He covered his mouth and laughed. “You’re not dying are you?” Remus shook his head, breathing deeply. “Good, that would be rather unfortunate if you were.”

“Just unfortunate?” Severus shrugged, spoon locked in his mouth. “Arse,” Remus said. Severus pulled the spoon out.

“Pet, you happen to love my arse, given the bite mark you left there this morning. Don’t think I’ve forgotten.” Remus grinned. He hadn’t bit hard, but it was a startling way to wake up.

“So what are you going to do about that, Love?”

Severus arched a brow, smirking. “And why ought I tell you?”

“Please?”

“No. I think not.” He scooped the last of the ice cream on his spoon. “I’ll take care of the dishes while you shower. Clean every single inch.” Remus nodded obediently. “Good boy. Go on now.”

Severus watched him go, letting the ice cream freeze his tongue before whisking the dishes to the sink and washed them. Once set on the drying rack, he went to their bedroom. The shower still ran in the bathroom and he perused his collection.

Once satisfied with his selections, he need only wait for Remus.

He didn’t need to wait long. Remus emerged from the bathroom not five minutes later. His hair clung to his skin and the towel wrapped around his waist came tantalizingly low. Severus motioned for him to come closer. Remus sat on his lap and kissed him. Severus loosened the towel, letting it fall to the floor at the foot of the bed.

He ran his hands over Remus’ legs and back before rolling him over to lay on the bed. “You bit your master,” he growled, locking Remus’ wrists to the bed.

“That was a love bite,” Remus said, pouting. “I’m sorry if it hurt. I wouldn’t purposefully hurt my master.” Severus hummed, making a trail down Remus’ chest with his lips. He pushed Remus’ legs apart and kissed his inner thigh. Severus nipped at the skin, bringing a hiss out of Remus before reaching for his wand. With a quick wave, shackles latched to Remus’ ankles and pulled his legs up till his knees met his shoulders.

“Not too tight?”

“No.”

“Tell me if it gets too much.”

“Always.”

Severus kissed the crease where thigh met ass cheek. He grabbed a paddle and ran the flat against Remus’ skin.
“I want you screaming for me, Pet.”

Remus wiggled. Severus watched his cock harden, licking his lips. He smacked Remus’ ass, earning a yelp. Slowly, he built up pace and strength, watching Remus carefully. The mix of pain and pleasure on his face reassured him that he wasn’t pushing him too far. He set the paddle down and reached for a dildo. He dragged the tip of the toy over Remus’ perineum and reddened ass and smirked at the way Remus shuddered, arching his back in attempt to gain friction.


“Friction,” Remus ground out. “Need lube.”

Severus mumbled a lubricating spell, carefully pulling the dildo out and watching Remus. Once the pain subsided, Severus tried again and this time the dildo slid in without resistance or hurting Remus.

“Better?” he asked, running his thumb over the puckered opening. Remus nodded, focusing on his breathing. Severus tapped the dildo with his wand and a steady vibration sent shivers that wrecked Remus’ body. His breathing came out in steady huffs.

Severus kissed his thighs. “You’re so gorgeous, Baby.”

“Sev’rus…”

“Right here, Pet,” Severus said, moving to lay beside him. He kissed Remus’ forehead, shoulder and chest. He ran his hand over Remus’ skin, avoiding his cock. “You’re being such a good boy.”

“Severus, please touch my cock,” Remus moaned.

Severus hummed, glancing at the neglected member thoughtfully. His own cock was in similar state trapped in his trousers.

“Please, Master. Please. I need…”

Severus ran his hand over Remus’ stomach and kissed his chest.

“You’re doing all right without that,” Severus said.

Remus groaned in frustration, tugging on his bonds. Severus hushed him.

“You can come all on your own, Pet.”

_Gods, I want to draw this out. He’s so fucking beautiful._ Severus thought, petting Remus’ hair with one hand and rubbing his cock through his trousers with the other.

“I must say though, I’m tempted to shove my cock down your throat,” he whispered, watching Remus flush. “Make you suck me down as much as you can take and fuck your willing mouth till I come and make you swallow each drop.”

“Fuck…” Remus hissed.

“Would you like that, Pet?”

“Yes, Master,” Remus said as he arched into Severus’ touch. “Fuck my mouth, Master. Please. Please come in my mouth.”
Severus groaned, kissing him. He bit Remus’ lip and stood. Severus undressed, laying his clothes beside the bed and climbed over Remus, straddling his lover’s chest and held his cock in one hand. The other hand fisted in Remus’ hair.

Remus closed his lips around the crown of Severus’ cock, dragging his tongue over the slit. Severus hissed, brow furrowed.

“Yes. Good boy. That’s good.”

Remus loosened his jaws, allowing Severus to feed more of his cock to him. An invitation Severus gladly took, pivoting his hips forward.

“You are so good, Baby,” Severus praised. Remus tugged on his chains.

_I want to touch you._

“You are, Love,” Severus growled, taking one of Remus’ hands in his own. “That better?”

Remus hummed happily, squeezing his hand lightly. Severus growled, feeling closer than he’d like to. He wanted to draw it out longer. To relish the heat and the moisture of that wicked mouth stretched around his girth. Remus glanced up at him and Severus hissed as he came.

Remus tightened his lips around him and Severus shuddered as Remus’ throat worked around his cock.

“Shit,” he growled. Remus continued to clean his cock and at last he let Severus go. “Fuck, that was so good, Pet,” he purred before climbing off. His legs wobbled and he went back to lying beside him. “Still need to come?” Remus nodded.

“Please…”

Severus kissed him and moved down Remus’ torso. He fondled his sack, nails gently brushing against the underside of Remus’ cock. Remus gasped, arching his back as he came. Severus arched a brow and removed the vibrator before cleaning his lover, dragging his tongue over Remus’ skin. Once finished, he smacked Remus’ ass, earning another hissing gasp.

“I’m tempted to leave you like this,” Severus said. “Nice and prone and loose.”

“Some other time,” he said. Severus hummed and waved his wand, releasing Remus and rubbed his sore muscles. Severus kissed his wrists and laid down beside him, hugging him.

“I’ll have an elf bring us something for dinner. Something we don’t need utensils for.”

“Pizza,” Remus demanded.

“Pizza and butterbeer,” Severus agreed. “Bath, too?”

Remus hummed affirmatively, laying his head on Severus’ chest.

After a few minutes of relishing in the afterglow, Severus stood and went to start the bath, sending his patronus to the kitchens, requesting an extra large, extra meat pizza and a case of butterbeer.

Remus joined him once the bath was ready, situated in front of him. “I don’t want to go to work tomorrow,” he said. Severus snorted, hugging him.

“We could cancel our classes tomorrow, if you like,” Severus said.
“I’d love to, except I have a test for my first years. Maybe the day after, though.”

“It’s Wednesday, Pet,” Severus reminded him. “Wouldn’t much matter on a Friday.”

“Good point,” Remus agreed forlornly. Severus kissed his neck. “Pity we can’t really get away with it. Poppy and Albus wouldn’t hear the end of it.”

“Well, there’s always the weekend and we have pizza on the way.”

“Extra meat?”

“Of course,” Severus assured him.

“Good.”

“Bossy today, aren’t you?”

“Good sex, good food, a caring dom? I could get used to this if not already.”

Severus snorted. “That’s the intent, Pet. Though I still worry about spoiling you a bit.”

Remus twisted around to look at him, pecking Severus’ cheek. “I love you. Besides, I’m a very good wolf, aren’t I? Haven’t I earned all that spoiling?” Severus laughed.

“I guess you have,” Severus chuckled.

Remus kissed him again, moving around so to face Severus and straddled his waist. Severus embraced him, biting Remus’ lower lip. The water sloshed around them, pooling over the tub’s rim.

Severus latched to Remus’ neck, biting and lathing his lover’s skin till it bruised. He ran his fingers over Remus’ chest. Remus groaned, running his hands through Severus’ hair as Severus moved to tease one of the pearled nipples with his mouth while the other pinched and twisted the other.

Remus rolled his hips, grinding their cock’s together, grinning at the hiss Severus emitted. Severus gripped his hips, stilling him.

“Insatiable brat,” Severus growled. Remus grinned, biting Severus’ lips gently. Severus licked the seam of Remus’ lips, requesting entrance, which Remus granted.

“Professors?” a squeak called. They broke away.

“Yes?” Severus said.

“Winky will leave the pizza on the table for you and left the butterbeer in the refrigerator.”

“Thanks, Winky,” Remus replied. After another awkward moment, they decided that the mood was gone and opted to eat while the pizza was hot.

They woke later that night to the intruder charm cast by the entrance to Severus’ office alarming.

Severus jumped to his feet and raced to his office. Remus kept close behind him.

“Fodio!” The thief shouted.

Severus swore, shielding himself behind the door from the stinging hex. He entered the room,
seeking out the thief. Seeing none, he waved his wand.

“Point me."

“Sev?”

“Go the other way. Cut him off.”

He ran where his wand directed, seeking any indication of the thief. He found Remus at the top of the stairs, Marauder’s Map in hand.

“This would make it easier,” he said, opening the map.

“Well?” Severus pushed

“Hush! I’m looking.”

Remus said, scanning the pages rapidly.

Severus bounced on the balls of his feet impatiently. Remus pointed at a dot moving away from them toward the Defense Class Room.

*Bartimaeus Crouch, Jr.*

“That’s impossible,” Severus said. “He died in Azkaban.”

“After last year, I think coming back from the dead is a habit of death eaters. Come on, He’s headed right for Moody.”

“So? Moody…oh my God,” Severus said, paling.

He and Remus ran to the Defense class room. Severus spotted Moody walking to the defense office. He paused, grabbing Remus’ arm.

“Where’s Moody on the map?” he whispered.

Remus looked at it. “In the Defense Teacher’s quarters. We should be looking at Crouch.”

“Polyjuice potion.” Severus pushed him back. “Come on, we got to leave.”

“Why? We know that’s Crouch—”

“Crouch was one of Voldemort’s most loyal followers. We cannot just approach him and tell him we know it’s him out of the blue. He might play dumb or attack at random. You may as well be cornering a Blast End Skrewt when it comes to that fanatic.”

“We need to tell Dumbledore at least,” Remus insisted. “He needs to know there’s a death eater in the school.”

Severus arched a brow.


“I know what you mean, Remus,” Severus said. “We should go before he realizes we’re watching. For all his cleverness, he’s as paranoid as his father.”

With that, they returned to their rooms.
Harry tapped Venora on the shoulder. She turned to him and grinned.

“Harry, good to see you.”

“Thanks, Venora. Can I ask when you and Viktor have your birthday?”

She blinked. “He hasn’t told you?”

“We tend to get distracted…” He said with a blush. “We talk about the tournament, homework, and culture, but I don’t think I ever got around to asking about birthdays…”

Venora snorted and Harry’s blush deepened. “Our birthday is June fifth,” she said.

“Thank you, Ven.”

“You’re welcome.” Venora cleared her throat. “Viktor’s a fan of Conroy Greenwood novels… though you might not be able to find one in Bulgarian.”

“I’m sure I can find something related that he’ll like.”

He thanked her again and made mental note to go to the bookstore at Hogsmeade. On his way back to Gryffindor Tower, he nearly ran into Professor Moody. He nodded respectfully at him.

“Good morning, Professor.”

“Potter,” he greeted. “On your way to class?”

“Yes, Sir. I’ve transfig—”

“Potter!” Harry turned around to Remus, “A word.”

“Go on, Lad. Wouldn’t want your Dad throwing a fit.”

“Not my dad,” Harry muttered, but he approached Remus nevertheless, wondering where the sudden hostility toward Moody came from.

Remus waited till Moody had left, then turned to Harry. “I don’t want you near him more than necessary,” he stated. “And especially not alone.”

“Why?” Harry asked. “Isn’t Moody an auror?”

Remus narrowed his eyes at him and Harry crossed his arms.

“Does this have to do with how I got my name in the Goblet? Why would Moody do that?” He grinned. “Moody’s not really Moody is he?”

Remus sighed. “You are far too smart for your own good sometimes, Harry,” he said. “Severus and I are handling it. Whatever is going on, we’ll figure it out. And you,” he poked Harry’s forehead. “Need only focus on being a kid while you can.”

Harry pouted. “Can’t I help? Whoever put my name in—”

“We don’t know everything for sure, yet,” Remus said. “Let us take care of it.”

“But—”
The growl Remus gave him silenced him.

“Fine, I’ll let you handle it. But I’ve managed to save people and myself just fine before.”

“Nearly getting killed does not count as bravery and heroism, Harry. I know your past escapades quite well by now. You’re courageous, Harry, but foolhardy. Severus, Sirius, and I worry about you. It would help if you tried to keep out of trouble as much as possible.”

Harry frowned. “Sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry, be smart about picking your battles. There is no shame in running.”

Harry scowled at that, looking far too much like James, green eyes aside.

Remus ruffled his hair. “I know it sounds cowardly, but it’s okay to be a coward when you’re a child.”

“But I’m fourteen.”

“You won’t be an adult until you’re seventeen, and even then, I’d prefer it if you’d let us adults handle it,” Remus said. He handed him two notes. “Give this to McGonagall, and this one is for Filch if he catches you in the hall.”

Harry thanked him and ran off, already forming a plan to find out who Moody really was.

#

Albus paced as Severus presented his and Remus’ latest findings.

He paused and turned to him.

“I advise caution, Severus, if this is true. After all, we can’t very well use the Marauders’ Map as adequate evidence for someone’s identity.” He raised a hand to silence him. “I believe you and Remus. And I know that the map is well made and won’t lie about someone’s identity. Instead, I suggest you and Remus continue your duties. And as for yourself, I know you can be quite stealthy if need be. If the real Alastor Moody is being held hostage by a Death Eater, I trust you’ll find him.”

“I will need Crouch distracted, Headmaster,” Severus said, arms crossed.

Albus smiled, eyes twinkling. “I think I can manage a suitable distraction for you, Severus. You and Remus don’t have a date set for the next Hogsmeade Weekend, do you?”

“No.”

“Then it looks like Moody and I will be visiting Aberforth. Should be a good…oh…three hours.”

Severus sighed, shaking his head. “You’re mad, old man.”

“I happen to think my madness is quite brilliant, after all these years, fine tuned and quite methodical.”

#

“Barmy, though, isn’t it?” Ron asked, scratching Crookshanks’ head absentmindedly. “That another dead follower of You-Know-Who just shows up a year after Pettigrew did?”
“Yeah, well, that’s Remus’ theory,” Harry said. “I don’t know what else to say, mate. But it’d make sense, right? Wouldn’t that be the reason why I got into the tournament?”

“Perhaps,” Hermione said. “But what would be the gain?”

“Oh I don’t know?” Harry said. “Kill me, maybe? Seems to be what they all want to do.”

“Not that they’d be able to,” Ron said. “Not with Snape and Lupin mothering you as much as they do.”

“They don’t mother me.”

“No, but they are rather protective,” Hermione said. “As bad as my parents are with me.”

“And my parents with me and my siblings,” Ron said. “Though how they managed that with seven of us, I don’t know.”

“Ducklings,” Hermione said, smiling. Ron stared at her. “Sorry, that was my first thought: you and your siblings are your parents’ ducklings. No? Litter? Either works.” Harry snorted, shoulders shaking. Hermione shrugged. “Sorry, Ron, that’s the only thing I can think of.”

“Shut up, Mione.”

“But really, Harry, you have three parents. You might call them uncles, but you’ve three fathers who are perhaps a little more overprotective than they need to be. But then again,” she tapped her forehead. Harry touched his scar. “You can’t blame them for being overprotective given your fame. You’ve not just fans, but also paparazzi, and add to those who support You-Know-Who, yeah…”

“Great, I’m a puppy with a fox, a wolf, and a dog all trying to keep me out of trouble.”

“Well, we have had a chance of nearly getting ourselves killed before,” Hermione reminded them. “Fluffy.”

“Quirrell.”

“Riddle’s Diary.”

“When we thought Sirius was evil and mad.”

“And now.”

Harry scoffed. “I’ve managed so far.”

“All with Professor Snape’s help,” Hermione reminded him. “At first unknowingly and now openly. Most of the magic you know now was what he taught you.”

“I still haven’t mastered levitation.”

Ron and Hermione stared at him.

“He can levitate?” Ron asked, awed.
When Remus and Severus run after Crouch/Moody, they are dressed. I'm not 100% sure I made that clear. They did get some pjs on at least and it's supposed to be late night, like past midnight in that sequence...I couldn't figure out how to make that clearer...
“Where are you off to?” Severus asked, arching a brow at Harry as he practically bolted for the door.

“Hogsmeade,” he said. “Viktor’s and Venora’s birthday’s coming up, so Ron and Hermione are going to help me find presents for them.”

“Students aren’t allowed to go till ten,” Severus reminded him.

“And?” Harry asked. Severus arched a brow, frowning at him. Secret passageways or not, there was no telling what Crouch knew about the castle. Harry slumped. “Fine,” he sighed, sliding into a seat. He smiled. “This wouldn’t have anything to do with Professor Moody being a death eater, would it?”

“We don’t know that for sure.”

“But Professor Lupin wouldn’t distrust him if it wasn’t true. And if he thinks it’s true, then most likely you think it’s true.”

Severus turned to him. “Harry James Potter, if you are trying to put yourself in danger again, I will not only give you detention for the rest of the year, I will ground you for the summer.”

That wiped the smile off his face. If it was Sirius or Remus making that threat, Harry wouldn’t listen, but from Severus…

Yeah, it was rather believable coming from Severus.

“I just want to help.”

“You can help by not putting your life in danger,” Severus said.

“But I’m not a coward.”

“No, you’re not. You never were. But you’re still a child.”

“Professor Lupin thinks so, too.”

“He’s right. Look, you’ve gone through so much more than any child should go through. And through all that you’ve gone through has born a strength most adults can’t bear.” He ruffled Harry’s hair. “I’m proud of whom you’ve become. We all are. But if you die before you’re an old man, I swear to Merlin, I will kick your astral butt.”

Harry sniggered.

“You find that funny?”

“No, but at the same time I’d like to see you try.”

Severus snorted, checking his watch. “They’ll start lining up for Hogsmeade now. Go on.”

Harry jumped up and ran for the door, shouting a salutation over his shoulder. Severus hummed and glanced at his papers. He was trying to suss out a new spell that would allow him to summon the dead for a short period of time, not trap them in the land of the living, but allow them to cross over.
He hadn’t tried it before because of the sheer impossibility of it. Also, there was freshness to the grief many years ago. Far too fresh to even dare thinking of it, no matter how much he dared.

So he had put the thought from his mind. Besides, if he could figure out how to do this he might be able to see Lily again. Harry could meet both of his parents.

Only one such object was known to allow it: The Resurrection Stone. Whatever came of the stone, well, no one knew.

He checked his watch again. Albus and Crouch ought to have left by now. It was time to look for the real Alastor Moody.

He left his quarters, walking calmly toward the Defense Classroom. He weaved around the students remaining behind. First and second years passed by him. Some would greet him, many did not.

At last, he arrived at Moody’s quarters. Severus cast a detection spell, breaking through each one meticulously. Once in the room, he searched through the possessions.

He found several unused potion ingredients—his ingredients. All of which were set aside to be returned to his storage cabinet. There were also several vials of unused polyjuice potions. He decided to take the vials as well. No reason letting Crouch continue his charade.

He approached a large trunk and checked its defenses. It was heavily warded. Frowning, Severus knelt before it, gradually breaking each spell set upon it. At last, it would open and Severus glanced inside. An older man laid asleep within.

Severus climbed inside and knelt before him. Once assured that the man was alive, he turned him over. As he suspected, the man was Alastor Moody. His eye was gone, of course, and the peg leg as well. Both were still with Crouch. He lifted Moody up and out of the trunk. Severus climbed out after him and looked around, trying to gauge his surroundings.

So far, so good. He glanced at the foe glass again, the eyes of a shadow were starting to turn white. Swearing, Severus and the floating stretcher with the passed out Moody approached the fireplace.

The stone exploded, stopping him. Severus turned to Crouch.

“What’re you up to, Snape?” he growled.

Severus sneered back, “I could ask the same, Bart,” he replied. Crouch shut the door and hobbled over to the chair. Once seated, he took off the leg and looked back at him, smirking.

“He’s alive, Snape. Barely, but he is alive. He just needs Harry Potter. And me.”

“I know he is,” Snape said. “And I know what he wants to Harry.”

Crouch snorted. “The boy is fodder, Snape, there is no reason for you to protect him.”

Severus leaned against the desk, glaring. “I have every reason to protect him and more, you mother fucker,” he snarled.

“Harsh words coming from a cock sucker, wouldn’t you say?” Crouch asked. “He needs his blood to come back. I will give him my flesh. I’ve no intention of killing the boy. Prove you are still loyal, Severus. Help me. The boy trusts you. You hand him over to the Dark Lord and we will both be greatly rewarded.”
Severus forced himself to breathe, fingers digging so deep into his hands that he was certain he was drawing blood.

“You’re no parent, Snape. You know it better than anyone.”

“I don’t have to be his parent to protect him,” Severus said. He flicked his wrist. “Incarcerous.”

Crouch was bound and the chair skidded across the floor, hitting the wall.

Severus approached him. “Voldemort took my best friend and sister from me. And in killing her, he also murdered my goddaughter, Crouch. Or are you so wrapped around his finger you don’t even see how much of a madman he is?”

“You betrayed us.”

“You’re killing innocent people. Not only men and women, but children.” Severus flexed his fingers. “If there was any benefit in killing you right now, I would do it in a second.” He stepped back, pointing his wand at Crouch.

“Stupefy.”

#

Conroy Greenwood, Harry mused, browsing the books. Conroy Greenwood…

“Barmy,” Ron said, flipping through a book. “We never come in here.”

“Missing out,” Hermione said, grinning at them. “Aw, you look like a fish out of water, Ron.”

“Shut it, Mione,” he snapped. She giggled as Harry continued his search for anything related to Conroy Greenwood. It seemed more difficult than he expected.

“Hermione, where would I find Conroy Greenwood books?”

“Erm…oh, he writes fantasy.”

“Wizards have fantasy novels?” Harry repeated. Hermione pulled him over toward the back of the room. “Why don’t I know about this?”

“Because you only read what you need to read,” she said. “Never for fun…ah, here we are: Conroy Greenwood.” She motioned to a large selection of books. “I don’t know if Viktor’s gotten the latest novel…”

“He probably reads them in Bulgarian…”

“Then you’d want a Lingua Franca copy.”

“What?”

“Lingua Franca books automatically translate to the language of the reader. For us, it would read in English, but a native speaker of another language would only need to tap it with their wand and state their native language for instance…”

She picked up one of the books:

*The Veiled Drum*
Hermione tapped the cover with her wand. “French,” she said, then handed it to Harry. He flipped through it. The book now read in French. He closed it and tapped it with his wand.

“English.”

He flipped through the book again, now able to recognize the language written.

“That’s the newest book by Greenwood, so I think a Lingua Franca copy would be best if you want to get him a book. What about Venora? Have you any idea what she would like?”

Harry looked up and bit his lip. He hadn’t given that much thought.

“That’s the newest book by Greenwood, so I think a Lingua Franca copy would be best if you want to get him a book. What about Venora? Have you any idea what she would like?”

Harry sighed. “I’d appreciate that, thanks.” He checked his watch. “Don’t you have a date with Fred?”

“Fred won’t mind. He’s a lot less temperamental than Ron, anyway.” Ron snorted at that.

“You’re the mean one, Mione,” he said. “Thankfully, Luna doesn’t scare me as much as you do.”

“Awww,” Hermione cooed. “I’m glad to hear that.”

“What? That Ron’s scared of you or that he’s not scared of Luna?” Harry asked.

“Both.”

“Typical,” Ron said, shaking his head. Harry patted his shoulder.

“I’m going to get this then I’ll just let Hermione lead me to wherever a good store for girls is so I can get Venora something suitable. Ron, you can come if you like, but it might be boring.”

“Nah, I’ll get something for Luna, I think. And might as well get something for Ginny too…”

“You’re so sweet,” Hermione teased.

“Fred is a terrible influence on you,” Ron stated.

“Yeah, just a little bit.”

#

Remus continued to glower at Severus, arms and legs crossed.

“He didn’t hurt me.”

“He tried to earlier.”

“Yes, in this incident he didn’t. Only attempted to convince me to go back to Voldemort.”

“He could’ve tried to make you tango for all I care,” Remus snapped. “I don’t like you risking your
life and I don’t like you doing something like this alone.” Severus sat across from him.

“He didn’t hurt me. He didn’t even try and he’s now locked in a trunk passed out and the real Alastor Moody is in the hospital wing.”

Remus continued to glower. Severus moved closer to him. “Once the minister comes, we’re going to bring him out, force feed him veritaserum, and get the truth out of him. Find out everything he knows. Okay? Harry won’t need to know a thing.”

“Really?” Remus asked incredulously. “Do you honestly think Harry won’t poke his nose where it shouldn’t?”

“Oh, he tries, and he will.” He stood and kissed Remus’ cheek. “But any foolery Harry attempts we can handle and put a stop to before he gets himself in a stickier situation.” Remus groaned. “Are you still mad at me?” Severus asked.

“Yes,” Remus snapped. “You could’ve gotten yourself hurt or worse.”

Severus hummed, kneeling before him and resting his hands on Remus’ knee. “How can I make up this transgression, Pet?” Remus glanced at him, frowning. Severus shifted into a fox.

“Don’t try acting cute,” Remus snapped. Severus sneezed, fur poofing as he did. “It won’t work this time.” Severus barked, staring at Remus with big eyes, fluffy tail wagging. He licked Remus’ hand and at last, Remus picked him up with a sigh.

“I have to figure out a way to resist you, you bastard.” Severus licked his face. “Just don’t do something that stupid again.”

Severus jumped off and turned back into a human, pulling Remus out of his seat. “I’ll try, but I can’t make any promises,” he said. “But I will do everything in my power not to die on you.”

“You better not. Who else will make the Wolfsbane potion for me?”

“Ah, the truth comes out.”

“Yes. I sleep with you just to get free potions and stuff.”

“So I’m a sugar-daddy?”

Remus grinned. “Yep. Is that a problem?”


“You’re unbelievable,” he said.

“Thank you.” Severus responded, resting his forehead against Remus’ forehead. He slid one of his hands over Remus’ ass—

The door slammed open and Harry rushed in, setting bags down. “Sorry I’ll get out of your way just need to hide these bye!” He shut the door behind him. Severus sighed and Remus laughed.

“You would think we’d be able to bypass all the awkwardness of raising a child when he’s a teenager,” Severus said. Remus kissed him and moved over to the bags Harry dumped on the coffee table.
A book and a basket of scented candles, lotions, and wash.

“I think these are for the Krums,” Remus said. Severus hummed, picking up the book. “Oh! A Lingua Franca copy. Smart.”

Severus flipped through it. “Never did find much reason to read fantasy books in the Wizard World. Muggle fantasy novels are far more interesting, but then again, Lingua Francas of Muggle novels would be tougher to find. Pity. *Lord of the Rings* is a fantasy classic.”

Remus hummed, nodding. “I cannot even find it in me to disagree with that.”

“You’ve read *the Lord of the Rings*?”

“And the Hobbit, and the Silmarillion… I think I also got some copies of the *Lost Tales*.”

Severus stared at him, gaping. “Marry me.”

Remus snorted, raising his hand with the Prince Family ring. “I already said yes, Love. As for the books, well, they’re still with my parents. I’ve not seen them since I graduated.”

“The books or your parents?”

“Both. It’s not as though they’d want to see me. It isn’t easy being what I am and my parents might not have meant to show it, but it was hard growing up and knowing that they were afraid of me.” Severus set the book down and sat on the couch. He pulled Remus into his lap.

“Remus, I say this with all the love in my heart and my deepest respect for you: that is stupid. Did they abuse you? Verbally, physically, mentally? No? Then I think they’d want to see you. I’m not belittling the difficulty of it, but most people would’ve tossed their child out if said child was bitten by a werewolf. They didn’t. If you’re parents are alive, then I would like to meet them.”

Remus pressed his forehead to Severus’. “I do miss them. And were great parents despite everything that happened to me.” He sighed. “I’ll see what I can do. But I don’t think we want to just pop up one day. I could send an owl…”

“Sounds like a good plan,” Severus said.

“And if they don’t…”

“If they don’t want to see you, then I don’t want to meet them.” His lips curled into a smile. “But I would like to get those books. It’s been too long since I’ve gone to Middle Earth.”

“Same,” Remus said wistfully. “Would it surprise you if I said I used to have a crush of Aragorn?”

“Not really,” Severus said. “Lily had a crush on him, too.”

“What about yourself?” Remus asked. “Any crush on particular fictional characters from Middle Earth?”

Severus hummed. “I happened to be torn between Eowyn and Faramir.”

“Were you disappointed when they got together?”

No, actually I wrote some bad fan-fiction about them when I was thirteen, fourteen,” Severus said, laughing. “It was fun. I had to hide it from everyone, except Lily, but there you are.”
Remus slid next to him. “Faramir suited Eowyn more than Aragorn anyway.”

“Thank you. I tried explaining that to Lily, but she was intent on Aragorn and Eowyn getting together.”

Remus shook his head. “No, Aragorn’s always had a thing for Elves. Married Arwen, after all, which also disappointed me. I’d have been happier if he ended up with Legolas and Gimli.”

“Ah, the three hunters romantically involved.”

“Shut it,” Remus snapped, shoving him. They passed a moment in silence. “Actually I was far more interested in Bilbo and Thorin Oakenshield together than anyone in Lord of the Rings.”

“Interesting,” Severus said slowly. “I see it. I do see it.”

“It also explains why Bilbo never marries.”

“Indeed it does. Unless we want to discuss the implications of mystical rings.”

Remus snorted. “Oh God, I don’t think anyone could handle the One Ring as well as Bagginses. I never envied Frodo. I would not want to be in his shoes.”

“Same,” Severus said.

Another moment of silence…

“I’m still mad at you for going after Crouch.”

“You’re not going to let me forget, aren’t you?”

“No.”

Harry raced out of the room as fast as he could. He really didn’t want to watch his uncles groping each other again if it could be helped, but for some reason they couldn’t keep their hands off each other. He slid into a seat next to Ron.

“Obliviate me,” he begged.

“You caught them getting frisky again, didn’t you?” Ginny asked.

“That’s why you should just knock,” Hermione reminded him.

“I know,” he groaned. “But it’s the middle of the day. I thought they’d at least keep their hands off each other in the middle of the day.”

Ginny, Ron, and Hermione stared at him.

“I should’ve known better.”

“Yep,” Ginny said.

“Yeah,” Ron said.

“I thought it was rather obvious,” Hermione said.
“You’re all arses,” Harry snapped. Hermione patted his shoulder.

“Its okay, Harry. It happens to everyone at some point in their life.”

“Our parents are just as bad sometimes,” Ginny said. Ron shuddered dramatically. Harry understood perfectly. He wouldn’t want to see that either.

“So,” Hermione said, grinning. “Harry, you wanted to through the Krum Twins a surprise party, right?”

“Yeah, but it might be dumb…”

“No it’s not,” Ginny assured him. “Actually, it’s kind of cute.”

“And it shows you are just as committed to this relationship as Viktor is. To add, you’re showing that you care for both of them.”

“Fred and George have fireworks.”

“And we can make a cake,” Ginny said. “I’m sure Professor Lupin or Professor Snape wouldn’t mind you using one of their classrooms.”

“They might have something already planned,” Harry said.

“Then ask Karkaroff if it helps.”

“Seriously? I barely know the guy and he doesn’t exactly like me.”

“Bring one of your dads, then,” Ron said.

“They aren’t my dads,” Harry muttered. “But fine, I’ll ask Professor Snape. He seems to know Karkaroff.”

Ron squeezed his shoulder. “Good luck with that, mate.”

“Arse.”

~June 8th, 1973~

Severus slammed the sliding door and locked it. The marauders jiggled the handle as he backed away, breathing heavily. “All right, Sev?” Lily asked.

“Yeah,” he said. Lily waved her wand, sliding the curtains down so that they wouldn’t have to see Potter and Black. Severus slid down. “Finally,” he sighed. “It’s over.”

“Are you sure I shouldn’t just go out with him?” she asked, frowning. “I don’t want you to suffer because of me, Sev.”

Severus stared at her. “It’s not your fault that they’re bullying me,” he said. “It’s not your fault that they decided to target me the way they have.” He sat beside her and embraced her. “If you give in and date him, it’s not a guarantee that they’ll stop tormenting me.”

Lily rested her head on his shoulder. “There is someone I wouldn’t mind dating,” she admitted. Severus sighed. His chest constricted as he prepared to have his heart broken. Lily sat up and took his hand in hers. “Severus, I don’t want our friendship to be destroyed but would you be my boyfriend?”
He stared at her.

Am I hearing what I think I’m…

“You’re braver and stronger than people give you credit for and I’m more comfortable with you anyway. And I’ve been in love with you for a couple months now, so…you don’t have to. If you’d rather just be friends then I understand…”

Severus shook his head. “I’ve actually had the same fear,” he admitted. “Lily, I’ve been in love with you since we met. I was content to just be friends, of course, but if you…if you really are okay…”

“I’m just scared this will make it worse for you at school.”

“I can handle Potter and Black. Don’t worry about me. Okay, Lee?”

Lily bit her lip. She nodded. “Would you kiss me, Sev?”

Severus swallowed. His heart hammered as he cupped her cheek and leaned forward. At last, their lips met in a gentle touch. Lily returned the kiss. After a moment, they broke away. Severus supposed his face was just as red as hers.

“Well, summer’s going to be interesting,” Lily said, clearing her throat.

“Maybe,” Severus agreed. “Tuni’s gonna hate it.”

“There’s very little Tuni really likes,” she reminded him. “And she has no say over who I befriend or date.” Her grin became feline. “So, since we met, hmm?”

Severus blushed deeper and turned away from her.

Lily giggled. “That’s adorable.”

“Shut it.”

“Why? You are adorable.”

“Evans.”

#

Returning to the car he shared with his friends proved a harder task than James expected it would.

“Whoa,” Peter said scooting away from him. “What’s with the static, Prongs?”

“James, you’re magic is going haywire,” Sirius said.

Remus glanced at him, biting his lip. “Evans?” he asked. James leaned forward, removing his glasses. “I keep telling you she isn’t interested in you and going after her best friend isn’t going to help.”

“Oi, I go after him because he’s a creep,” Sirius said. Peter moved over to their side.

“Guys, something’s really wrong,” he said. “Or are you not feeling that magic he’s expelling.”

“I feel it,” Remus said. He sighed. “What happened? Did she go too far this time?”

“Moony, don’t you think you’re being a bit insensitive?” Sirius asked.
“He kissed her,” James mumbled. The others stared at him. “He kissed Lily.”

“Snape?” Peter asked.

“WHO ELSE?!” James shouted. “HE KISSED HER AND SHE KISSED HIM BACK!!!”

“She has that right,” Remus said calmly. “You can’t force her to love you just because you think she’s your soul mate. And hurting someone she cares about doesn’t really help your chances, James.”

James bowed his head again. “She has to know it’s me,” he said, “She has to know it’s me. I’m right here. I’m trying…to…to make it easier…”

“James, the Dimidium Animae is a myth. Soul mates don’t exist,” Remus said. “And you’re not in love with her. You’re obsessed with her. It’s not healthy. Look, it’s just the beginning of summer and it’s not the end for any of us. You’ll fall in love again someday.”

James shook his head. Remus sighed. There was really nothing more he could do for him right now. After all, there was truly nothing he could do about it except hope that James would realize…

Remus shook the thought from his head, pushing it down. As much as it hurt to see James heartbroken and hurting like this…As much as he wanted to embrace him and tell him it’d be okay…

Being accepted as a werewolf was one thing. But being accepted as queer was quite another. And being queer and in love with one of your best friends…

It might’ve worked out for Evans and Snape, but for Remus, it was another matter entirely.
Chapter 20

~June, 1995~

Parties were never his strong suit and with a group of teenagers just lounging about in Remus’ classroom made his head hurt. But he managed, snorting as they engaged in their own brand of merriment.

Harry had managed to get a party hat onto Viktor’s head, laughing as he did so.

Severus couldn’t blame him for laughing.

The hat was a plastic, pink tiara. Apparently the party store at Hogsmeade had run out of birthday-boy hats. Viktor ripped it off his head and hexed it to stick to the wall before going after Harry.

Severus watched him lift Harry up over his shoulder and snorted.

No problems with that between them, he supposed. He could try with Remus, but it didn’t seem likely that he would succeed in it. The one time they tried, he nearly injured himself and never dared it again.

He tossed Harry onto one of the oversized beanbag chairs (a desk transfigured) and sat beside him, kissing his cheek.

“Adorable, aren’t they?” Remus said, handing him a bottle of butterbeer.

“Some might wonder why we’re still allowing it, now that Krum is nineteen.”

“Well, it’s not ours to really allow anymore. Just enforce,” Remus stated, sitting beside him. He kissed Severus’ cheek. “Besides, they really are adorable in their own way.”

“Dare I tell them that?”

“No.”

“I thought so,” Severus chuckled between sips.

“Oh! Before I forget…” Remus pulled out an envelope.

“I thought you already sent the letter to your parents.”

“I did,” Remus said. “They already replied.”

Severus hummed. “That was fast.”

“I’m kind of nervous. Care to read it first?”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes. I trust you to sugar coat it if it ends up being sour.”

Severus took the letter and opened the envelope. He quickly scanned the contents:
Dear Remus,

You have no idea how glad we are to hear from you.

Of course you can come home.

Of course you can bring Severus and Sirius. We’d love to meet Harry, too, if he’d like to come.

Remus, it’s been so long and we worried about you.

We know things have been rough since James and Lily died, but please, sweetheart, come home.

We miss you and we love you.

Sincerely,

Mum

Severus handed it back to him. “You’ve nothing to worry about, Pet.”

Relief evident, Remus read the note. He pocketed it and turned to Sirius. “Are you sure you want to meet my parents?”

“Well, your parents are alive. Mine are dead. And I wouldn’t have wanted you to meet my parents anyway. How about, if you’d rather not just spring it all on them, you can meet with them somewhere neutral. Reconnect with your parents, then once you feel comfortable enough with it, you can introduce me then. Would that be suitable?”

“Good plan.”

“I’m not a master strategist or nothing,” Severus said, smirking at him.

“Better idea: final task.”


“You do that. Be careful.”

Severus kissed him.

“I mean it.”

“I will be careful, Pet,” he assured him before heading out. He paused in front of Harry, flicking his ear. “Remus is in charge.”

“Yes, Sir,” Harry said, rubbing his ear.

Severus headed for his office and left it, heading toward another room. He undid the shields and unlocked the door before entering. The trunk centered in the middle of the room. He unlocked it and entered.

The polyjuice had long since worn out and the leg and eye were returned to the real Alastor Moody. Crouch glared at him. Severus tossed him a cricket ball.

“That might help you pass the time,” he said.
“You’re an ass, Snape.”

Severus shrugged. “Yeah, I know I am. But at least I’m not ass enough to plan slaughter of a child.”

“It is not my place to kill him. Only deliver him safely and unharmed to the Dark Lord. Thank you, though, you did most of the work for me. For a traitor.” Crouch tossed the ball in the air. “You smell of sweets.”

“Party upstairs. Having fun. Pity you couldn’t go, Crouch. You’d have had fun. Cake, gelato, crisps, butterbeer. Even little part hats and noise makers.”

“Doesn’t sound like you,” Crouch groused, examining the ball. “You know, you never were much of a partier.”

I’m here, am I not? Needed a break.”

Crouch hummed, standing. He continued to examine the ball before throwing it at Severus. It bounced off a shield. Severus smirked at him as the ball bounced off his barrier and against the ground.

“You really thought I’d come down here with nothing to protect myself with? Especially if it means giving you a potential weapon?”

“Had to at least try,” he said. “You’ve taken my wand and my freedom, Snape. You really don’t need to gloat.”

Severus nodded and shrugged. “No, I don’t. But it’s just so fun. There is, however, one thing you can do to make the gloating stop.”

Crouch glowered at him. “I am not telling you anything about my master. I am loyal to the Dark Lord, unlike some. He trusted you, Snape. Cared for you as if you were his own son. Everyone knew that. He taught you much more and treated you better than others.”

“No, he didn’t. Never trusted anyone. We were all just his pawns, Crouch. He used us. He could have and would have thrown us to the aurors if it meant saving his own neck. He killed so many people and terrorized millions more. Why the hell would I be loyal to such a wizard? Why the hell would anyone follow a madman who has done nothing more than murder and lie and manipulate? Crouch, killing anyone, especially a child, is wrong. Most of us were lured in because we thought he could be the father we desired, but he wasn’t. He never was.”

“If he wasn’t a father to us, then who was? Huh? Dumbledore?”

“I don’t know about you, but my father—the man I could call father and look up to as a father…it wasn’t the man who’s genes I share, nor was it Voldemort, and neither is it Dumbledore. His name was Collin Evans. And he was a muggle.”

Crouch scoffed. “Definitely a traitor.”

“Of what?” Severus asked. “Crouch, I don’t know what it was like for you. I don’t know what drew you to Voldemort, but it would not surprise me if your own father had a part to play in that. Prove to us that you are not too far gone. Tell me where Voldemort is.”

Crouch spat at him, sneering.

“All right,” Severus said. He climbed out of the trunk. “We’ll talk again soon,” he called down
before shutting the lid on Crouch.

#

Harry and Ron helped Remus put the classroom back together, high spirited and rowdier than they needed to be. Remus blamed it on the sugar they had from the cake and the butterbeer and whatever other sweet and greasy treat was served.

“Professor Snape’s back!” Harry shouted, only to be muffled by Severus a moment later.

“Don’t shout.” He removed the silencing hex on Harry.

“Sorry,” Harry said.

“Sugar high,” Remus clarified.

“That’s no excuse,” Severus snapped. “Go on,” he said, shooing Harry and Ron.

They ran out, whooping and yelling like a pair of monkeys. Severus massaged his forehead.

“Why do I bother?”

“I don’t know. It’s rather pointless,” Remus replied, locking his arms around Severus’ waist and kissed him. “Still not ’fessing up, is he?” Severus shook his head.

“He’s stubborn,” he stated. “But I know I can break him without resorting to torture. Granted, there is only so much time left and it is tempting.”

“Yes, well, Moody has his reasons for wanting to delve into torturing him.”

“And I don’t blame him,” Severus said, following Remus back to their room. “But that would be going down to Crouch’s level. We need to at least maintain an illusion of being better. Ergo, we’re not going to torture him beyond denying him sugar, caffeine, and alcohol.”

Remus shuddered and removed his outer robe. “That’s sounds like torture to me.”

“Not everyone has your sugar addiction, Pet,” Severus said, pulling him into his arms. “So I doubt it bothers him more than no caffeine or alcohol.”

“Point taken,” Remus said, wrapping his arms around Severus’ neck and kissed him. “But how else will we get it out of him in two and a half weeks? He might be too far gone.”

“I have to hope that not everyone who was dragged into Voldemort’s clutches were completely swayed. He was a manipulator and a liar. We can’t assume that everyone else who bears his mark is evil or mad.”

Remus hummed. “Let me try? Not today, but tomorrow. I want to try.”

“You’re not going in there alone.”

“You were.”

Severus groaned. “Fine, but I’ll be right outside, and cast a few shields so he can’t attack.”

“He attacked you?!”
“Tried to hit me with a cricket ball I gave him. It bounced off my shield. And it was fun.”

“Yeah, it’s funny because if you didn’t have a shield up, you’d be unconscious and he’d be on the run.”

“Okay, I will be more careful. In fact, if it makes you feel better, I will not go back without you. Fair?”

Remus nodded, still pouting.

Severus moved his hands to Remus’ face to kiss him. “I love you, Remus and we will go back tomorrow together.” He released Remus and went to the kitchen. “I think some tea would be good.”

“I’d like some chamomile, if you don’t mind.”

“One chamomile coming up.”

Remus climbed out and slammed the trunk shut. Severus arched a brow.

“That bad?”

“Thank god this full moon is past otherwise I probably would have lost my job,” he growled. He inhaled, shutting his eyes, as Severus embraced him.

“Sweetie, there is one more thing we can do without resorting to torture.”

Remus opened his eyes and glanced at him. “Veritaserum?”

“Veritaserum. Just made a new batch the other night since I figured we might need it.”

“I love you.”

“I know you do,” Severus said, kissing him.

“I’d say stuff it down his throat and get him to tell us where Voldemort is before the task. And then once we take care of a half dead dark lord, we dump him on the ministry’s steps heavily confounded.”

They left the room, locking the door behind them. “Albus will still need to know,” Severus said.

“You really think he’d side with us here? He let Harry compete. Since then, it’s been very hard for me to trust him since,” Remus said. Severus wrapped an arm around his shoulder.

“I know. But it wasn’t as if he intended for this to happen any more than Harry did. We all tried to get him out of it and failed. So we all did what we could to ensure Harry survived. And we’re so close. Let me talk to Dumbledore first. After that, grab the veritaserum and force it down his throat with me.”

“Only you could make drugging death eaters sound sexy,” Remus snorted.

“I know. It takes talent.”

Remus kissed him. “I’ll meet you at home. I’ve work to do before dinner.”
Severus bade goodbye, allowing Remus to return to his office as he went to Albus’ office.

On the way back, Remus was allowed to stew in his own irritation toward everything going on. Not only with the tournament and everything involved there, but Dumbledore’s part in Harry’s participation. Then add to it that it was a Death Eater’s doing in order to get Harry to Voldemort—for what reason, he didn’t know and he feared what he’d do once he did.

He stumbled a bit, spying Moody outside his classroom.

“Lupin,” Moody greeted.

“Moody. Should you be out of bed?”

“That old bird kept me bedridden long enough,” Moody growled.

Lupin motioned for him to go ahead and enter.

“Need to stretch my leg before I go mad. Well,” he gave Remus a gnarled grin. “Madder. Can’t make it to the dungeons, though. I figured there was a chance you’d be able to get your fiancé up here so I can give him a proper thank you for saving me. That’s what I get for trying to let go of my own securities.”

“Tea?” Remus offered.

“Whiskey,” Moody said. “If you’ve got any.”

“Not in my office, but give me a moment and I can grab some whiskey from my flat.”

“Nah, I’ll survive a bit of tea, then,” Moody said.

Remus hummed. *Could have just said “yes, Lupin, I’ll have a cuppa.”* He tapped his kettle and the water within began heating up.

Might I ask why you switched? Can’t really be because of your condition.”

“It did play a part,” Remus said, “and while I am best at Defensive magic, I have to think about what my condition does to me and my health. One of my earlier experiences ended up having me bedridden for a few days after. At least with History, it isn’t as insane. Also, now that it’s known I’m a werewolf, I can at least cancel any classes I have on the days after the moon.”

“And get pampered by your boyfriend,” Moody said.

Remus glared at him.

“What? Most like a bit of pampering. Heard tell you like it loads. Especially with,” he placed his hand over his neck.

Remus blushed and touched the collar.

“Not many spells get past me, Lad.”

“If you say *one word*…”

“Keep your britches on. You’re not the only sub I’ve worked with in the past.”

The kettle whistled and Remus gladly took the opportunity to take care of the tea. He handed Moody
a cup of chamomile.

“Now, you and Snape have Crouch under lock and key, aye?”

“Yes.”

Moody smirked.

“Don’t you dare,” he growled.

Moody snorted and took a sip.

“There’s nothing…inappropriate going on.”

“Maybe on a sexual level, but it’s still unlawful imprisonment.”

Remus groaned around the rim of his cup of chamomile.

“Have you gotten anything out of him yet?”

“No,” Remus admitted. “Severus is trying to get permission to use Veritaserum on him from Dumbledore right now.”

“A galleon says Dumbledore won’t allow it.”

“You’re betting with the wrong wolf,” Remus said. “I doubt Dumbledore will allow it either. He barely did a thing about Harry competing, after all. I’m afraid that pattern will continue.”

Moody hummed. “So I take it you’ll force it down his throat anyway.”

“Damn straight.”

“Remind me to warn anyone who goes after your pup,” Moody said.

“I don’t have a pup.”

“Could have fooled me.”

“You mean Harry? He’ll be moving in with Sirius at the end of the school year. He isn’t staying with me and Severus. Besides, I get to take care of him the rest of the year. I can live two months without him running amuck and doing all he can to turn my hair grey. Let him mess with his godfather from now on. Sirius earned a few grey hairs and I can’t think of anyone better to give them to him than Harry.”

Moody snorted, setting his empty cup down. “Make sure to alert the Prophet. That Skeeter Hag’s painted you and Snape as a rather protective set of parents. Heard you both got into a fight a few months back with a reporter and photographer.”

“They barraged Harry at Madam Malkin’s. What else were we supposed to do? Let them harass him? Kid’s shy and introverted. He hates the fame and everything that goes along with it.”

“So you say, Mum.”

“On the one, I’m glad we got you out. You’re more fun than Crouch’s portrayal of you.”

“Thank you, Wolf.”
“On the other, I never realized you were such a git.”

“Being a git isn’t the worse thing a bloke could be. Besides, after losing different body parts, I think being a git is synonymous with being Babbity Rabbity.”

“Indeed. Babbity Rabbity my arse,” Remus mumbled as he poured himself another cup. “More tea?”

“No. Actually, I was going to see the game after this.”

“Game?”

“Aye. Some sort of three-way Quidditch game,” Moody said. “Best players only. Save Krum. Somehow being a professional player gave Durmstrang an unfair advantage on the field. He’ll be refereeing instead or some’at.”

“So…by three way, Hogwarts vs. Durmstrang vs. Beauxbaton?”

“Yup. Guess the players had been itching for a game all year. Least I’ll e abel to end the school year on a high note, if nothing else.”

“Year’s not over yet, but I’ll join you for that game. Sounds interesting if nothing else.”

“Course it sounds interesting. It’s three-way Quidditch.”

#

Albus listened quietly as Severus made his case, hands folded and elbows on the desk.

“I take it you’ve expended all other options.”

“I have.”

“Even Legilimency?”

“Apparently, Crouch is an occlumens as well.”

“Huh. Must’ve learned it from Voldemort,” Albus said thoughtfully. “Very well. As he refuses to tell you what we need to know willingly, you may use Veritaserum.”

“Thank you, Headmaster.”

“Severus, I must ask you not to act rashly regardless what you find out.”

Severus arched a brow. “What do you mean by that?”

Albus’ eyes twinkled. “You and Remus might continue to protest, but I’ve only seen the level of devotion you two display for Harry from parents to their children.”

Severus sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose.

“That being said, I worry that whatever you find out will send you and Remus after Voldemort.”

“And you don’t think we can handle ridding the world of him?”

“Severus, I know you remember Sybill’s prophecy. It is not your destiny, nor Remus’, nor Sirius’ to rid the world fo Voldemort. Voldemort and Harry must face each other—”
“With all due respect,” Severus interrupted, “I can’t allow that, Headmaster.”

Albus’ eyebrows rose.

“I understand what the prophecy states. He marked Harry as his equal. All right, they’re equals. Harry has power the Dark Lord knows not. We agreed that power is Lily’s love. Neither can live while the other survives is nothing but clear in its meaning. But the prophecy never once states that Harry must be the one to kill him. If you’d analyze it a little more, Sir, you would see that.”

They stared at each other for some time before Albus stood. “Do you know how to kill him?”

Severus blinked.

“He survived a Killing Curse that backfired on him. Do you truly think it would be so simple as casting another? Or your Sword Hex?”

“I take it you know?”

“I suspect. I do not know.”

“Will you not tell me what you suspect, then?” Severus asked calmly, despite his irritation growing difficult to maintain.

Albus opened a drawer and set a mangled black book on the desk. Severus picked it up. There was blood and ink stained on the cover and the pages both.

“What is this?”

“I believe that was one of the items Voldemort used to infuse his trick of immortality.”

Severus set the book down.

“That was given to Ms. Weasley in her first year. It controlled her to set the creature within the Chamber of Secrets on our students as it had done so once before in 1943. As you can see, it was severely destroyed, courtesy of Harry.”

“How?”

“A Basilisk fang.”

“There was a Basilisk in the school?!” Severus yelled.

“And had been here for centuries before. No need to worry, it is dead now.”

“That doesn’t really help,” Severus snarled. “What is it? Or what do you suppose it is?”

Albus looked at the book again. “I believe it was a Horcrux,” Albus said calmly.

Severus’ shoulders fell. His knees buckled. He sat before his weight gave way.

“You know what a Horcrux is, I take it?”

“I do,” Severus said quietly.

“If you are insistent in taking the task on yourself, you will need to speak with your predecessor.”

Severus closed his eyes. “I’ll contact him.”
“Horace might not want to tell you anything...are you still trying to figure out how to call upon the dead that have crossed over?”

“Here are there,” Severus admitted.

Albus moved away from his desk to one of his shelves. He picked up an ornate box and opened it. “This will work better than any spell or ritual you can come up with,” he said. He placed a black stone in Severus’ hand. “He won’t want to talk to you about this alone, but if it is you and Lily, he might then open up. I’m giving the Resurrection Stone, Severus. I pray you use it wisely.”

Severus closed his hand around the stone. “I will,” he promised. “Thank you, Albus.”

“Good luck.”

Chapter End Notes

PUBLISHED A NOVEL YESTERDAY!!!!

You can find it on Amazon, both an ebook and a paperback. The Title is "The Lady of Lomond" by Brittany Keller
Chapter 21

After explaining his encounter with Dumbledore to Remus, Severus held the stone loosely in his hand. Remus rested his hands on Severus’ knees.

“I know you want to summon her,” he said.

“Does that not bother you?”

“No. How could it? I have nothing to fear from Lily. I have no reason to stop you from seeing your best friend again.”

“But should I?”

“We need answers. We need to know what to do. If summoning Lily will help us do that, then you should. You want to see her again, don’t you?”

“More than anything, but that’s not the point.”

“Then what is?”

Severus clutched the stone tighter. “I don’t want to trap her.”

“Do you think you will?”

“Not purposefully.”

“What if you don’t, but she decides to stay anyway?”

Severus sighed. “I’ve never been so unsure in my life.”

Remus kissed his forehead. “If you want me to stay while you summon her, then I’ll stay.”

Severus opened his palm, letting the stone float into the air.

“Then stay,” he said.

“Always.”

Severus turned to the stone again and exhaled.

“Lily Rose Evans-Potter, I summon thee.”

The air chilled around them. The candles flickered. But as soon as it began, it ended.

“Severus.”

Severus and Remus jumped off the couch, turning to the opalescent image.

Lily’s lips twisted into a smile.

“I expected a little more screaming,” she said. “But I’ll take it. I’d give you both hugs, but,” she glanced down at her body. “Can’t really do that. But I can do this.”

She waved her hand and one of Severus’ books went flying at him. Severus and Remus ducked and
the book passed over Severus’ head.

“Lily!”

“That is for treating my son so poorly for two years and it’s less than you deserve.”

Severus chuckled. “Fair enough.”

He and Remus straightened.

“You saw or knew or…”

“Saw,” she said. “Having an attachment to the living can be a pain.”

Severus clicked his tongue. “Fuck, I did trap you.”

“Don’t worry, you didn’t,” she said. “I chose to stay with my son. And that thing with the book… that’s the second time I’ve managed to do that. Otherwise my sister would terrified of her own home.”

“You’re not eternally pregnant, are you?” Remus asked. Lily snorted.

“No, thank goodness. James and Fay come along once in a while, but for the most part, they can come and go as they please. Part of me thinks James is quite happy that Fay is eternally eight…I’m not so sure,” she clicked her tongue. “Anyway, you needed to speak with me?”

“I need your help talking to Slughorn. Apparently he knows something about the Dark Lord that could help us save Harry from him.”

Lily hummed, tapping her chin. “I think I can do one better. When I died, there was a woman who greeted me. She comes by every so often to tell me she’s sorry on Voldemort’s behalf.”

“What?”

“His mother. Voldemort’s mother. She wants to help stop him, but she doesn’t know how. And yet, like me, she’s attached to him. Not since the night he killed James and me, but she still comes every so often, especially after Voldemort tried to kill him again, to say she’s sorry and that she wishes there is something she could do to help stop him. She might know what Slughorn does.”

“That’s good!” Remus said. “We can do that. Talk to her instead. She probably knows exactly what we need to do.”

Severus glanced at the stone.

“Severus?”

Severus looked at Lily again. “You’ve been here this whole time?”

“I have.”

“And you really couldn’t tell me you were here. I needed you, Lily.”

“I know. I can feel it in your energy. I feel your fear. I feel your sadness, and your anger. So, this is what I can tell you about what I feel coming off you over the last four years:

“You never really became Tobias, Severus. You realized it before reaching the point of no return.
And all because Remus came back and you two got back together. I’m glad for you and I’m relieved. You’re not your father. You’re my brother. You always were. You’re a good man and now you can be a better man than you were before.”

Lily’s form began to fade.

“You need to speak with Merope Riddle, daughter of Marvolo Gaunt. She can tell you whatever you need to know.”

She vanished.

The stone fell into Severus’ palm.

Remus embraced him. “Need time to think?”

“I need time to process.”

“Okay. Would you like to be alone for that?”

Severus swallowed, shaking his head before collapsing onto the couch. Remus sat beside him and embraced him.

#

Harry collapsed onto the grass, huffing, he rolled over onto his stomach and pressed his flushed face into the grass.

“Damn it, Viktor, you’re kicking my ass!”

“Just want to make sure you get through the last task all right.”

“I will. Jeez, you’re kicking my butt harder than Professor Snape ever did.”

Viktor sat beside him, leaning back on the grass. “I thought I was going easy, but I’ll…lighten the load?”

“Yeah. Please. That’d help,” Harry said.

Viktor scratched his back, gently massaging his sore muscles.

“Are you always so tight?”

“Erm…I guess. Doesn’t help having dark wizards wanting to kill me and all.”

“Sit up,” Viktor said.

Harry obeyed reluctantly, Viktor moved to sit behind him and placed his hands on Harry’s shoulder.

“Relax or this will hurt more than it should.”

He squeezed the muscles and Harry winced, grinding his teeth. It wouldn’t take long before the pain ebbed.

“Better?”

“Yeah. Feels good,” Harry said, unsure if he was mumbling too much to be heard. It didn’t seem to matter much as Viktor continued to massage his neck and shoulders.
“You think you’re uncles would let you come visit?”

Harry turned to look at him.

“I don’t know why not,” he said. “I’m sure Sirius would be all right with it. Probably would see it as a vacation if nothing else.”

Viktor grinned and pressed his forehead to Harry’s.

“I hope so. I would like to show you my home, Harry. Sofia is a beautiful city in the summer. Perhaps not as warm as the UK, but beautiful all the same.”

“Actually the weather we’re having right now isn’t usual.”

“Oh?”

“Summer usually averages twenty-two degrees celcius.”

“Oh. Weather’s usually the same, then in summer. It averages twenty-one in July.”

“Maybe I could convince Sirius that we could be there for my birthday, then,” Harry said. “I turn fifteen in July, so…”

“I like that plan,” Viktor said. “But perhaps you should talk to your uncles first before we make too many plans.” Harry kissed him.

“I’ll do that once I’ve gotten feeling back in my legs,” he said.

#

SUMMER TIME BASH

~Rita Skeeter~

As we near the end of the school year at Hogwarts, the love story between Harry Potter and Quiditch Bon-Bon Viktor Krum continues as plans to spend time in Sofia, Bulgaria are made.

This esteemed reporter wonders where Potter’s guardian, Sirius Black, stands on the matter…

“Fucking bitch doesn’t know when to quit,” Sirius snarled, crumpling the paper and tossing it into the fire.

Remus sipped his tea contemplatively.

“So?”

“What?”

“What is the plan for the summer?”

“Harry asked me via floo as soon as he could get a fireplace,” Sirius said. “I told him that we could go.”

“Nice. Summer in Bulgaria.”

“Speaking of travelling outside the UK, have you and Severus decided on a wedding date yet?”
Remus hummed and took another sip of tea. “We’ve…erm…been a bit preoccupied with the Crouch situation. Severus is still a bit…ill.”

Ill was really the only way to describe his reaction to seeing Lily again. And in a matter of hours, he was truly sick with a very nasty cold.

He’d not touched the Stone since.

Remus had been trying to get information about Merope Riddle, nee Gaunt, but the furthest he managed to get was that a few generations ago, an ancestor squandered their wealth and the family fell off the grid around the mid eighteenth century.

If he could figure out anything more, that would help.

“Well, I hope he gets better soon,” Sirius said. “Wouldn’t want to miss the final task.”

“He wouldn’t miss it for anything. Not when he worked so hard to make sure Harry would get through it unscathed,” Remus assured him. “No. He’d go watch if it meant having an IV attached to his arm and rolled there on a bed.”

“Would he?”

“I wouldn’t put it past him to try. Severus can be ridiculously stubborn when he wants to.”

The bedroom door opened and Severus stepped out, looking a little green.

“Hey, love. Feeling better?”


“Good to see you, too, Snape. You sound like a clogged drain.”

“I feel like a clogged drain.”

What did Lily do to you?

“I don’t know. I tempted to summon her back, but I don’t want to set this back. Maybe this is the actual payback for how I treated Harry in his first and second years?”

That makes sense…But how’d she manage that.

“Let’s ask her when I summon her astral butt back here.”

Remus snorted.

“What?”

“Nothing.”

“Right, those mind-reading secret conversations. Fuck that, it’s rude,” Sirius snapped, glowering.

“It’s private,” Remus said.

Severus returned to the bedroom.

“Are you talking about sex?”
“Really, Sirius?” Remus snapped, glowering at him.

Sirius smirked, wiggling his eyebrows.

“You’re a weird wanker.”

“You love me anyway.”

“Not the point.”

“So was it?”

“Will you drop it?”

“Fine, touchy.” Sirius checked his watch. “I need to get going anyway. Duty calls. Especially if I’m going to get enough money to go to Spain and Bulgaria.”

#

“Are you sure you’re feeling well enough to do this?” Remus asked.

Severus nodded. He certainly looked better, but what if the strain accidentally set him back.

“It doesn’t matter,” Severus said, clearing his throat. It was still rather croaky. “We don’t have much more time.”

Remus opened the chest and they entered. Remus aimed his wand at Crouch.

“Incarcerous,” he cried.

Crouch fell, cursing angrily as Severus approached and forced Veritaserum down his throat. He backed away, leaning against the wall.

“All right?”

“Just dizzy. Damn it, Lily…”

“I’ve got this from here,” Remus said.

“I’m not leaving you alone with him,” Severus snapped.

Remus engaged in a staring match with him. At last, he sighed.

“Suit yourself,” he said before approaching Crouch and kneeling. “Tell me what you were planning to do to Harry Potter.”

“Deliver him,” Crouch said, “To the Dark Lord. I would need to ensure that he won the tournament. The Triwizard cup is a portkey. I needed to only redirect it to my Master’s location.”

“For what reason? Why does Voldemort need Harry?”

“YOU HAVEN’T THE RIGHT TO SAY HIS NAME!” Crouch bellowed at Remus. He cried out when a stinging hex hit his shoulder.

“Answer the question,” Severus snarled.

“He needs his blood to return. He can’t touch the boy unless he can get his blood.” Crouch bowed
his head. “Forgive me, Master. Please forgive me…”

Severus groaned, holding his arm. “Where is he, Crouch?”

“They forced a truth potion on me, Master!” Crouch shouted, falling to his side. “I had no choice!”

Severus approached and grabbed Crouch’s shoulders. He felt pulled, as if something reached inside his mind and dragged him inside another dimension.

He saw a mansion.

A cemetery.

A cauldron.

A sign—Little Hangleton.

“Good of you to join us, Severus.”

Severus turned around to see the tall, cloaked figure of Voldemort.

“We’re long overdue for a chat, I believe.”

In the corner, Crouch leaned against a tombstone, ashen and shaking. Severus stood his ground.

“I’m not afraid of you.”

“Good, good,” Voldemort said, patting his cheek. “Still your actions lately have been troubling, bordering treacherous. Tell me, Severus, are you still one I can rely on?”

Severus inhaled. “No.”

“Pity.”

He backed away, pulling a wand free of his robes and aimed it at Severus—

He was back in the chest, breathing heavily. He looked around, clutching tightly to Remus.

“I’m right here,” Remus said. “You’re okay, Sev.”

“Little Hangleton.”

“What?”

“He’s in Little Hangleton.”

“NOOOO!!!” Crouch shrieked.

He fell silent.

Remus approached.

“Remus, be careful!”

“I’m not going to touch him,” he assured Severus, waving his wand in the air over Crouch’s body. “Severus, he’s dead.”
“Well…technically you can’t kill a dead man twice. And only so many people knew we had him.” Severus coughed, hacking and doubling over.

“That is it: I’m summoning Lily and demanding that she reverse whatever the hell she did to you,” Remus said. “Come on. Out we go.”

“We have more important things to worry about,” Severus said.

“The Triwizard Cup isn’t going anywhere,” Remus snapped, helping him into a chair and rubbing his back. “Where’s the Stone.”

“Left robe pocket.”

Remus pulled it out and held it in his palm. “Lily Rose Potter, I summon thee!”

The wind whistled and Lily came forth, arching a brow. “I thought my part was done.”

“What did you do to Severus?”

Lily glanced at Severus. “Sorry.”

“Sorry? So you admit you did this?”

“Yes, but not on purpose,” she said. “I’m never visible, usually, and I suppose I took a little more of the summoner’s energy than I needed the last time. The summoner being Severus. Electronics work just as well, but without electronics, the only energy source I have is the living. Manifesting this much can take a lot of energy. Ghosts like the Hogwarts ghosts can tap into multiple energy sources that allow them to remain visible. For me, that’s not necessarily possible, and with the Stone, I’ve a central link between myself and the summoner’s energy.”

“So right now, you’re leeching Remus’ energy?” Severus asked between coughs.

“Yeah.”

“How do we fix this?”

“Rest, usually helps, but I suppose I drained too much. I mean, I did manage to throw a book and I didn’t disappear, so that might be what happened. At this point, rest and good food and something for the throat will help. It’s also possible that in draining Severus’ energy, I ended up making him more susceptible to common illnesses.”

“Shit.”

“I am sorry.”

“All right, I’m letting you go now,” Remus said.

Lily disappeared and the stone went back into Severus’ pocket. “Can you walk or will I need to carry you to the hospital wing.”

“I can walk.”

Remus waited while Dumbledore double checked the Cup for any tampering. “Well, whatever Crouch intended to do to it, he never had the chance,” he said. “For which we can be eternally
grateful. And Severus?"

“Recovering from whatever it was that made him sick,” Remus said. Dumbledore hummed and locked the Cup away. “Albus, I don’t know if we should wait to catch Voldemort.”

“Drained of power as he is, I do not believe he will stay in Little Hangleton much longer now that we know where he is. It is safer to assume that he is on the run.”

“Safer, perhaps, but no less foolish,” Remus said.

“Even as weak as he is now, Voldemort isn’t defenceless, Remus, he could, I fear, still kill whomever we send to capture him. Particularly so if he can kill from afar as he had Crouch.”

Remus ground his teeth, wishing Dumbledore could be wrong for once. “Then I suppose we’ll just have to focus on finding a way to defeat him.”

Dumbledore squeezed his shoulder. “You and Severus are wise men. I trust you both with this task. I just hope that I’m not wrong in doing so.”

“You aren’t,” Remus said. “Thank you, Sir.”

With that, they went their separate ways. Remus went to check on Severus, intent on assuring him that the Cup was safe from anyone wanting to tamper with it. Once there, Poppy stopped him.

“He’s already left.”

“Left?”

“Felt better after a Throat Soothing Draught, Pepperup Potion, and some sleep. Would have kept him longer if he wasn’t so bloody stubborn.”

Remus sighed. “I’m sorry, Poppy. I’ll knock some sense into him.”

“No need. If he sets himself back, I’ll knock it in him myself.” She handed him a bag. “Make sure he takes these vitamins. They’ll help his energy increase a little faster.”

“Thanks, Poppy,” Remus said, sighing again. “I’ll head down then.”

With that, Remus left the wing for the dungeons. Once back, he handed Severus the bag.

“Vitamins. From Poppy.”

“Blech.”

“Deal with it. I think we should summon Merope Riddle.”

“We? Or do you mean me? Or do you mean you?”

“I highly doubt she’s going to drain you as badly as Lily did before, but I’d rather not risk it for both of us. I don’t know if that will work, but I’m willing to try and see if it will.”

Severus pulled the Stone back out. It floated upward above his palm. “Shall we, then?”

Remus took Severus’ hand in his underneath the Stone.

“Merope Riddle, daughter of Marvolo Gaunt, we summon thee.”
Chapter 22

The candles flickered and danced for a brief moment before the spirit appeared.

Merope Riddle was young. Not much younger than the Potters had been when they died. Her hair was dark, her clothes tattered, and her eyes sad.

"Why have you called me?"

"Lily Potter suggested we talk to you," Severus said.

"You know Lily?"

"She told us that you're Voldemort's mother."

"His name," Merope said, "Is Tom, after his father." She looked around. "I'd never thought I'd be here again."

"Can you help us?" Remus asked.

Merope turned to him. "What do you want my help with?"

"You're son is still hunting Lily's. You told her you're sorry on his behalf, am I right?" She nodded. "Then help us."

"The only way to do that is to kill him."

"But if we don't kill him, he'll kill hundreds, maybe thousands more," Severus said. "Merope, Lily wouldn't have told us to talk to you if she didn't think you were tired of just apologizing rather than doing something to stop him."

"You're Lily's brother?"

"Yes."

"I know where most of his horcruxes are," she said. "There's one in the castle and a way to destroy it." She looked around. "This was Horace Slughorn's office. Tom looked up to him. I thought Horace would at least be able to reach him, show him that love isn't an illusion or weakness, but I was wrong."

"We can rectify this, Merope," Severus said. "I can't imagine what it's like knowing that you're only chance to stop someone you love from doing something horrible is to let them die."

"Don't placate me," she snapped. "I know what I have to do. I am going to tell you where they are. I don't have a choice but to tell you. Because you're right: I wasn't there for him and now..."

Merope turned away from them, weeping. After a moment, she squared her shoulders and turned back to Severus and Remus.

"I can show you to the Chamber where the Basilisk's carcass is. Its venom is potent enough to destroy a horcrux and lasts long after the beast is dead. Get that, then I will show you where to find them. All of them. Some of which you might not like."

Severus exhaled. "Lead the way."
Severus groaned when Merope disappeared behind a door. Remus eyebrows rose.

"We have to go into a girl's lavatory?"

"Don't worry," Severus said. "No one uses it."

"How do you know?"

"Lily and I used to hide in here," he admitted, opening the door. Remus followed.

"Severus, you better be right because if you're not we could lose our jobs," he hissed. Merope stood before a sink.

A head poked out from above a stall. "Teachers? In the girl's room?"

Severus smirked at her. "Myrtle, it's been a while."

"Severus! If I could, I'd hit you. I've not seen you in two decades!"

"Well, it'd be weird if I kept coming here, don't you think? Especially now that I'm a teacher."

"Why are you now, then?" she asked, pouting. "And who's this?"

"I'm his fiancé," Remus said, frowning. Severus looked at him and snorted.

"Why are you getting jealous of a ghost?" Severus asked.

"I don't know."

Rusty gears shifted, drawing their attention to the sinks where an opening appeared beneath it.

"Down there," Merope said, pointing at the opening. Severus and Remus approached it, looking down.

"No stairs or ladder?"

"No," Merope said. "Not this entrance, anyway and it's the easiest."

"Well," Severus said. "Lily used to vouch strongly for giant slides."

"Is the Snake afraid?" Remus teased. Severus glowered at him. "I'll go first," he said.

"Maybe we should think this through-"

"Severus, two twelve year olds probably went this way. We'll be fine. See you at the bottom."

With that, Remus jumped in.

"I like him," Myrtle said. "He's very brave."

Severus sighed. Bloody Gryffindors and their bloody bravery. Gotten them killed more than once. He jumped in. The darkness blinded him. Only the sensation of wind whipping around him he was moving. Then he landed on a hard surface.

"Ow!" Remus shouted.
"Sorry," Severus said. "Lumos."

"That was not smart," Remus groaned. Severus helped him up and winced at the injuries. "Does it look as bad as it feels?"

"How does it feel?"

"Like I ripped half my face off."

"Then no. Face is very much in tact." He cast a mild cleaning spell for the wound. "I should've brought my dittany, that would have taken care of the worst of it."

"I can handle a little pain," Remus said.

"This way," Merope called, flying by them. They followed her to a vault. The door had shut since the last time someone was down in the chamber. Merope approached it and her voice echoed in the harsh whisper of parseltongue. The vault clicked and swung open.

The first thing Severus noted was the stench. Both he and Remus covered their noses, breathing through the cloth of their sleeves as Merope led them to a giant, rotting carcass.

"The teeth still carry the venom, and it is still potent," she said. "Take care not to cut yourself on the fangs." Severus approached the corpse and examined the fangs. He gripped one and yanked. It came free of the skull. He turned to Merope.

"You're certain this will work?" he asked.

"It will," she vowed. Severus stared at her for a long moment before grabbing another fang, handing it to Remus. "I must go. Or I might end up using too much of your energy."

"Wait, how do we get out of here?"

Merope pointed at the mouth. "A tunnel runs through there. Follow it. You'll find a passage that will lead you back to the ground level of the castle."

"How much energy can you still use before we get sick?" Remus asked.

"Enough to get you to the stairs," she said.

"Then lead the way," Severus said.

#

Remus met with Sirius in the tent and embraced him.

"Ready for the last task?"

"Very. What's the plan?"

"Harry doesn't need to win," Remus said. "He just needs to get through it unscathed. Besides, he's free to forfeit if something happens."

"Well, let's hope it goes according to plan, then," Sirius said, checking his watch. "Where' Snape?"

"Maintaining a couple finishing touches," Remus said. "He'll be in the maze, making sure no one gets too terribly hurt. A few teachers are in there for the same purpose. He and Moody are primarily"
making sure no one attempts to tamper with the cup in case we've another Death Eater attempting to get Harry to Voldemort."

The tent flap opened and Harry stepped in with the other champions, who went to greet their own relatives. He embraced Sirius and Remus.

"Where's Professor Snape?"

"Finishing up some work," Remus said. "He'll be here to cheer you on before the cannon goes off." Harry looked a little put out at Severus' absence. Sirius hugged him. "He'll be here," he repeated. "And win or lose, he'll be proud. We all will be proud of you."

"ALL CHAMPIONS REPORT TO THE MAZE ENTRANCE." Bagman's voice echoed. Harry let Sirius go.

"Give them hell," Sirius said.

"I will. See you in a bit." With that, Harry left, following the other champions to the maze entrance. Before Sirius and Remus could leave, a man approached.

"You are Harry Potter's guardians?"

"Just him," Remus said. "I'm one of his teachers."

"You are Black, then?"

"am," Sirius said. "Do I know you?"

"You know my children, Viktor and Venora. I am Atanas Krum." He held his hand out to Sirius, who took it. "Our boys are Dimidium Animae, or so we have been told."

"So we've been told."

"Most would not have allowed Viktor to act."

"Within reason," Sirius said. "Both of our boys have more eyes than they need watching them. We don't want their reputations compromised, but we also don't want them to be denied living.

"Of course, and I thank you for your cautions. Both my wife and I thank you." He motioned at the woman, currently in conversation with Fleur's mother. "I would like to speak with you more, Mr. Black, if that is all right."

Sirius shrugged. "I don't see why not."

Remus squeezed his shoulder. "I'll be with the other teachers. You go ahead and schedule some playdates or whatever you call them."

"Shut it, Remus."

#

Severus turned to the sound of the cannon blast, a loud boom in the air.

"Jumpy, aren't you?" Moody asked. "Don't lose sight of what you need to do, Snape."

"I haven't," Severus snapped, turning back to the cup. "Think it's reinforced enough?"
"Nothing can be too reinforced."

"We still want the Champions to be able to grab it."

"Don't worry, they will," Moody said. "They'll get through just fine. Only ones. Anyone else," he picked up a stick and tossed it into at the cup. The stick burst into flames, then fell to the ground, ash. "Don't worry, people can fall back."

"On the one, I don't know what to think. That's very dangerous and I pray you really aren't going to eviscerate the champions on accident. On the other, I like your style. No death eater could get through that. Then again, neither could we."

"That's the point."

"And the champions?" Severus asked. "How will they get through without being burned alive?"

Moody held up a vial. "Told them I would need a little bit of hair from each of them," he said. "Little DNA, their energy, can aid a spell like this."

"So only they can get through."

"Exactly."

"You're certain it works?"

"Well, can't be sure unless someone not a champion is willing to test it," he said, pushing his hand past the barrier. Nothing happened. "You can trust me. Can I trust you?"

Severus arched a brow. "With your life."

"I hope so," Moody said. "I already owe it. Now enough jabber. We best get into position for those kids."

#

"Ridiculus!" Harry shouted at the Bogart. It turned into a little mouse and scampered off. With that, he continued on his way, attempting to dodge the ever changing maze. He ran into Viktor.

"Doing all right?" he asked.

"Well enough."

"Good." Viktor grabbed his hand and pulled Harry along as the maze began to shift again, closing around them. "Go Left," Viktor said when they reached a crossroads. Harry let go of his hand and they split directions, heading closer to the center of the maze.

He was forced to stop as a golden mist wafted toward him, weighing his options. Seeing no way around it, he went forward. Within seconds, he felt lightheaded as the mist surrounded him. Everything seemed to be upside down. The sky was below him...the lawn above...

Harry continued on, trying to make it through the mist.

He just needed to get through the mist.

Just the mist...
Then he was out and everything began coming back into focus. Shaking it off, Harry continued onward as the maze began closing in on him again. He shifted right, running into one of the Blast-End Skrewts. He blasted it into the maze's hedges, not waiting to see it writhe and screech trying to escape.

He just needed to get there...

Just needed to get to the center...

"Hey," Cedric called. "Doing all right?"

"Yeah. You?"

"Been better," he said. "It's like we're just running in circles."

"We'll get there."

"Maybe. See you on the flip side."

He patted Harry's shoulder and ran onward. Harry scanned his options, looking for a more viable route. He held his hand out, wand flat on his palm.

"Point Me," he said. It turned to the right and he ran, running as fast as he could through the aisle until he faced another fork, guarded by a sphinx. She stood and approached him. "I suppose you won't just let me through."

"Not until you answer my riddle," she said. Harry exhaled.

"Give it to me."

#

"Who do you think will win?" Moody asked. Severus hummed, floating on a broom beside him. "Personally, I'm voting Krum."

"They all have a chance," Severus said.

"Not placing your chips on Potter?"

Severus chuckled. "Win or lose, as long as he's alive, I'll be proud." Moody nodded.

"You trained him well. Why didn't you become an Auror?"

"I wasn't interested. Besides, had I joined after I graduated, I'd have betrayed the Aurors one way or other." Moody stared at him. "I was a stupid, angry child back then. I've grown up since and I'm better for it." A red spark cascaded over the maze.

"Looks like someone's decided to tap out."

"I'm on it," Severus said, moving toward the spark's origin.

He landed in front of Fleur and helped her up, taking her back to the maze entrance and the medic tent. He set her down on a bed and let Pomfrey take over.

"She's unconscious," he said, checking her eyes. "Pupils' responsive."

"Still breathing," Pomfrey added. "This tournament alone was a bad idea."
"You really want to say that to Albus?" he asked.

"If I could, I'd say so much more," she muttered. "You better get back there in case someone else needs you. Particularly if it's Potter."

He thanked her and took off, flying back toward the center of the maze. Moody greeted him and pointed down.

Harry had made it. He was all right. A bit grimy, but otherwise, all right.

"Looks like your kid's going to have another record added to the list."

"He does have quite a few," Severus said, grinning. Harry passed through the last obstacle, an acromantula, and stretched his hand out, gripping the cup's handle.

The tournament was over.

Severus and Moody both headed toward the entrance. Harry grinned, holding the cup high. Severus landed and ran to him. The Weasleys beat him to Harry, hoisting him on their shoulders.

"Professor! I did it!"

"Yeah you did," Severus said. But it's not over yet.

"Party at Gryffindor Tower!" Ron shouted. Severus shook his head at that. Those poor House Elves are going to be busy enough with the feast.

He pushed his way through the crowd, searching for Remus. He found him next to McGonagall. Once close enough, he wrapped his arms around his waist. Remus turned to kiss him.

"Just try not to be too loud tonight," she scoffed.

"Shut up, Minnie," Severus snapped, resting his chin on Remus' shoulder. "We'll be as loud as we want to be tonight."

"We'll make sure the charms are in place," Remus said.

"Why bother after all the crap she's given us?"

"Because she's our coworker, former teacher, my former head of house, and I want to stay on her good side, Sev," Remus said.

Minerva laughed. "I'll see you at the Tower tonight, you two."

"Not a Gryffindor," Severus said.

"You ensured Harry's survival and that led to his victory. That's enough for me to let you into Gryffindor Tower for a victory party. Think of it this way: it wasn't that we beat Slytherin at Quidditch again."

Sirius decided to help with the party preparations at Gryffindor Tower. Harry was still with the other champions, getting looked over for any lingering injuries.

That gave them time to spare before the celebrations.
Once back in their flat, Remus kissed him, mumbling that he was going to take a shower. He pressed another lingering kiss to Severus' mouth and left for the bathroom. Severus approached the bed, wondering what would be the best tool to use.

"I'm ready, Master."


Severus motioned him to kneel and once on his knees, Remus glanced up at him, waiting instruction. Severus held out the collar, and once a kiss was placed to it, he latched it to Remus' neck. Severus hooked a finger in the metal loop and pulled.

"Salazar, you're beautiful," he whispered, backing toward the bed and sitting once his feet hit the back of it. "What do you want, Pet?"

"May I suck your cock, Master?"

"Go on, then," he said, undoing his fly and pulling his cock out, holding it to Remus' lips.

Remus pressed his lips to the tip, sliding his lips around the head. Severus slid his eyes closed, sighing as a thrum of pleasure overcame him. He ran his hand through Remus' hair, tugging. Remus shivered, moaning as he licked and sucked. Once hard, Remus released him. Severus cupped his face, tilting his head up to kiss him.

"You did well, Pet," he purred. "Would you like a treat?"

"Yes, Master, I would."

"Then on the bed, sweet boy." He stood, allowing Remus to climb onto the bed. "Lay on your front," he instructed, flicking his wrist. The bonds latched to Remus' wrists as Severus summoned a riding crop. He ran the leather strip against Remus' legs. Remus arched his back, ass raised and exposed.

"Beautiful," Severus hissed, running the crop over his arched back. "You look so good, Pet" He dragged the crop over one of Remus' arms. "Ready?"

"Yes," Remus said.

Severus hummed. "Yes, what?"

I'm ready, Master."

"Better." With that came one strike to Remus' ass. "Shall I give you more?"

"Please." Another strike. Remus groaned, gripping the ropes. "Sev, please stop teasing."

"I'm not teasing," Severus said. "I never said I wouldn't draw this out as long as I could." He swatted the back of Remus' legs."Perhaps I could be a little harder," he brought the crop down on Remus' left buttock with more force. "Better?"

Remus groaned, pressing his face into the pillow as Severus moved between teasing strokes and the hard swats. Once Remus' ass was bright red, Severus set the crop down and settled between Remus' legs, kneading the red flesh of his ass.

"You like this, Pet?" Remus nodded. Severus gripped the back of his hair and pulled. "I need a
"Verbal answer, Remus."

"Yes. I like it."

"Good boy," he said, letting Remus' hair go and spread his cheeks apart. "Relax, Remus. Going to eat you out, Baby," he said, licking Remus' perineum. Remus spread his legs further apart, giving himself wholly to Severus.

Severus kissed and licked Remus, working his tongue inside. Remus moaned beneath him, muscles tense and wriggling. Severus paused to release Remus and disrobe, letting the garments fall to the floor. He summoned lubricant and began working his fingers into Remus, stretching him open.

"So much for drawing it out," Remus said, chuckling.

"Cheeky," Severus said. "But I did say I wasn't teasing."

He wiggled his finger, searching for Remus' prostate. Once found, Remus yelped and bucked. Severus smirked and moved another finger inside, stretching and assaulting at the same time as he played with the sensitive nub.

"Well, Pet? Go on and tell me. Is this to your liking?"

"Y-yes."

"Is it now? Is there nothing you'd like to critique?"

Remus shook his head. "Only that...another finger?"

"You want another finger?"

"Yes, please, Severus."

"Well, I suppose so, my pretty boy," Severus purred, inserting another. "But I don't want you to come yet, Pet. Not till I say so."

"Oh, fuck..."

Severus twisted his fingers into Remus' hair, digging his nails into Remus' scalp. "You're so beautiful like this. Love the way you squeeze around my fingers, Remus."

"Please..."

"Don't worry, love, you'll have my cock soon enough," Severus promised, pressing a kiss to Remus' neck. "You're so ready for me, aren't you?"

"Yes...so ready...Sev, please."

"Well, then," Severus waved his wand, releasing Remus. "In a moment, I'm going to let you go and you'll turn over for me, holding your legs open. Understood?"

Remus nodded. Severus pulled his fingers out and sat up for Remus to do as he was bidden, hands hooked under his thighs. Severus licked his lips as he slicked his cock up and leaned over him. He lined his cock with Remus' hole and kissed him as he nudged his cock inside. Remus arched his back, head pressed into the pillows.

Severus kissed his jaw, rolling his hips gently. "Such a good boy, you are," he purred. "You love
"Master's cock, don't you?"

"Yes," Remus huffed. Severus took one of Remus' hands in his own, pinning it above Remus' head.

"Look at me," Severus demanded. Remus obeyed, locking his eyes on Severus'. "I want you to come," he growled. "Don't take your eyes off me. Come for me, Remus."

Remus gasped, muscles tensing Severus gripped his hand tightly as Remus squeezed around him, coating their abdomens in his seed, Severus not far behind. They took a moment to catch their breath before Severus pulled out and cast a cleaning charm before pulling Remus into his arms and fixing the blankets over them.

"You were amazing as always," Severus praised. Remus grinned.

"Still want to go to the party?"

"I've a reputation to keep. Can't be seen in Gryffindor Tower or everyone will think something's gone wrong," he said.

"I think Harry would want you there."

"But that means getting up and dressed." Remus slapped his chest. "Ow, that hurt."

"I'll be there."

"And every other Gryffindor."

"Severus," Remus sat up, balanced on an elbow. "You're going if I have to drag you there. If you cast the invisibility spell, I'll wear the collar"

Severus arched a brow. "Fine. But I'm not done cuddling you, yet."

Remus kissed him. "Just a few minutes," he said. "Then we go."
Chapter 23

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Gryffindor Tower was loud and boisterous in the wake of Harry’s victory. Screaming and cheering deafened the room through games of butterbeer chugging and exploding snap in between congratulating Harry.

Harry spied Remus and Severus and raced over to them as best he could through the crowd. “You made it!” he shouted, grinning.

“Wouldn’t miss this for anything,” Remus said embracing him. Harry then embraced Severus tightly. “Ready for the year to end?”

Harry released Severus, grinning. “Fuck yes!”

“The mouth on you!”

“It’s the end of the school year and I don’t think Sirius cares.”

Severus shrugged. “I don’t have the heart to take points away for that or give detention. This time.”

“Harry!” Hermione shouted. “Get over here! Photo Op!”

“Go on,” Remus said. “This night’s yours. Enjoy it.” Harry raced off, tackling Ron. Remus leaned against Severus. “So. Horcrux hunting should be a fun honeymoon.”

“Honeymoon? I was thinking summer adventure. I’m still set on Barcelona.”

“We will literally cook to death in Spain.”

“No, we will not. We are wizards. We can prevent evisceration and spontaneous combustion, Pet. Besides. I would rather not spend the honeymoon hunting down the pieces of a mad man’s soul, thank you. And yet, the sooner we start the better.”

“As soon as Harry has settled at Sirius’?”

“Done.”

“Do you really think we can destroy them all before the wedding?”

“Probably not, but we have the weapons, we know one is in the school, we can contact his dead mum, and find the others. At the very least, we might have a chance of destroying at least half if not more of the horcruxes before the wedding.”

Remus sighed. “It’d be nice to get them all.”

“Yeah,” Severus agreed. “I think we’ve overstayed our welcome.” He held his hand out. “Could I interest you in a walk around the grounds for a bit?” Remus smiled and took his hand, leading him out of the common room.

Severus led him down to the quidditch pitch. The maze was still up. “What a year,” Severus said. “Getting the kid through this was crazy, but we did.”
“No. You did. I feel like I barely had to do anything.”

Severus snorted, wrapping his arm around Remus’ shoulder.

“You are the Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher. Without you, I don’t’ think Harry would know what to do with most of what he has faced already. I’ve only helped him find his potential and live up to it. You taught him the spells. So, again, we did it. Together.”

He kissed Remus’ cheek.

“You’re his favorite teacher. Anyone can see that. That will never change. I can settle for second favorite now that we aren’t at each other’s throats.”

Remus turned to him and kissed him. Severus deepened it.

“I love you, Baby,” Severus mumbled against Remus’ lips. “So don’t sell yourself short. Never sell yourself short, Remus.”

Remus rested his hands on Severus shoulders and pressed their foreheads together. “I love you, too. I suppose I was just a little jealous. He’s gotten closer to you this year. He got to know the real you.”

“Well…”

“You know what I mean,” Remus said, grinning. “He knows you now. He knows there’s nothing either of us wouldn’t do to protect him. He might not the extent, but he will one day.”

Severus kissed him again. “One day,” he agreed. “When the threat on his life is gone, he will know.”

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading! Now, question: I do intend to continue the series, but I'm at a conundrum because I really want to write an AU for this AU where the Potters live. At the same time, I know that the initial story line of the current AU hasn't finished, so I should probably finish that.

Thoughts?

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!