Changing Faces

by cyn_ful

Summary

Dumbledore has just died and Harry has begun his quest to find horcruxes. In the meantime, he analyzes his failed relationship with Tonks. Along his way, he finds new obstacles and allies he never suspected.

Notes

Please note, this fic was originally written immediately after HBP. It is a part of the WIPBigBang - and finally being finished. In my attempt to finish it, I am making it a bit DH compliant, but please keep in mind that it was started two days after I finished reading HBP. As a part of this challenge, there will also be some artwork accompanying this fic. So if you have previously read parts of this at AFF or LJ, then re-read! It is being revamped all the way through as I finish it up. It all has to be posted by the 30th! Also a side-note - the extreme graphic violence is only in chapter 7.

Each chapter of this fic is titled as a song. This one can be found here: http://youtu.be/yipoOY56MbM

I just created a playlist of all the songs - so I will just post it playlist here instead of each individual video in the fic: http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLn-ZQxO1-
QI8L7pGXhmM7T5L6Xpbofkx

I also want to dedicate this fic to my dear sweet Jill! You had faith in me even when I had lost it. I promised this fic to you after the tornadoes years ago - and here it is, being
finished. Love you honey! I hope the ending was worth waiting for.

I have also had quite a few beta's over the years - so many to name Sara, Laura, Jill, Lacy, Bootsy, Raven, Luci, to name just a few. I want to thank each of you for your input into my work. Each of you has added a bit more to the fic and I believe this final product will be totally awesome. Thank you guys! I love you.
Harry lay in his bed thinking of the events of the past days. It was all a swirl of madness, the burial of Dumbledore, the Minister of Magic still trying to get Harry to “join” the Ministry, Fleur actually not being squeamish over Bill’s mangled body, Lupin and Tonks... Harry choked back tears. He had not realized that this would be what hurt the most. His anger over Snape was slowly dying like a glowing ember in a fire. He still planned on finding the man to hold him accountable for his actions.

Harry remembered the conversation when Hagrid had mentioned a fight between Snape and Dumbledore. Apparently Dumbledore had made him promise to do something, and Snape had said he couldn’t. Harry realized so much more was going on than even he knew. There were so many questions he needed answered. Starting tomorrow he would be able to begin his search for the horcruxes in earnest, well, after his last trip to the Dursleys, that is. He knew he would have to go to Grimmauld Place for a bit. He would need to get Kreacher and Dobby situated there as a home base. With the uncertainty of Hogwarts after Dumbledore's death, Harry knew he needed to keep Kreacher where he could not cause any trouble. He was going to have to make sure that the elf did not tread into enemy territory.

Maybe the Order would start meeting again. He would force the issue and insist that he should be allowed to join now. It was up to him to destroy Voldemort. The only problem would be seeing Tonks. She had looked happy the other day. He didn’t know why he was so upset. He had told her over and over again that he loved Ginny. He had desperately kept reminding Tonks of Ginny right up to the moment her mouth had covered his cock.

Harry sat up. He had to stop this train of thoughts. His mind was a jumbled mess, and it would not help matters to sit and think about the one person he never thought he would have fallen in love with. Granted, you don’t easily forget the first person you have sex with. She was so much more than a passing fancy. She was possessive, demanding, and always in control. Why then did she look at Lupin as if he hung the moon that he howled to once a month? How could she go from claiming Harry’s lips, his body and his soul as her own and then look so happily at Lupin?

Harry walked to the window. He had the room to himself. Ron was sleeping across the hall, and more than likely, Hermione was with him. He stared at the nearly full moon wondering what Lupin had that he didn’t. Harry turned and walked out of the room and down the stairs. Everyone was sleeping soundly, so he didn’t worry too much about waking anyone. He slipped out the back door and walked into the garden. He sat down with his back to the house and just stared at the moon.

He had not thought that he would have fallen in love with her. In the beginning, he had been more worried about Ginny finding out, but then he knew it needed to be kept secret. Tonks had insisted that it couldn’t be known that he was with her. He shouldn’t be upset that she was now dating Lupin. It wouldn’t do for her to be seen with Harry. It would be too dangerous.

It just didn’t make sense. He still remembered the first time she had kissed him. He did not see it coming. He had run into her in the seventh floor corridor while he was trying to find a way into the room Draco had entered; the need to find out what he was doing in there had been overwhelming. Harry snorted remembering the cabinet, “I guess we know what he was up to now, don’t we?”

*Harry had just turned the corner and scared ‘Susan Bones’ away. Apparently it was Crabbe who was standing watch outside of the Room of Requirement. He always seemed to be the one following the Hufflepuffs around.*
Harry had heard a sound and looked up. Tonks was walking towards him. She saw him and seemed to be upset. They had run across each other before, but this time she seemed angry with him. “Why, Harry?”

“I’m sorry, what’s wrong, Tonks?” Harry asked, concerned. He didn’t see the flash of pain in her eyes, just heard the question.

“Ginny Weasley? Couldn’t you find someone better?” she asked quietly. “She isn’t worthy of you. You need someone that can be your equal.”

Harry looked at her in shock. Ginny was an amazing witch and they had just started going out. “What is wrong with Ginny?” Harry demanded. His temper was coming quickly.

“Nothing is wrong with Ginny, Harry. You just need someone stronger, someone who will never need you to save them,” Tonks said quietly. She looked into Harry’s eyes and did something he would never forget. She pushed him up against the wall and kissed him.

Harry started to protest, but the minute his mouth opened her tongue swept in. She claimed his mouth as her own, demanding access to it, not taking “no” for an answer. She pulled Harry in closer to her as she deepened her kiss. He slowly began to respond, against his better judgment. This was so different than kissing Ginny. There was so much more passion.

Harry nearly kicked himself for having those thoughts. He cared for Ginny, he did. He couldn’t help the reactions he was having to Tonks.

“Say it, Harry. Say you are mine.”

“I’m yours,” he said quietly, looking up into silvery eyes. Damn her for being a Metamorphmagus. She could change at will, and apparently she willed Harry to look into silver eyes, instead of the brown ones that had looked haunted moments before.

She opened the door to the Room of Requirement and pulled the stunned boy in. She pushed him down on the bed that had appeared and slowly began to undress him. She kissed him, slowly, teasingly. His body responded to every touch from her hands, her lips. He moaned her name over and over as she lowered herself onto his cock. She laid claim to Harry that night.

Harry tried to remember Ginny. Tried and failed. He came hard and fast. Tonks leaned over and laid a gentle kiss on him before she got up and got dressed. “You are mine, Harry. Don’t you forget it. Mine and only mine.”

She turned and walked out of the room and Harry just lay there. He thought of what had just happened and cried. He knew this would come back and haunt him. It would hurt Ginny so much. He wanted to see where his relationship with Ginny was going to go, but now he just didn’t know. Slowly, he got up and cleaned himself off.

He walked slowly back to Gryffindor tower that night. He never spoke a word about Tonks to anyone. He just continued on as if nothing had happened. When he saw Tonks patrolling the edges of Hogwarts, she pretended as if she didn’t see him.

Harry leaned his head back and felt the tears falling. It was the first time he had cried since that first time with Tonks. He didn’t understand it. How could she have gone from loving him to loving Lupin within a blink of an eye? It just didn’t make sense. Harry watched as the moon slowly slid down the horizon. He could feel the first rays of the sun coming up before he moved again. Another sleepless night, the first of many more to come, he was sure.
Today was the first day of summer. His quest was going to begin in earnest. He would go to the Dursleys, just as Dumbledore had requested. Then he would be off to find Voldemort and kill him. Maybe during his quest to kill Voldemort he would find a way to heal his heart from the betrayal he was feeling.
Taking Care of Business

Chapter Summary

Harry begins his plans for the summer

Chapter Notes

Taking Care of Business: Bachman & Turner: http://youtu.be/ybtlsqVF3zc

Harry stood up and stretched. His body told how many long hours he had sat outside just thinking. He walked into the kitchen just as Mrs. Weasley was walking down the stairs.

“Harry, what are you doing up at this time of morning?” she questioned wondering what he could have been doing up before anyone else.

“I couldn’t sleep,” he replied truthfully. Thankfully, everyone would believe that it was over the stress of the last few days and not anything to do with Tonks.

“Oh, my poor dear. You should have let me know. I have a few sleeping potions I could have let you use.” She pulled him into a hug.

“Mrs. Weasley, I’m fine, really. I needed some time to think,” he said, coming out of the hug.

Mrs. Weasley started to prepare some breakfast, if only for the two of them. Harry knew it was something to do with her hands. “So what have you decided on?” This was the first time she had ever asked him a question as if her were a true adult. Harry could tell it cost her to admit that much.

“I think today I shall visit my relatives. I need to get that out of the way.”

“Surely you don’t need to….” Mrs. Weasley was starting to look worried. She hated allowing him to go back to his family.

“Dumbledore was insistent upon it. Ron and Hermione want to come with me, though,” he looked up at Mrs. Weasley who had gone pale at this mention. “I’m not sure if this is a wise idea yet or not. I don’t really want them to be faced with any danger, until I can no longer help it,” he finished, sounding more and more adult-like with every decision he was beginning to make.

Mrs. Weasley smiled, realizing that Harry had grown up. He was thinking about others before just rushing off headlong into danger. She knew she couldn’t stop Harry, and that would mean she might also lose Ron, who would not leave Harry’s side when he finally went off on his own. “You don’t think this is wise…” she started to question holding her breath in anticipation.

Harry looked at Mrs. Weasley, surprised at her response. “No, I don’t. I know they are both willing to go with me, but right now I need to face the Dursleys alone. I have to set a few things right before I leave there for the final time. It might actually take a day or two to get everything settled and I don’t want to expose anyone to my relatives for that length of time.
“I also need to get a new secret keeper for Sirius’ house,” Harry choked. “I need to find someone reliable, that I can trust.”

“Harry,” Mrs. Weasley moved closer to him. “Do you have any idea of who you are going to ask?”

Harry looked up at her worried face. He knew he couldn’t ask one of the Weasleys. They were already targets because they were his adopted family. “Well, I know Dumbledore was the last one. Can I be my own secret keeper?” he asked.

Mrs. Weasley was lost in thought. She fully expected someone in her family of being the secret keeper.

“That is a brilliant idea, Harry,” Mr. Weasley said as he walked into the room. “You need to do it quickly though,” he added.

“Do you know the spell? Can I do it myself?”

“We can do it, Harry. I just need to check the spell first. We need to do it immediately before anyone from the Order or otherwise shows up. Is Grimmauld Place going to remain headquarters?”

Harry sat in thought. “I think so, but first we need to make sure that Snape or any of his associates cannot get in. Merlin knows we are all going to need a safe place to run to and if this doesn't get taken care of we can be found easily.”

“It would be fastest for us to Apparate, but you still aren’t licensed. We need to see if the Ministry will allow for you and Ron to be tested immediately. You need to be able to do it legally. In the meantime, hold onto my arm and we can go together.”

“Yes, sir, Mr. Weasley,” Harry said quietly. He looked back through the door towards the stairway. He could tell that there was more movement coming from upstairs. They needed to move quickly. “We need to start before they wake up,” he said determinedly. He stood up and hugged Mrs. Weasley, who was crying silently. He felt as if it would be a while before he saw her again. “I love you. You have been the best surrogate mother a boy could ask for. I won't ask Ron or Hermione to join me even though I know they will try. I promise I will keep them out of harm’s way as long as possible and will return to you as well.” He kissed her tear-stained face and nodded at Mr. Weasley. “Let’s go.”

The two men Apparated into number 12 Grimmauld Place, and stood quietly for a few moments, waiting to see if anyone else was in the house. “Dobby!” Harry yelled after a moment. “Kreacher!”

Within a couple of seconds both house elves appeared before Harry. “You called us, Master Harry, sir?”

“Yes, Dobby, I need you to make sure that there isn't anyone hiding in the house. Then I need to perform a spell that neither of you can mention to anyone. Is that understood, Kreacher?”

“Kreacher is in the house of his mistress again, but that half blood Master is talking to Kreacher. Kreacher will pretend he doesn’t hear the Master.”

“Kreacher, I just gave you a direct order. Dobby, I expect you to make sure that he follows it,” Harry said impatiently. He didn’t have time to deal with the house-elf.

“Yes, sir, Master Harry, sir. Dobby is glad to do as you have asked.” With a pop, Dobby disappeared, and returned moments later. “There are no signs of anyone here right now, Master Harry. I is checking the whole house to be making sure of it.”
“Thank you. Dobby, do you think Winky would like to come and stay here? Would she want to leave Hogwarts?”

Dobby looked up at Harry with his eyes wide with tears. “You is wanting to have another house elf, Master Harry? Did I do something wrong?” Dobby walked over to a bookshelf to hit his head.

“No, no, Dobby,” Harry reassured the house-elf quickly before anything was broken, “I just wanted to make sure that Winky was taken care of. We won’t be going back to Hogwarts for quite some time, if ever. Besides, both you and Winky are free elves and can go wherever you wish.”

“Yes, and Dobby is wanting to serve Harry Potter. If Harry Potter wants to be having Winky, then he would just need to be calling her name. If she be wanting to come she will,” Dobby said softly, still afraid that Harry might not want him any longer. “Winky will probably be wanting to bond with you so she can be a servant again.”

“Thank you, Dobby,” Harry said quickly. “Well, Mr. Weasley, what do we need for the spell?”

Mr. Weasley was looking over at the shelves on the wall. He pulled out a book and blew the dust off of it. “This is it, my boy,” he said excitedly. “Make sure you have called the other elf, if that is what you really want. Will it make her happy being bonded again?”

“Mr. Weasley, did Hermione convince you to join S.P.E.W. while we were at school?” Harry asked with a slight twinkle in his eye.

Mr. Weasley and Harry laughed at that. “Harry, it will take me just a few moments to look up the spell. Go on and call her, otherwise she may not find this house afterwards.”

Harry went to the center of the room and yelled for Winky, the same way he had for the other two. Winky appeared a few moments later with her apron askew. She had been in the butterbeer again. Harry leaned down and looked the little elf in the eye. “Winky, I have a question for you. Would you like to join in my services here and work for me?”

Winky’s eyes got bigger. “Is Master Harry wanting a new house elf, sir? Would Master Harry be owning me?” she asked, hopefully.

“Winky, I will only tie you to me permanently if that is what you wish. You are a free elf and able to make your own choices. If you wish to remain free, you can, or if you wish to bond to me, the choice is yours,” Harry said diplomatically, even though he knew she wanted to belong to a family.

“I is wanting to be your bonded servant, Master Harry. Winky will no longer being a disgrace to house elf.”

Harry performed the bonding spell with the house elf, the same as he had done with Kreacher. In just a matter of minutes, Winky’s entire outlook changed. She adjusted her apron. She thanked Harry profusely and promised to serve him well.

“Dobby, the decision is yours to make. I want you in my household as either a free elf or bonded. I don’t trust any elf more than I trust you.”

Dobby had tears in his eyes as Harry said this. “Master Harry sir, I am not needing the bonding. I is already your faithful servant,” and with this he bowed low to Harry.

Harry was grateful for this at least. Hermione might have forgiven him for Kreacher, but he was pushing his luck with Winky. If Dobby had wanted to bond as well, that would have been the end of it. Hermione would have his head on a platter.
"Winky can you and Kreacher and Dobby begin to get this house livable? It needs to be cleaned up properly." Harry said with his nose wrinkled.

"Yes, Master Harry, we will be taking care of it." Winky disappeared to another area of the house as Kreacher walked off.

Dobby bowed deeply and then ran and hugged Harry's leg. Harry patted his head awkwardly.

“Ok, Harry, here we go. Are you ready to do this? Are you sure you want to be your own secret keeper?” Mr. Weasley asked one last time. He had kept his smile hidden from Harry while watching the boy with his new elves. He was so proud of the boy.

“Mr. Weasley, no one will be able to torture someone for information about my house to get to me. No one would question me about where my house is if they already have me. It would only put a lot of other people into danger,” Harry said, knowing the dangers that would be placed upon others if he gave the secret to someone else.

Mr. Weasley quickly performed the spell that made Harry the secret keeper of number 12 Grimmauld Place. It was an easy spell, but held so much impact.

“Let me write this out for you to hand out to everyone at the Burrow,” Harry said quickly. “Mr. Weasley, I meant what I told Mrs. Weasley. I couldn’t have found a better set of surrogate parents. This is your safe shelter. I don’t want it to be used for any Order meetings. I want to know that everyone in the family has a safe place to come, if they need one, before this becomes our headquarters again.” Harry hugged the man he thought of as a father. He then crossed to the desk and started writing out where the house was for Ron, Hermione, and the others waiting back at the Burrow.

Harry looked up at Mr. Weasley. “Please be sure and come here, if you need to. I don’t plan on being here for too long. Although I do have to get a few things taken care of before anyone comes just for a visit. I have to get to my relatives’ house and begin my plans there. Then I also need to decide where I will live. Just please don’t tell Ron and Hermione that I might be here for a day or two. I will come and see them as soon as I can.”

Mr. Weasley hugged Harry close to him. “I couldn’t have asked for a finer son. I will tell them where the house is located, but I won’t allow them to come here just yet. I will tell them that you asked for the privacy of a few days to take care of some business. I know they won’t like it, but it keeps them safe for another day?”

Harry and Mr. Weasley walked to the fireplace and Mr. Weasley Floo’d home with the address secure in his pocket.

When he was gone, Harry turned and looked at the house. He hadn’t wanted to come back here, but he knew that he needed to have a safe place for his family, one that no one would know. Snape may have known the address before, but now he would have to be given directions if he were to pop in.

Harry sighed and went up the stairs to his bedroom that he shared with Ron. He decided to lie down for a bit. He was so tired he didn’t notice the letter sitting on the dresser with his name on it.
Harry slept restlessly for a couple of hours. Silver eyes haunted him, teasing him, dragging him through memories as he tossed and turned.

“Harry, do you just enjoy lurking around in hallways, or are you waiting for someone?” she asked quietly from behind him.

He spun around and stared into the hazel eyes he had come to expect when she was on her rounds. He wanted to tell her about his obsession with Malfoy, knowing that he was up to something. Then again, he didn’t want anyone else to tell him he was imagining things. He didn’t want to see that look from her eyes that everyone else gave him. “Of course I’m waiting for someone. I was hoping you would be coming through here tonight,” he said casually, leaning back against the wall.

“Fire flashed through her eyes. She leaned in close, close enough to almost kiss him before she spoke. “You know the last I checked a certain red-head is still attached to your side. You said you were mine, yet you aren’t showing it. Do you care to explain that one?”

“I have to keep up appearances, you know that. Everyone would wonder why I stopped having a relationship with her for no reason at all. It isn’t like I can go around saying that I am now the personal sex toy of one Nymphadora Tonks, now can I?” Harry was getting agitated. He hated lying to Ginny about where he disappeared to. He hated sneaking around the castle, but he couldn’t get Tonks out of his head. Aside from his steadily growing obsession with Malfoy, the only other thoughts in his head were of the fiery Metamorphmagus who was standing in front of him.

Tonks pulled him in close to her and crushed his lips to hers. “Just don’t forget who your lips belong to. I don’t want to hear about you shagging that useless chit. I don’t want to see you playing with each others’ tonsils. You are mine, Harry.”

Harry’s eyes went wide with the venom that was coming out of her mouth. This was a possessive side he had not seen before in her. “Of course not,” he stuttered, “my body belongs to you.”

She ran her hand down his chest. “Yes, it does, doesn’t it?” She pushed open the door to the Room of Requirement and pulled Harry in after her. She closed the door by pushing Harry up against it. Her lips were bruising as she left a mark on his body.

She broke contact and pushed him towards the bed. She quickly took his shirt off, letting her nails trailing his tanned skin leaving red marks down his chest. Harry moaned softly. She attacked his nipples first, taking one into her mouth and teasing the other with her fingers. She nipped and licked at the nipple until it was hard. She slowly nibbled her way down his body, unfastening his trousers and pulling them off. She spread his legs apart and instead of attacking his cock, she bit into his inner thigh, making Harry cry out. She didn’t end her assault there. She continued to suck and lick and bite until she had left a large hickey at the top of his inner thigh. She rose up and looked at Harry with silver eyes filled with passion and anger and something more, he wasn’t sure what. She was claiming his body to ensure that it would only respond to her touch. She leaned down and left another bite mark on his other thigh. “Mine, Harry, all mine,” she said possessively.

She raked her hands up his chest as she rose and claimed his cock for her own. She took as much of it in as possible, sucking and licking. Harry’s body responded as he thrust in time with her
mouth. She grabbed his balls and began to roll them in her hand, using her nails to tease and torment Harry.

When she felt he had enough, she got up off her knees and climbed onto the bed with Harry. She straddled his waist and lowered herself onto his cock. She ground herself onto him over and over again, watching his expressions as she claimed his body. Harry began to whimper and cry out her name.

“Look at me, Harry. You are mine. Do you understand me?” He opened his eyes and stared into the silvery mist before him. “Look at me and know me, Harry,” she demanded.

Harry cried out as he came. He looked around the darkened room and saw that he was alone in his room at Grimmauld Place. He took a deep breath and sighed, trying to calm himself from his mind-blowing orgasm.

That was the most realistic dream yet. He cast a Cleansing Spell for his trousers. Why now? Why all of a sudden did he have to see her whenever he closed his eyes? He didn’t use to dream about her.

Harry hit the pillow behind his head and kicked the mattress. It just wasn’t fair.

He sat up and looked at his watch. He had only slept for about an hour and a half. He looked over at his dresser and saw the envelope. He knew that no one had been in his room while he was sleeping. He didn’t remember seeing it when he came into the room earlier, but he had been so tired. He walked over to the dresser and opened the letter.

_Potter,_

_I know I’m the last person you want to hear from, but I always keep my oaths. This will just be the first of many clues you will find._

_I explain only this: it was his last request. Only in honor of him, do I even continue. You must go to your relatives. He stressed this multiple times. Stay there until you realize your next step._

_Remember your training and practice. Time is of the essence. I can hold them at bay only so long._

_HBP_

Harry almost tore the letter up in anger. How dare Snape come into his house after what he did? How dare he leave a letter lying around for anyone to find? How dare he even think to lecture me about what has happened?

He was getting ready to go on and tear up the letter and just go back to the Weasleys when he realized that this was what Dumbledore had wanted. He had wanted Harry to go to his relatives. That had been Harry's plan from this morning. He was not going to let his temper get in the way with what he had already planned.

Harry realized then what Snape had been trying to teach him over and over again. As long as his temper got the best of him, he would never defeat Voldemort, let alone Snape. Vengeance would still be his and it would be sweet, but he would not let his anger lead him along the path. He would practice his Occlumency because he knew it was a vital. He would stay with his aunt and uncle to learn to control his temper.

Defeating Snape was not the final goal. He had to keep that in mind. The final battle was for Voldemort. If he could not defeat Snape, there was no point in attempting to find Voldemort.
The biggest question was why did Snape leave the letter? Surely the man was not going to go all over England and leave clues. He would try to get in touch with Harry at some point. How did the man know that Harry was going to go to Grimmauld Place? That was frustrating. It was as if Snape was reading his mind. He had not told anyone except the Weasleys where he was going and that had just been the day before.

Harry folded the letter and shrunk it down to a minute size. He stuffed it into his pocket with his other belongings. He knew there were keys to finding Snape in the letter, and he knew that if he just threw it away he would throw away his chance of finding him and avenging Dumbledore’s death.

Harry sighed. “I guess I really do need to get ready for the Dursleys now. DOBBY, WINKY, KREACHER,” he yelled as he walked down the stairs.

There were three cracks as the elves popped into the living room. “Yes sir, Master Harry sir,” Winky said, hoping for a new task.

“Dobby, I want you to continue to keep an eye on this errant house-elf. Keep Kreacher in line, but do NOT kill him. Kreacher, you will still continue to follow my previous orders. You will not contact anyone from the Malfoys or the Blacks. You will stay here and help keep this house straightened up until I have need of a spy again. Dobby, keep him in line.” Sirius’ mother’s portrait had begun ranting and raving about the filth in the house. “Oh and Dobby, see what you can do to permanently shut up the previous mistress of the house. I’m tired of her.”

Harry turned and looked at Winky, who was looking fearful. She had never seen the determined look in her new master’s eyes and it was scaring her. She cringed back when Harry knelt down next to her and touched her shoulder. “Do not be scared, Winky,” he said softly. “I am most thankful that you have decided to become my house-elf.” Winky let out a sigh and a shy smile as he continued to talk. “I have a special job for you. I want you to take care of this house. I would like for it to be fit for people to live in at any given moment. Can you do that for me, please?”

“Yes, sir, Master Harry, sir. Winky be doing a good job for her new master.”

“Thank you, Winky. Now, the three of you need to know this. This house now has a new secret keeper. The only people who know where the house is located are the Weasleys and Hermione. I will let you know if anyone else is allowed to come before they show up. If someone else shows up, no matter who it is, I want the three of you to Apparate to the Burrow and remain hidden in the attic or someplace safe until I can locate you or one of the Weasleys. They are my extended family and as such, I will trust your fate to them if something were to happen to me. Do you understand this, Kreacher?”

Kreacher mumbled under his breath, but he knew he had to answer to his new owner. “Yes sir,” he forced out.

“Good, as I said, if someone other than the Weasleys or Hermione is to show up, something may have happened to me. I will not let anyone else know the address until I let you know they are coming. This is for everyone’s safety.

“Now that that is out of the way, I will be making a journey to my blood relatives’ house. I’m not sure how long I will be there, but I will return here before I journey anywhere else. This is going to become a safe haven for any of my loved ones who need to be protected.”

“We is understanding, Master Harry, sir,” Dobby replied. “I is looking out for the house for you and is taking care of everything while you are gone.”
“Thank you, Dobby. I appreciate all you do for me. I appreciate all three of you, yes even you Kreacher, when you do as you are told.”

Without a backwards glance, Harry walked out the door to Grimmauld Place and hailed a cab to the train station.

Chapter End Notes

Today's song is from Heart: http://youtu.be/KE5GGMhmo-M
Harry hailed a cab and went to the train station. He had written to his aunt and told her when the Hogwarts train would be in. He didn't bother to mention that the train had actually come in a few days earlier. He figured that a few days wouldn't hurt anything before he began his final visit with the Dursleys.

He walked to the waiting area and sat with his back to the wall in between ticket machines, blending into his surroundings as much as possible. He watched as the different Muggles rushed past, keeping his eyes open for any wizards that might be out of place.

Harry saw the doors to the station open up and in walked his uncle. Harry didn't want to be caught outside with so many Death Eaters about, so he rushed toward his uncle. As usual his uncle didn't know what to say, so he just turned around and ordered Harry to follow him to the car. Neither of the said a word until they were safely on their way back to Privet Drive.

“How long are you staying for, boy?” Uncle Vernon asked gruffly. He remembered the old man had said Harry had to stay, but did not have to stay long.

“I’m not sure yet, Uncle Vernon,” Harry replied calmly.

“I’m not going to put up with any hocus pocus, so you need to get that out of your head right now,” his uncle continued, ready to begin his rant on how unnatural Harry really was.

Harry cut his uncle off. “Don’t worry, Uncle Vernon. I will stay only as long as I need to keep everyone safe for another year. After that, you should never have to see me again. Then again, I could be dead by this time next year.”

This made Vernon look at his nephew closely. “What do you mean, another year and after that you may be dead?”

“The blood protection and wards have to be renewed every year. That is why you have had to put up with me year after year,” he said wearily. He didn’t really want to have this discussion with his uncle now. He knew he would have to do it again when he got home with his aunt.

“What about next year? Are you coming back then as well? What happens if you don’t?”

“I will come back only if I have to. I’m working on something this summer that should take care of the problem. Then you never need to see me again, and we all know that will make you happy.”

“Extremely happy, boy,” Vernon said gruffly. He pulled into the driveway and stopped the car. “So this should be the end of it?”

Harry looked at his uncle, irritated at him for this line of questioning. Instead of losing his temper he decided it would be better to let his uncle realize how deadly the situation really was. “Yes, unless, of course, I die in the process. Then you are on your own. I’m sure Voldemort wouldn’t really care about you if I’m dead. Then again he is a madman and might think that even though I only lived here and you put a roof over my head that you should die anyway. I’ll be dead at that point, so it won’t bother me one way or the other.”
Vernon looked at his nephew in disbelief. “You really do have a madman trying to kill you?” Vernen’s world had been torn apart. It had been mentioned before, but he had never taken anyone seriously until hearing his nephew's stark words. Something big had happened at that place this year, and he wanted to know what it was.

“I am an orphan because of his first attempt on my life, but then you already knew that.” With that, Harry got out of the car and slammed the door. He greeted his aunt at the door and stormed up to his room, slammed the door, and lay down on the bed.

Harry had not slept nearly enough in the past week to deal with his relatives. Why did he have to decide to come? If he couldn’t get more than an hour or two of sleep at any given time, he might as well leave now because he was going to kill them. Honestly! They knew that Voldemort kept trying to kill him. He needed to lie down and get his thoughts together. He needed to start working on his plans.

Harry’s eyes were just starting to close when he heard his uncle bellowing downstairs. He could tell the fight was over him. “Oh well, it is always nice to know how loved you are by your family,” he murmured as he closed his eyes again. The voices began dying down after a few minutes. He knew the fight would resume when he finally went downstairs for dinner. He relaxed as much as possible while waiting to hear a pounding on the door.

“Harry.”

Harry mumbled.

“Are you sleeping, Harry? And out here, where anyone can find you,” she whispered teasingly.

“Go away. I’m tired,” he managed to get out.

“Come on, Harry. It’s time to play,” she replied seductively.

Harry opened his eyes and saw the silvery eyes dancing in front of him.

“Come on, love, I’m in such a good mood. Were you waiting on me?” she asked.

Harry got up and followed Tonks into the Room of Requirement. She pulled him to the couch and sat him down. “I have had a great day. I’m in such a good mood. Shall we keep it that way?”

Harry looked at her in surprise. This was the first time she hadn’t gone straight to the bed. He wondered what was different about her tonight. She really was happy.

“Now, Harry, why were you asleep in the hallway?”

“I was waiting. I just fell asleep.” Harry tried to look away from her. He still wasn’t ready to tell her the truth about trying to follow Malfoy.

“Waiting for me? You know I’m not always up here,” she replied.

Harry turned red. “Well, it has more to do with other people and stuff.” He tried to make it sound unimportant.

“Oh.” She raised her eyebrows.

“Yeah, it’s nothing really. Everyone thinks I’m crazy anyway. I guess this just proves it.”

“Tell me about it, sweetheart. I can help. Maybe I can keep an eye out for you. That is what they
trained me for."

He could tell she was still teasing him. He was surprised she hadn’t gotten possessive over him waiting for someone other than her.

“Well, it wouldn’t have been so bad if Ginny,” he started and was stopped by a low growl from Tonks, “hadn’t yelled at me.” He tried to continue it naturally, but he knew that he might have overstepped his limits. She hated it when he mentioned Ginny. “She thinks I’m obsessed over someone.”

“Well, you are, aren’t you? Obsessed over me?”

“No, it isn’t you. She doesn’t know about you, about us. That is what you wanted, right? To keep this secret…”

“That’s right, she can’t know about this. It doesn’t mean I have to like watching you with that wench,” she said spitefully.

“Apparently I am obsessed with someone else.”

“Should I be jealous, Harry?” Her eyes focused on him intently. What he saw there was scary, even to him. He could see the flames roaring in the silver orbs.

“NO! That is ridiculous. You know I belong to you. My body is yours to do with as you please,” he said quickly.

“I know that, and as long as you remember this we will remain happy,” she said tersely.

“Besides, this is over a boy. You wouldn’t get jealous over a boy would you?” Harry asked Tonks.

“It depends. If he is interested in you, then I most definitely will worry. So, what is his name? I might need to check up on him and see if he is trying to get into my man’s pants,” she almost growled.

“Malfoy,” Harry gulped. He was now pretty sure he shouldn’t have told her.

“My cousin? You are obsessed with him? Why? Don’t you remember what he did to you on the train? I could barely find you in time. Your nose was broken.” Tonks was indignant; irritated that Harry would even lower himself to think of Draco.

“You did save me,” he said quietly, moving closer to her, trying to appease her and calm her down.

“That is beside the point. Why are you obsessed with him?”

”I'm not obsessed with him,” he pouted.

Tonks leaned in and kissed him. "Right, your friends think you are."

“I only think that we should check up on him. He has been acting suspiciously since we first saw him at Diagon Alley. We followed him to Borgin and Burkes. Hermione tried to get into the store and find out what he was buying.” He closed his eyes as he thought about that day. "I still want to know what he was after."

“So you are saying that you followed him into Knockturn Alley? Are you insane?”

"We were careful. He never even knew we were there."
"Dumbledore never knew?" she asked.

Harry shook his head. "Besides Mr. Weasley, you are the only one I have told."

"I'm shocked, Harry, really I am. Then you snuck into the train compartment with Draco on the Express?" She sat back, thinking.

Harry nodded. "Yes, and you rescued me." He reached over and squeezed her hand. "After that I have kept my eye on him. Hermione and Ron think I'm crazy. I think it is strange that he has been blowing off Quidditch."

"You are following him because he is blowing off Quidditch?"

"Yes! You are starting to look at me the way they do. I have been following him. He always comes to the Room of Requirement, but there are always different people hanging around outside. He has been with Hufflepuffs this year! Draco Malfoy with a Hufflepuff? It's not normal! He is up to something."

Tonks laughed. "So you are suspicious of him because he was with some Hufflepuff?"

Harry rolled his eyes. He had hoped that she would be different than Ron and Hermione. "Forget it. You don't get it either. He is up to something and I am going to find out what it is."

“So it has nothing to do with how gorgeous he is?” she questioned, a bit insecurely.

“There is only you, Tonks. I promise. You are the one I love, the one I worship, the one I give myself to totally,” Harry declared.

She smiled and leaned in to kiss him. He closed his eyes and kissed her back. He pulled away when he felt her body change.

He jumped back in shock as he stared into the face of Draco Malfoy, those piercing grey eyes boring into his, the same blond hair totally immaculate. “Come on, Tonks. I love you. I don’t want to see him, I want to see you,” he whispered.

“Then kiss me.” She even sounded like him. He took a deep breath and kissed his enemy. She transformed back into herself after a moment. “I have to run, Harry. I have to get to my post. Tomorrow night, here.” She kissed him again and ran out the door. Harry leaned back and closed his eyes again. What was happening between the two of them?

Harry jumped when his door slammed open. “Harry, get down to the kitchen now. I want to talk to you.”

Harry glared at his aunt and nodded. He watched her back disappear before laying his head back on the pillow for a moment. His body was so tired, he just wanted to rest before he had to deal with his relatives. That was too much to ask though.

He went downstairs to face his aunt and uncle. He took a deep breath preparing for the worst, and walked into the kitchen.

“Yes, Aunt Petunia?” He tried to play it calmly.

“Harry, we need to discuss what is happening here. I understand a bit more than your uncle does,
but I want to know what kind of danger you have put us all in.”

“Aunt Petunia, I haven’t placed you in any more danger. If nothing else, you have been living a very safe existence. Voldemort cannot find his way here because of all of the wards and the protections.”

His aunt and uncle looked at him. “Why would he come here, boy?” his uncle asked.

“He has been trying to kill me since I was a year old, Uncle Vernon. He would do whatever he possibly could to have the opportunity to kill me. I just won’t die.” Harry replied weakly.

“So what is this you are planning? You mentioned that you might not come back next year. If you are all that is keeping that madman from attacking my family, then I will not let you leave,” his uncle stated quite clearly.

“Well, Uncle Vernon, me never leaving would pose a great problem. I have no intention of staying any longer than I have to.”

“Not in this house…”

Harry cut his uncle off. “Yes, in this house! I will take the family into consideration and I will do my best to make sure that no one sees my freakishness, but I will be performing magic. I know you really don’t want me here, and I want to make sure that I can leave and never come back with a clear conscience.

“If I have to perform magic every single bloody day of the week, then I will. I know you don’t like me. You don’t want me in this house. I am a bloody burden on you, even though I never asked to come here. I am doing my bloody best effort to make sure that you never have to see me again, but I will make sure you are still safe. For some reason, even though you never loved me and you never cared for me, I do not want your deaths on my head as well as all the others”

His uncle sat down in shock. He had never seen Harry truly express his anger before. The fact that Harry could calmly sit there and say he didn’t give a damn about his family, but was still going to protect them, struck home with his uncle.

“I don’t like this. I don’t want magic in my house.” Vernon took a deep breath. "Do what you have to do."

Harry looked at his uncle, stunned. He couldn’t believe that his uncle had just calmly told him to perform magic. “I promise I’m not going to do more than I have to. Now, if you don’t mind, I would like to go lie back down. I haven’t slept well in the past week.”

Harry had got up to leave the room when his aunt spoke to him. “Oh, Harry, one of your professors came by earlier in the week. He said to expect you later this week and that he needed to leave some assignments for you to look over.”

Harry stopped and stared incredulously at his aunt. “Which professor?” he asked suspiciously.

“The evil boy that was friends with your mother. He said he was leaving the notes for you in Dudley's second bedroom. Then he did something strange. He went into the cupboard and did something in there.”

“Was he alone?” Harry asked, his eyes wide at the thought of Snape in his house.

“No, he had a blond boy with him. His nose was wrinkled as he looked around my house, as if it were not clean. He followed that man through the house.”
“Bloody hell, how long ago?” Harry wondered what Snape and Draco were up to. He was surprised that the wards had let them both through.

“It was earlier in the week, maybe two or three days ago.”

“The day of the funeral,” he mumbled to himself. “Damn that man!” Harry stormed to the cupboard under the stairs and pulled out his wand. He opened the door and looked inside. His cot was still in there, along with the little figures he used to play with when he was locked in. Sitting on the pillow were two letters addressed to him.

Harry sat down on the cot. He was cursing himself. He knew he needed to work on getting the house protected. If Draco Malfoy could enter the house, then he knew that the wards were not nearly as strong as they used to be. Harry grabbed the two letters and walked out of the cupboard. He didn’t look at his aunt or uncle as he walked back upstairs. He knew they were beginning to get worried, but he didn’t have time for them. He needed to be alone before he could read either letter. He had no idea what they said, but he knew it had to be important.

Chapter End Notes

Song of the chapter is Give In by The Bravery: http://youtu.be/IQ3pqdmjK3A
Harry pulled out his wand as soon as he got into his room. He placed a heavy locking charm on the door as well as a silencing spell. His aunt and uncle might complain, but he was at least trying to protect them from the majority of the magic he was about to perform. Harry whispered a couple of spells over the envelopes to make sure they didn’t hold any dark magic that could threaten his family.

He sat down on his bed and picked up the letters. He decided he wanted to see what Snape had to say first. That one was the most pressing of the two.

Potter,

I do hope you are double-checking for evil intent, although being a Gryffindor you are surely rushing in headfirst as usual. Obviously this letter was not a trap, but who is to say that another wouldn’t have had ill intent?

You may still believe in my guilt, but I am honor-bound to continue your education, as I promised. I cannot tell you anything. You must decipher this on your own, so your success or failure relies entirely upon you. I have enlisted the aid of one who will guide you. This person will be in contact with you.

I feel I must remind you that this is a highly dangerous situation for myself and others. None know my true allegiance, but if you questions you will find the answers to all the questions you have.

One last word of advice: The best-kept secrets are found at Azkaban.

HBP

“Azkaban? What is he going on about?” Instead of having questions answered, Harry found he had more questions. He didn’t know why he felt he could trust the letter. But he thought that if Snape had actually been in the house with the Dursleys and not killed them, then he was pretty safe. Granted, even a wizard who was on the side of the light would be willing to kill the Dursleys after any small amount of time with them.

His biggest question was: why did Snape want him to know about secrets in Azkaban? What secrets did those walls hide? Why did they concern him?

He knew he needed to work on his occlumency as well as legilimency. He might as well start practicing tonight at dinner with the Dursleys. Harry did not like the thought of trying to slip into the minds of his family, but he felt a need a urgency. He needed to try and keep up his walls so no one could slip into his. It would be so much easier if Voldemort were trying to get into his head. If he was not doing it right, then he would know he needed more work. The Aurors at Azkaban might try and find out what he was actually doing there so he really need to practice.

Harry sighed. Tomorrow he would go to the prison. Tomorrow he would try and find out what it was that Snape wanted him to learn. Thank the gods the dementors had left Azkaban.

Harry looked down at the other letter, still unopened on the bed. He had no idea why Malfoy would have written him a letter. There was no other person it could be, so why would he do that? It
was so unexpected.

_Potter,_

Apparently because I could not fulfill my duty, I must aid you in finding those you seek. I know that you will do exactly the opposite of whatever I say. I know you could not have witnessed all that happened the other night. Maybe I will be able to explain it to you one day, but now is not the time.

Bloody hell, this would be so much easier if you had not gotten my father thrown into prison. He would be able to tell me what I need to do. Unfortunately, I must now rely upon someone not trustworthy. Not even my father could save me now.

Expect to hear from me. Keep your mind open to all possibilities and for Merlin’s sake, get more sleep!

_Malfoy_

That boy was off his rocker! Harry crumpled the letter up into a wad at first, but then thought better of it. He put the two letters with the first one that Snape had given him. What was Malfoy trying to do? What was going through his head? What the hell was Snape thinking, assigning Malfoy to the task of helping? “How the hell will any of this help me? I don’t trust either of them,” he muttered to himself. The questions kept building.

He heard a voice in the back of his head replying, “Maybe that is why you will learn. It is so much easier to learn from your enemies than your friends. With your enemies you will keep an eye on them. That old saying holds true, you keep your friends close and your enemies even closer.”

It made no sense. Well, except for getting more sleep, but how did Malfoy know that he needed it? The mysterious voice did have a point, though. He learned more from watching Draco and Snape than from all the joking around he did with Ron to get out of learning.

Harry let the wards down around his room and went back downstairs. He had to talk to his aunt about Snape’s visit. He wanted every detail.

“Aunt Petunia,” Harry asked softly when he saw that she was sitting down drinking a cup of tea. He noticed that his uncle and cousin were out of the house.

“What is it, Harry?” Petunia sounded very tired and old at that moment. Harry took a long look at her. He suddenly realized that this couldn’t be easy on her. If it weren’t for the fact that Lily was her sister, her family wouldn’t be in danger. Harry suddenly saw the burden his aunt had had to carry all these years. She had to have known that taking Harry in would bring danger to them.

He sat down across from her, suddenly seeing his aunt in a new light. He might not have liked how she raised him, but she was an amazingly strong woman who had borne the worries of the family for 16 years. “Aunt Petunia, I was wondering if you could tell me what happened when my professor stopped by. I need to know. He was supposed to have something else for me.” Harry was amazed at how the lie slipped past his lips.

“He was only here for a few moments, like I said earlier,” she replied. “He came in, opened the cupboard, went in, and came out. The boy followed him in there. They were here for maybe five minutes. They didn’t talk.”

Harry looked his aunt in the eye as she was telling him this. It was amazing how easy it was to slip into her mind. Granted, she wouldn’t think that anyone would try this.
Harry heard the doorbell ring. His aunt walked to the door and opened it. She started to tell Snape to go away, that she knew who he was. He heard Uncle Vernon stuttering from behind her.

Snape pushed past her, telling her he had an important matter to leave for Potter. Harry could feel his aunt’s shock as Snape walked straight to the cupboard and opened it with an *Alohomora*. Draco pushed in after him, muttering.

“He lived here? What happened to the mansion I heard he grew up in?”

“Hush, Draco.”

“He slept in here? Can I curse them now?”

“Draco, shut up!”

His aunt could hear the bickering going back and forth. She was becoming more and more afraid as the blond boy mentioned harming the family. She had done everything she was supposed to. She had kept the boy alive. She made sure that he went to that school. It was their duty to take over now.

*She watched the professor stalk back out of the cupboard. He closed the door and muttered a spell over it. “I’m sorry, madam, but only Potter can open that door. Make sure that no one attempts to disturb it. It will not be pleasant. I’m sure he will be back shortly.” With that, Snape walked out the door.*

Harry slipped out of his aunt’s mind as quietly as he had slipped in. She had a slightly dazed look on her face. “Here, Aunt Petunia, let me pour you some more tea. Would you like some more sugar?” Harry did his best to take care of his aunt so she wouldn’t have any side effects from him entering her mind. She hadn’t been blocking him, so she shouldn’t feel too tired.

“Thank you, Harry,” she said quietly. “Your mother would be so proud of you now.”

Harry looked up at his aunt. He had never received praise from her before.

She looked over at him. She could see the shock on his face. “I did my best, Harry. I did. I’m sorry I couldn’t be better.”

Harry got up and walked to his aunt. He then did something he had never done before. He hugged her. She halfway hugged him back, but after years of not touching, it was still very awkward. “I understand, Aunt Petunia.”

"I know that you have a lot going on right now. I don't want to know all the details. Please try and remain safe and keep the danger away from home. It is hard enough trying to keep your world away from ours," she said wearily.

“I don’t plan on letting the danger come in,” Harry replied. “If you don’t mind, I’m going to go to bed now. I haven’t slept in a week. I plan on being up early to start taking care of you. You won’t have to worry about protection anymore. That is now in my department,” he promised his aunt as he walked out of the kitchen.

He locked his bedroom door as soon as he got back upstairs. Hopefully he would have more luck tonight sleeping than he had the previous night. He lay down on the bed, thinking about what he had just learned from Aunt Petunia. He drifted off forget to close his mind.

*Harry got to the Room of Requirement early that night. He couldn’t wait. This was the first time*
that Tonks had actually set up a meeting time for them. He sat on the couch and then paced around the room. Finally, the door opened and she walked in.

He went over and greeted her with a kiss.

“Miss me, Harry?”

“Always,” he answered to her lips.

“Did you have trouble getting here? Is the Weasley girl waiting for you?” Tonks asked with a gleam in her eyes.

“I had trouble slipping out, but they all think I’m off obsessing again. I guess that is going to come in handy,” Harry replied.

“Oh good! Then we have all night, just as I planned.” Tonks pulled Harry over to the bed. She helped him get his clothes off before she pushed him onto the bed.

“Yes, all night. You aren’t going to run away tonight, are you?” Harry hoped that it had not come out insecure.

“No, Harry. I won’t run away tonight. Tonight, though, we are going to do a little experimentation. Some things I have wanted to try before. Are you ready? Will you do what I want tonight, Harry?” she asked.

“What ever you want to do, I’m willing to try.”

“I was hoping you would say that. I got the idea last night,” she said as she began to kiss his neck. “I want to fuck you.”

“Tonks, I have no problem with that,” Harry said, wondering where she was going with this. He had stopped trying to stop her when it came to having sex.

“No, Harry, I want to do a bit of role-playing. Will you let me role-play?”

Harry looked at her questioningly. “I suppose so.”

“Oh goody,” she said seductively. She began to kiss him again, slowly morphing into the exact image of her cousin.

Harry yelled out when he opened his eyes and looked down at the blond head teasing his nipple.

“Harry, you said you would,” she said, sounding just like Malfoy.

“I’m sorry, it is so hard. You sound just like him too.” Harry was starting to get nervous.

“Please, Harry. Please let me fuck you like this.” She leaned down and bit his nipple and ran her perfect manicured nails down his chest towards his cock. He felt her hands wrap around him. “I have always wanted to have sex like this.”

“I suppose so.” Harry whimpered as his cock began to respond to the talented fingers. He thought he should question this more, but he was quickly losing all blood to his brain.

“Oh, Harry, I love you for this,” she whispered. “One more thing, love. Would you call me Draco tonight? Please. I want this to be a complete role-play. I don’t want you to call me Tonks when I look like someone else.”
Harry looked into the eyes of the girl he loved. The silvery mists were there, as they always were when they made love. “Anything you want, Ton…Draco. Tonight, as always, I’m yours to do with as you please.”

Draco smirked at him. “Anything I please? Oh how I have longed to hear those words from you.”

Harry closed his eyes as Draco’s mouth covered his cock. He moaned almost immediately as the skilled tongue began to lick and taste him. Harry put his hands into Draco’s hair and moaned his name. “Oh, Draco.”

Draco looked up at Harry. “Do you know how long I have waited to hear you moan my name? Forever, it seems.”

Harry was lost to the sensations. It was so different. Tonight it was not as rough, but it still wasn’t tame. Draco’s lips teased him while his fingers started to find their way into Harry’s arse. Harry stiffened up when he felt the first one.

“Relax, Harry. You promised me, remember. You said I could fuck you.”

“I’m sorry. I was just shocked.”

Draco laughed seductively. He kissed Harry’s knee at that point. Harry then felt the finger slip back into him, this time covered in a cool gel. Harry tried to relax. He moaned as Draco slipped another finger in, stretching Harry, preparing him.

Slowly Draco rose up. His lips captured Harry’s. “Are you ready, love? I want to be in you so badly now.”

Harry looked into the eyes he had learned to trust. “I love you.”

Draco possessively claimed Harry’s lips as he entered Harry’s body. He pushed all the way in and stopped, letting Harry adjust to the full length of him. Slowly he began to pull out each agonizing inch increasing the sensations for Harry as he did. He pushed back in aiming for Harry’s prostrate. The moan from Harry showed that he found it quickly.

Harry moaned as Draco began to move in him. The sensations his lover created were pushing him quickly toward release. He wrapped his legs around Draco’s torso, trying to get closer to him. As soon as Draco found that special spot, Harry began to whimper louder.

He leaned down and bit Harry’s lower lip, tugging on it as Harry moaned again. “Let me hear you, Harry. Don’t keep it in,” Draco demanded.

Harry began to cry out Draco’s name. Draco pushed into him harder and harder, bringing them both to the edge. Harry felt himself going over the edge as soon as Draco grabbed his cock and began to massage the length. Harry didn’t last much longer as he came all over his and Draco’s chest. Draco pushed into him a few more times before yelling his name. He collapsed onto Harry.

Harry wrapped his arms around Draco and kissed his head. Draco looked up at him and Harry drew him into a sweet, teasing kiss of completion. “I love you, Draco.”

“I love you, Harry,” he whispered. They wrapped their arms around each other and fell asleep.

Harry awoke to a mouth teasing him, licking his chest and neck. “Mmmm, more?”

“No, we need to get you back to your dorm before you are missed.”
“They know I’m going to be out late,” Harry complained. He didn’t want to have to get up.

He pulled Draco up and kissed him again. “I love you. I don’t want this night to end.”

“Oh but it must end, love,” Draco replied. “You have to get back to the Weaselette, remember?”

“Why do you have to bring her up when we are together? You know it is you I want.” Harry was getting frustrated at always having Ginny thrown into his face. He couldn’t understand the jealousy that surrounded his ‘girlfriend.’ “I promise that you are the only one. My body is only yours. You destroy me. You build me up. No one could do to me what you do.”

“Thank you, Harry.” Draco kissed him again. “I don’t know why I’m so insecure. I guess I just don’t think anyone can love me.”

“You are an amazing person! Anyone would love you. I know I do,” Harry declared before kissing him again.

Draco hugged Harry again and kissed him softly. “Thank you for letting my fantasies be fulfilled with you, Harry. With you, I feel alive and whole.”

Harry smiled up at his love still in a daze not paying attention to the last sentence. “Anything you want, it is yours.”

“Do you really mean that?”

“Yes. Anything I have to give is yours.”

“Then I might have to take you up on that sometime.” He kissed Harry one last time before he put his clothes back on and walked out the door.

Harry closed his eyes. He couldn’t believe that he had just let Tonks have sex with him looking like Draco. He found that he didn’t really mind. At least he knew that with Tonks, he would never be bored in bed. He would even be willing to try fantasizing she was a man again.

Harry woke up from this dream confused. He remembered it happening. He remembered that night well. Tonks was sweeter than she had ever been before. It was that night he knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that he loved her.

He looked at his watch. It was only 12:30. There were so many more hours to waste before he could get up and get on with his day. It looked as if it were going to be another sleepless night. Harry sighed, but didn’t get out of bed. He stared at the ceiling, remembering again. The pain and anguish of the past week settled in to his heart. It was quickly followed by the pain of realizing that Tonks was in love with Lupin. He still didn’t understand it and thought he never would.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter is brought to you by the sounds of Animotion with Obsession:
http://youtu.be/iAn1FmW7ypE
He lay in bed cursing himself. He wanted to move on, but the wounds were still so fresh. He wanted to forget about her, but every time he closed his eyes she was there.

He was tired of these dreams that haunted him. He seemed to be reliving every night he had spent with Tonks. This had been his last one. The next night, Dumbledore died. After that, Tonks confessed her love to Lupin.

That night had been so much. It had held so much passion and tenderness. Harry had given his all that night. He hadn’t held back anything. She left him after declaring her love.

Harry rolled over and tried to close his eyes. Behind closed lids he could see those piercing grey eyes. They never let him rest. “Go away,” he muttered.

“Never, Harry. You are mine.” The voice taunted him as he tried to block out everything.

Harry felt tears travel down his face as he whispered, “Why are you still torturing me? I left her for you. I did everything you wanted. I gave myself to you. What more do you want?”

“Come save me, Harry.” Harry knew he had heard that in his mind.

“Tonks?” Harry whispered, almost hopeful.

“Save me, Harry.” The voice disappeared and Harry fell into a restless sleep, waking as the first rays of sunlight entered his room.

Harry got up and got ready for the day. Out of habit he decided to make breakfast for everyone. The years of it being beaten into him were coming back. Just as he finished, his aunt came downstairs.

“Good morning,” he said calmly as he added bacon to his plate and sat down. His aunt just looked on in shock. Harry had never willingly made breakfast before. “Aunt Petunia,” Harry started, “I just wanted to let you know I am going to be gone for most of the day.” Harry looked at his aunt, expecting her to begin yelling.

She looked at him calmly. “Are you working on the protection you mentioned yesterday?”

“Yes, I am.”

“Then try to make sure you are back at a decent hour,” his aunt replied as she sat down at the table and began to eat as well.

“I will be if all goes well.” Harry got up, put his dishes in the sink and walked out of the house. He walked to a deserted corner of the park. He decided that law or no law, he would Apparate to the prison. Besides, it wasn’t as if he was going to go back to Hogwarts, at least not until Voldemort was dead.

Hidden beneath the covering of the trees, Harry began to concentrate on his destination, remembering everything they had taught him in class. He closed his eyes, and when he opened
them again he was staring at the place that even the bravest wizards seemed to fear, Azkaban. He had had to Apparate to the shores on the border of the sea surrounding the prison. He knew he couldn't go further, and had to look around. He found a ferry house with a guard. All he had to do was submit his wand to board the ferry.

Harry shivered. The dementors may have been gone but the echo of their memory was still present. Harry took a deep breath and walked forward. He still didn’t know what he was doing, but it just felt right to be there. Something was waiting for him, but what?

~*~

An Auror met Harry at the entrance. He looked Harry over, pausing when he caught a glimpse of the scar on his forehead. “What are you doing here?”

“Research.” It was the first thing that popped into Harry’s head.

“Research? What kind of research?” the Auror demanded.

“I want to know how the prisoners are being treated. I want to speak with a few, if that is okay,” Harry said acting as if he owned the place, although he was trembling inside. Would he be able to pull off this act? he questioned himself.

“Oh do you now? And why do you think you are going to be admitted?” Apparently this was going to be harder for Harry than he originally thought.

Harry decided he might need to start mentioning people in power to see if this would have any sway. “I was considering a proposition from the Minister,” Harry replied. The Auror looked a bit pale when Harry said that. “And what do you think the Minister may do for you?”

“What is your name?” Harry asked sardonically, as if he couldn’t care less about the person. He hoped the Auror could not tell that he was shaking. He had stood up to Scrimgeour before, but he hadn’t been trying to break into a prison at that time.

“Gregor Ballis, Mr. Potter,” he stated. He had heard about the boy; but from what he was seeing, this was not the mild even-tempered boy.

“Well, Mr. Ballis, this isn’t a matter of what the Minister could give me. I believe he wants something from me. I mentioned a few things that needed to be taken care of, and I’m here to make sure they are being done. Do I need to contact Minister Scrimgeour to get in, or are you going to be a nice little Auror and let me in?” Harry dusted some lint off of the Auror’s shoulder at this statement and gave him a look of disgust.

Harry waited patiently for the man’s reply. He couldn’t believe he had just done that. All those years of watching Draco may have finally paid off.

Gregor decided then that if Harry Potter wanted to get into Azkaban, he would let him in. “So, um…who are you wanting to question? I need to get them out of their cells and into an interview room for you.”

Harry smiled, although inwardly he was cringing. He had not thought of any prisoners that he could see. He was grasping for straws when it hit him. “Stan Shunpike.”

“And the other one? I assume that you wish to speak with more than one prisoner. Right, Mr.
“Potter?” he asked.

“Yes, of course.” Harry almost panicked. Who else was here that he knew? Draco’s face floated through his mind. “Lucius Malfoy.”

The Auror looked at him as if he were crazy. “Malfoy?”

“Yes, Lucius Malfoy.” Harry said stubbornly. If he were going to go follow through with his shaky plan, he had to make sure he saw the man. “I was there the night he was captured. I want to know how he has been treated during his stay here.”

“So let me get this straight. You want to question two known Death Eaters?”

“Yes. Technically only one of them is a known Death Eater. I can confirm that one. The other was wrongfully imprisoned. Who else would you have me question? A murderer, a thief, or maybe someone that is in for assault? All of those fit Mr. Malfoy perfectly. I have a personal interest in Stan Shunpike, and I will have him removed from this prison post-haste and his record cleared. He is an innocent man.” Harry stated vehemently.

Harry waited patiently while the guard called inside. He spoke quickly to another Auror on duty and told him what was needed. Within a few moments, two Aurors came out. They looked at Harry and as usual, their gazes strayed to his scar. Harry made sure that he brushed the hair from his head, accentuating where the scar was. He decided it wouldn’t hurt to flaunt the hated scar. He was then led to a room where he could question the two prisoners.

Harry sat down at the table and waited patiently for the Aurors to bring Lucius or Stan into the room. He heard a commotion outside the door, but looked up when two Aurors walk in followed by Lucius Malfoy, strolling to the table, looking as if he did not have a care in the world. Behind him were two more guards. Lucius looked to where Harry was sitting and sneered at him. One of the Aurors looked as if he were about to hit Lucius when he spoke up quickly. “I assured you, gentlemen, that I will cooperate to my fullest with Mr. Potter. I will play nicely with him.”

The Aurors were stunned. They had heard from those that knew him, that Harry Potter was a well-liked individual who was extremely shy. They were faced with someone who looked as if he ruled the world and was not above doing what he needed to get something done. They would have expected this attitude out of Malfoy, but not their hero. They backed out of the room quickly, not sure if it was the right thing to do or not. “Mr. Potter, just call if you need any assistance. We will be right outside this door.”

“I would prefer that no one listen to my conversation, Mr. er…what was your name again, sir?” Harry asked as politely as he could, while trying to show he did not give a damn about the person he was speaking to.

“Anton Boyd, sir,” he replied.

“Mr. Boyd, I will summon you if I need you. I would like to have a silencing charm placed around the room. Since I am investigating how the prisoners are being treated, I do not want what Mr. Malfoy says to me used against him in any way.”

Mr. Boyd looked a bit nervous. “I’m not sure that I can do that, sir.”
“Please find a way to make it happen, Mr. Boyd. I have many things to do today. I am not looking forward to spending any more time here than necessary. In fact, depending on how quickly I get my questions answered, I will floo immediately to the Ministry to discuss my concerns with the Minister. I wonder if he would approve of you not cooperating with me.” Harry replied casually, keeping eye contact with the guard.

“Yes, sir. I shall put a silencing charm on the room as well. Just send me a message if you need anything. I will make sure you are not disturbed.”

“Thank you, Mr. Boyd. It has been a pleasure,” Harry drawled.

Anton backed out of the room and closed the door firmly behind him. Harry waited until he felt the silencing charm settle on the room before he looked at Malfoy again.

“Mr. Potter, I’m quite impressed. You have matured since the last time I saw you. I never knew you had it in you to order people around so casually,” Lucius drawled.

“It is only years of watching your son do the same thing to everyone around him. I’m sure that Draco will be happy to know that I was able to see his father by channeling him.”

“So, to what do I owe this unexpected visit, Mr. Potter? Did you come to harass me as the others have?” Lucius asked.

“Others? Who else has been to see you, other than myself?”

“It doesn’t matter. Why are you here, Mr. Potter? I don’t believe what the guards told me, and judging from the way you were reacting with them, there is something going on. I want to know what it is. Just be honest.”

“Oh, but I am here to check on the conditions of the inmates. They wouldn’t let me just waltz in to see everyone, so you became one of the ones that I will be questioning today. How are you treated, Mr. Malfoy?” Harry asked, trying to remain in charge of the situation.

“It is a more pleasurable experience with the Dementors gone. What else do you want to know? I’m cooperating to my fullest ability with you. This means you had better ask all the questions you want. I am not going back to my cell until I am satisfied all of your questions are answered,” Lucius replied to him.

“I wouldn’t be too sure of that,” Harry mumbled thinking of secrets. "I want to make sure they are treating you as well as you need to be treated.”

“But, Mr. Potter, somehow I believe you came for more than you say,” he responded with a superior air. “Why would you bother with those already in prison? We all know you want ‘the bad guys’ locked up. So, what on earth could possess you to come to Azkaban and face the very same people you imprisoned a year ago?”

Harry was trying to maintain his control in the banter that the two of them had created. Neither stating what was really on their mind, but trying to find out the truth concealed in the words. “For your information, the Minister would like for me to work for him. I set a few requirements that must be met before I ever even begin to agree to work for him. Azkaban is one of the requirements that needed to be looked into.

“What do you know of the men that were arrested as suspected Death Eaters?” he asked, getting to the point.
“Why would I know them?”

“Come now, Lucius, let’s not play games. What do you know about Stan Shunpike?”

“I do not know that person, Harry,” Lucius replied.

“I want the truth,” Harry stated as his temper was beginning to show through his façade.

“Why would I lie about this? I don’t know Mr. Shunpike. Should I? He isn’t a Pure-blood, is he?”

Harry sat back. “A new approach then; how many new Death Eaters are there?”

“Mr. Potter, let me remind you that I have been here for one year. There has been no attempt to contact me or release me. What has happened in a year, I cannot say. You should talk to your precious Ministry or that old fool Dumbledore,” he answered, noting the color change on Harry’s face as he said the last statement.

“I would love to talk to Dumbledore, but thanks to your son, a plan was set into motion and Dumbledore is now dead,” Harry stated through clenched teeth. He couldn’t keep up the cold exterior, not when it came to Dumbledore’s death.

“Dumbledore is dead?” Lucius was shocked at this statement. His complexion became even more pale than it already was.

“Yes, he is dead.” Harry was trying to maintain control, but his magic began to seep out. His frustration at Lucius, at Draco, at Dumbledore being gone was getting to be too much. The lights began to flicker.

At that moment Anton poked his head through the door, “Mr. Potter, is everything alright in here? I noticed a magical surge and I thought I should investigate.”

Harry reined in most of his magic when the door opened. “Yes, sir. I’m sorry. I’m just getting a bit upset at the deplorable conditions I’m hearing about. I fear I may need to do further inspections.”

The guard gulped at the sight of the distressed young man. “Yes, sir. I will arrange for you to look at Mr. Malfloy’s cell as well. Please do not believe everything he says. He doesn’t get punished like the others. He cooperates.”

“Punished?” Harry yelled. “Lucius, you left that out. Mr. Boyd, I want to see everything after my interview and I want Mr. Malfloy to accompany me. In fact, so he doesn’t feel intimidated, I am putting up a silencing charm in addition to yours. I fear he may not speak unless he knows this is purely confidential.”

Harry stood up and walked over to the door that Anton was at. “In fact, why don’t you just see about getting us through the rest of the prison. I want to see it all.” Harry slammed the door in the guard’s face and muttered a locking charm as well as a silencing charm.

Lucius watched Potter with a gleam in his eyes. “You do realize that you lie well for you age. I believed you.”

“Well, thanks to him interfering, I now have to know about these punishments and why you felt the need to make sure I knew you were cooperating. I felt it was strange that you kept saying it.” Harry looked down and ran his hands through his hair, leaning against the door. It was becoming too much. He was only here to find Snape.
“Mr. Potter, I’m sure you don’t want to know what they do to suspected Death Eaters here. It isn’t a pretty sight.”

“Well, apparently I now have to correct these ‘deplorable conditions’ instead of just leaving as soon as I finish in here,” he said. He walked back to the table and sat down, leaning his head on his hands.

“We can discuss the conditions, but I want to know your real reason for coming,” Lucius said quietly, looking at the boy in a new light.

“Excuse me?”

“You heard me, Mr. Potter. I will cooperate with you 100% if you can answer my questions as well. I know you aren’t here to check on the condition of the prison. You took too much joy in making sure that as many Death Eaters as possible were placed here.”

Harry stared at Lucius whose cold steel eyes gazing into the depths of Harry's soul. “I’m on a mission to find someone. I was told to come here.”

“Who are you looking for?” he asked quietly, noticing that Harry was ready to break from the strain he had been hiding since he arrived.

“Why should I trust you with that information?” Harry retorted.

“Who am I going to tell, Mr. Potter? I have not heard from any of my associates in the past year. I don’t trust the Ministry officials. You never know whom they are working for. You, on the other hand, I know that your overall goal is to defeat the Dark Lord. I know where you stand,” Lucius said calmly, and continued as if talking to a wounded animal. “Your secret would be safe with me, especially since you are already using me in your venture. I am willing to cooperate with those I trust.”

Harry was stunned by Lucius’ reaction. Snape could not have meant Lucius Malfoy, could he? Harry didn’t know what to think. He ran his hands through his hair while the other man sat and watched the emotions clouding Harry’s face. “Have you seen your son recently?” he asked unexpectedly.

“No, I haven’t seen him since the previous summer. He was allowed to visit me one time,” Lucius replied wondering where this line of questioning was going.

“What about Professor Snape?”

“I just told you I haven’t seen any of my associates since the night at the Ministry.”

“Damn. Who have you seen, most recently?”

“I don’t know why you are so worried about my son and Severus Snape. It is to my understanding that you hate each other. I would like to know more about how my son caused Dumbledore’s death, if you don’t mind,” he replied.

“I will tell you about your son’s involvement after I find out about your visitors,” Harry stated, willing to give something in return for the information.

“Since your heart is set on who has visited me, it was one of those Weasleys. He has an earring. I can’t tell them all apart, there are so many of them,” he said distastefully.
“Bill? When was he here?” he asked anxiously.

“It was early in the morning five days ago.”

“That can’t be!” Harry exclaimed, standing up. “Are you sure it was Bill?”

“Long red hair, freckles, and an earring dangling from his ear.”

Harry stared at the man as he sat back down. The shock was apparent on his face. Lucius waited for the reason behind Harry’s actions.

“Bill was in the infirmary five days ago being treated for a werewolf bite. It could not have been him that you saw,” Harry said quietly, looking into Lucius’ eyes.

“I don’t know about that, Mr. Potter, but I know I spoke with a Weasley who fits that description five days ago, early in the morning.”

“What did he say?” Harry asked, his mind going in different directions, his body ready to break down after this new development.

“Just to be ready for a surprise visitor who will want to talk to me about secrets,” he replied, watching Harry’s face to see what it may give away.

Harry’s face paled, “But what secrets?”

“I guess we shall see. Am I to assume that you are searching for secrets, Mr. Potter?” he asked quietly.

“Yes, but Bill doesn’t know that. Only two people know and it couldn’t be…wouldn’t…” Harry was so confused.

“Maybe they told Bill and had him to come see me,” Lucius supplied helpfully.

“They haven’t told the Weasleys. I can guarantee this.”

“Well, who was it then? You know this room is safe. You put up your own charms to make sure of it. How can you be sure that whoever has you looking for secrets didn’t involve Mr. Weasley?”

“I told you already. Bill was in the infirmary that morning. He would not have been told about the secrets because I only found out about them yesterday. He is still at Hogwarts recovering from the battle.” Harry said running his hand through his hair. He hated that his frustration was getting the better of him.

Lucius looked at him closely. Harry was talking more and more quietly. He could tell the boy had been through a bit in the last few days. He began to see beyond the scar and see the boy underneath, a boy the same age as his own son.

“Harry, who is it that told you to look for secrets? I will help you the best I can,” he said softly.

“Snape and Draco are hiding because of Dumbledore’s murder.”

“Draco?”

“Yes. Draco was supposed to kill Dumbledore, but he couldn’t do it. I watched the entire scene unfold. Snape came up and saw Dumbledore there…and he didn’t hesitate…he just killed him. Right then. He didn’t care. He just killed him. Dumbledore’s body went over the side of the tower.
Snape grabbed Draco and ran out,” Harry said, tears running down his face. He hadn’t really cried, yet telling this man who was his enemy made the tears fall.

Lucius sat back, shocked. “Why would Draco try to kill Dumbledore?”

“It was his assignment,” Harry spat out. “He is following in your footsteps. Dumbledore tried to talk to him, and it was working until the other Death Eaters showed up. They were telling him to go on and finish the job. Then Snape came in and took over and killed him.”

“He wasn’t supposed to join, not yet. He was supposed to finish his schooling before they…” he said more to himself than to Harry.

“I’m sorry to say, Mr. Malfoy, I think they decided to recruit him early because you are in here,” Harry said with disgust. “All because you had to follow a Dark Lord, your son is now trapped with him.”

Harry didn’t know why this upset Lucius so much. He watched the older man's reaction.

Lucius placed his head in his hands. He didn’t want his son involved until he had to be. “I told him it wasn’t time yet. I told him he needed to wait.”

“Well, apparently he wasn’t able to wait any longer. His father was in prison. You know what? That is just as bad as if he were dead. Do you know how hard it is to do what you are supposed to do when you don’t have a father?” Harry couldn’t explain why he was so mad. He didn’t know why he was showing his emotions to Lucius Malfoy. He just knew he couldn’t keep it in any longer. The past week had been hard on him.

Lucius sat back, his eyes opened wider as he came to the realization that Harry was the same age as Draco. He had been participating in events to kill this boy since he was an infant. A boy, just sixteen, or was he seventeen yet? It didn’t matter. He realized then that if his “enemy” was a boy Draco’s age, then Draco would be considered old enough to join the war effort. Everything he had done to keep him out of it had failed. His son was now on the run because he, Lucius, had had to join the forces of the Dark Lord.

In that moment he did something he never thought he would do. He stood up and crossed to Harry Potter and pulled him into a hug. He would never be able to explain why he did that, but he knew it was the right thing to do. He suddenly realized that this could very well have been Draco sitting here facing an enemy. Draco could have been the boy that was orphaned too soon. He felt his mask fall from his face as he held the shaking boy in his arms.

After just a moment, Harry looked up and saw Lucius’ face. The pain that he felt was being reflected back at him. He knew something had happened, but what, he wasn’t sure. He was afraid to break the silence.

Lucius was afraid to break the tentative truce they had unwittingly called. He got back up and sat in his chair again. “Harry, I’m sorry. I can’t even begin to tell you why, but I am sorry.”

Harry just looked at him and nodded. He couldn’t form any words just yet.

“Now, back to the subject at hand; you say that Bill Weasley was in the infirmary, right?”

Harry nodded as Lucius continued, “That means that whoever came to see me could not be him, right? Who else could it have been? Unless…no, he wouldn’t have done that. He couldn’t have. He isn’t strong enough to hold it…let alone the risk involved, but if he set out to…” Lucius face paled as his thought took control of him.
“What is it, Lucius?” Harry asked quietly.

Lucius looked at the boy across from him. He knew he had to decide right then what side of the war he wanted to stay on. It all came down to this one secret, the one he had vowed never to tell another soul until it was time.

“Harry, I…” Lucius took a deep breath. He was never at a loss for words; his cool exterior had faded when he realized how involved Draco was in the war. “Harry, I think I need to change my allegiance. Will you have me as an ally?” he asked cautiously.

“Why are you ready to switch to the light side so easily?”

“This is hard for me. I had thought that Draco would remain safe. For him, I will do anything. I have done my best to keep him safe, but if what I fear has happened, he isn’t safe at all. He is about to be used and exploited.”

Harry stared at the man who was changing sides because of his son. He had never thought he would see this day. “What is the secret, Mr. Malfoy? Why did Snape want me to come see you?”

Lucius took a deep breath. “This is a secret I have kept for seventeen years. It is hard to say it even now, although I have a feeling it is the only way my son is going to be saved.”

Harry looked at the man, almost afraid of what he was about to say.

“You see, in my wife’s family there is a Metamorphmagus born in every generation. It has been this way for centuries. It was assumed that her niece, Nymphadora was the only one.”

Harry’s blood was running cold. He had forgotten that Tonks was related to the Malfoys. His eyes grew larger as a stray thought fell into his head. “No,” he said quietly.

Lucius continued without noticing Harry’s change in demeanor. “We were surprised when Draco started exhibiting the signs as well. Only my wife and his godfather knew about it. We kept it hidden from everyone. We knew it would be only a matter of time before the Dark Lord found out and made Draco a part of his Death Eaters.”

“NO!” Harry screamed. “No! It can’t be.” He put his head on his hands, feeling his world fall apart. “It can’t be.”

“I assure you, Draco is a Metamorphmagus,” Lucius said staring at the boy. He didn’t understand this outburst. “Draco has been able to change his form at will for the past few years. He has never been able to hold it until recently. He only practices it at home, so no one else will know about it. He has not been able to sustain the change for long periods of time. That is why I am hesitant to say that it was he who was here.”

“Why do you say that?”

“When he gets emotional, he changes back to himself. He has been able to hold the image for about ten minutes that I know of. I could always tell it was him; his eyes rarely ever changed. Unless he has gotten control of that, then he couldn’t have been here. The person was at the prison for a good half hour between getting in, seeing me, and then leaving. I cannot believe that it was him.”

Grey, silvery eyes staring back at him, always during sex. It couldn’t be. It just couldn’t. Harry’s world fell apart. “Mr. Malfoy…” he started, but couldn’t finish.
“Harry, can we visit my cell now? I just remembered that he dropped a Muggle book in my room, but I did not look at it closely. It may have been for you.” Lucius’ face reflected pride as he thought about what his son might be capable of now.

“Sure,” Harry said quietly. If it was another message, he was ready to just tear it up. He was totally shaken. Everything he believed could have just been thrown away. Draco was a Metamorphmagus.

Chapter End Notes

Everybody...let's Rock with the Jailhouse Rock and the KING:
http://youtu.be/fbre48NgBOg
Harry called for the guards to take them directly to Lucius’ cell. He walked behind the guards and Lucius down the dreary hallways. They passed through a maze of different corridors before arriving at Lucius' cell. Harry followed Lucius into his little room and looked around. He noticed how filthy the room was. It was too deplorable to even think of sitting on the bed. The other man had always had a style to him when he was on the outside, and even though it was grimy he had managed to carry it over into the prison in small ways like keeping the small table clean. He could tell that Lucius had done what he could, but when a rat runs over your foot when you walk in the door, something needed to be done.

Lucius walked to the bed, picked up the book *Crime and Punishment*, and handed it to Harry. “I didn’t check it for anything magical, obviously. I just thought it was weird that the Weasley boy had given me a book. I thought he might be poking fun at me, but it is one of my favorite books. I have read it twice since he left it here.”

“Thank you, Mr. Malfoy. I will definitely let you know if there is anything to it,” Harry replied quietly. He knew they needed to be careful about what the guards heard.

Harry glanced over at the Auror at the door. “I would like to see the rest of the prison. What do you do when the prisoners do not behave?”

The Auror fidgeted, but saw that Harry meant business. He had been told about the exploits in the interrogation room when Harry arrived at the prison. “Yes, Mr. Potter, sir. I hope you let the Minister know that I was willing to take you to certain places when the others weren’t.”

Harry nodded his appreciation, still holding his mask of indifference. Lucius followed him out of the cell as two more Aurors appeared behind them. As they continued down the corridor, two more joined the one in front. They went through a twisting maze of corridors, Lucius’ face becoming harder with each step.

The Aurors led them to a door that opened just as they got there. Harry went to walk in, but one of the guards stopped him. “I just want you to know, Mr. Potter, what happens in here, well, we just do what we are told. None of us like this job. Please do not hold it against us.”

Harry was beginning to really wonder why they were all making sure that he knew they didn’t like doing their job. He was suddenly afraid of what was on the other side of the door. He stepped through the door without answering the man and walked in. The shock had to be showing on his face, because Lucius stepped up beside him.

“They just finished with a prisoner. I don’t know who was in here today, but it looks as if they used the rack and the flogger with steel tips.” Lucius pointed to the area of the room that looked as
if it had just been used. There was blood splattered over the medieval-style rack. There were cuffs attached to the rack making it apparent that a prisoner was strapped down before they were soundly beaten.

Harry walked around the room in shock. Lucius' words sunk in as he took in the entire room. He walked to the other end of the room and touched the Iron Maiden sitting against the far wall. There was dried blood on it. Apparently, they never did clean up fully in here.

Harry looked at the guards in the entranceway. One of them had his hand on an interesting looking device. "Can someone please explain to me why there is not only fresh blood, but also dried blood in here? Who authorized the torture of prisoners? What does a person have to do to deserve such treatment?"

The Aurors just looked at each other, trying to decide which one of them would be the one to tell Harry Potter what happened in the dungeons. Lucius looked at the guards with disgust and spoke up, "This is what happens when you do not cooperate with the Aurors. If you are difficult in the least, you are punished in some way."

"Mr. Potter, we can explain," said the guard that led them in there. "We are under orders to find out all the information they have on suspicious activities. Mr. Malfoy cooperates with us, so he rarely comes down here. It is the others that do not talk when we ask them to."

Harry felt as if he could strangle all of the guards right there. He looked over at Lucius, "This is what you meant when you kept telling me you would cooperate. You were afraid I would have you sent here."

Lucius nodded at the boy, glad that he picked up on the subtle hints he had given the boy. "Yes, Mr. Potter. I am not quite in the mood to be tortured today, or any other day for that matter. Typically I come down here every other week."

The equipment started to rattle as Harry's temper began to get the better of him. He was doing his best to control it, but the fire in his eyes was apparent to everyone. "Where is the prisoner that was in here? I want to see him now."

The guards paled. One of them finally came forward and led him and Lucius into a small room. There was a sheet covered body lying there, not moving. "I'm sorry sir, they were a bit rough with him. He refused to talk. He refused to say who his contacts were."

Harry walked over to the body. He pulled back the sheet slowly, not quite wanting to see what was under it. Harry forced himself to look down into the pale face of Stan Shunpike. Harry pulled the sheet down further, tears forming in his eyes. Stan had no clothes on, not that it would matter. His body was covered in red welts and there was blood everywhere. It looked as if his hand had been smashed.

Lucius gasped when Harry pulled the sheet all the way down. Some blunt object had removed his testicles and his penis had been cut repeatedly. A tear fell from Harry's face onto the body, mixing with the blood. He looked up into the face of the Auror. "I want to know who is responsible for this. I want to see the Minister right now. Please get him a message for me. Immediately! Someone has murdered an innocent man; a man I planned on talking with today."

"But, Mr. Potter..."

"NOW! You have just killed an innocent man. I want something done about this. You know what. Forget what I just said. I'm going to the Ministry myself. His death will not go unpunished. I think
you need to start deciding on your alliances now." Harry turned from the man and walked out of
the room. "I would like to speak with Mr. Malfoy in the visitor's room again. I need to find out
what he knows now, before anyone else can cover it up."

Harry brushed past the Aurors standing in the doorway. He stormed down the corridor, knowing
they would follow him. Lucius caught up to him and walked beside him. The Aurors followed
them closely, but they remained silent as they followed the young man. One of the Aurors opened
the door to the room when they got there.

Harry thanked the man before slamming the door shut and placing multiple locking and silencing
charms on the door. He turned around and sank to the floor. He ignored Lucius at that moment and
just cried as he banged his head against the wall.

Lucius sat back in his chair watching Harry, impressed at how well the boy had held up when
facing the sight downstairs. He knew that he was making the right choice by following the boy.
The older man felt honored that Harry even trusted him enough to let him see the vulnerable side of
his personality. "Harry?"

"Why? Why are they doing that?" Harry looked at him with tears running down his face. "What
kind of human would do that to another human? He was never a Death Eater. He was innocent."

Lucius stared at young man in front of him. He wanted to comfort the boy again, but felt it would
be out of place. Harry needed to be strong now. He needed to see the horrors committed by both
sides in this war. The ones on the side of the light were killing people, too. "In this society, you are
guilty until proven innocent. I admit that I have done wrong, but other people that are in here are
innocent. They keep pleading their innocence, begging for someone to listen. The more they do,
the longer and harder they are beaten.

"I didn’t know the man in there. I can say this much, Harry. No one deserves a death like that one.
I learned quickly that I needed to take care of myself. I agree to whatever they want, otherwise I
am tortured." Lucius continued talking, telling of the treatment in the prison. When he finally
stopped, Harry was no longer crying. He had a determined look on his face.

"Mr. Malfoy, I have a proposition to make to you you. The Aurors know that I will go directly to
the press with my findings if something is not done. To ensure that they work diligently at solving
their discipline issues, I believe I may be able to get them to release you. You have been an
upstanding prisoner. They even said this before they brought you to me."

Lucius stared at the boy. He could not believe he was hearing these words come from his mouth.
"Harry?"

"Please let me finish. I will get you out on my terms, though. I want an Unbreakable Vow from
you,” he demanded. "I want you to testify and tell the courts exactly what has gone on in here. I
want your memories of today recorded in a pensieve before I leave, and I will take a copy of it with
me."

"That all sounds reasonable, Harry," Lucius said, wondering what was going on in the mind of the
boy.

"That isn’t all. I also am in need of a secret keeper," Harry paused to let it sink in.

"You are going to trust me to be your secret keeper?” Lucius was astounded. He began to question
his new allegiance. If this boy believed that Lucius would not betray him immediately, he was
insane.
“Lucius, it is not as crazy as it sounds. You are going to be bound by an oath. It will not be for my house, either, but rather that of my family. I may not like them, but I do not wish them dead the minute I leave their house. Besides,” he said with a grin, “Voldemort would never look to you as the secret keeper. What kind of idiot would trust their enemy’s right-hand man?”

Lucius nodded slowly. He could see how that would actually work. Voldemort would never question Lucius about his involvement with the boy, except as to why he wasn’t dead yet. “Is there anything else?”

Harry gave him a cold smile. “I’m also going to be your secret keeper. I am going to have Malfoy Manor hidden so that it will be a safe haven if it is needed. No one will know that you are there, so you will still be in prison in a way, only you will be living in the comfort of your own home. Hopefully this will be for just a short period of time, but I guess that depends on how long it takes me to kill Voldemort.”

Harry looked at Lucius as an equal at that moment. “What do you say? Does this work in your favor?”

Lucius sat back and looked at Harry, quite thoughtful. “What do I receive out of this? I realize that I will be out of here, but you are asking quite a bit, including making sure that I do turn my back on my Master.”

“Well, it is simply this. I will testify in your trial. I will tell the Ministry that you are actually a spy and were working for me since Voldemort returned. You are here now under the guise of hiding from Voldemort so he doesn’t discover your true allegiance. When I win this war, and I intend to, you will be set free and the Malfoy name will be dignified once more.”

Lucius stared at the boy who had been his enemy. He would have crushed him if the circumstances had been different, but young Potter was learning how to deal with adults now. There might be hope for their future after all. “I do believe we have a deal then, Mr. Potter. It seems to be in my favor no matter which way I look at it, so I will not complain.”

Harry stood up and walked over to Lucius. He shook his hand. “There is only one person I trust to do the Unbreakable Vow and that is Arthur Weasley. I will send a note to him, telling him it is urgent he come here, along with release papers for you.”

“How will he get my release?” Lucius was curious about how Harry planned on getting him out.

“Quite simple, he will get the papers from Kingsley who will word them exactly the way I tell him. It will mention that you have been released into my care due to the abuse you have suffered here. Due to the extenuating circumstances, it is much safer for you to be with me than in the prison system.”

Lucius nodded. The boy seemed to have thought of everything. He watched as Harry wrote out the message to the head of the Weasley clan. Harry then called for the guards and had the message floo’ed to the Ministry of Magic.

Harry sat back down hoping Mr. Weasley would get there quickly. He was still angry at the turn of events at the prison. Thanks to him being led to Azkaban he now had to change the entire prison system. He had no idea if his plan would work, but he decided that it was best to try and fail, than to sit and think.

Fortunately, lady luck was on his side. Mr. Weasley arrived quickly and was escorted to the examination room. He watched as Harry applied the spells to the door again, sealing the room.
“Harry?”

“Thank you for coming, Mr. Weasley. Did you bring everything I requested?”

“I did, Harry, but do you know what you are doing? How did you end up here?” Mr. Weasley asked, placing a hand on Harry’s shoulder.

“Yes, Mr. Weasley, I know what I’m doing. I am here because this is the first stop on my quest. Granted, I will be doing more here than I thought I would,” Harry replied sourly. “Mr. Weasley, I’m sure you remember Mr. Malfoy.”

“Lucius,” he said with a terse nod.

“Arthur, a pleasure to see you,” Lucius replied. The years of hate were evident between the two.

“Harry, please tell me that he has not conned you into anything.”

“Come now, Arthur, do you believe I could control the boy? He outsmarted me quite a few years ago. I lost one of my best house-elves because of him.”

“I would put nothing past you, Lucius.”

“STOP IT!” Harry yelled. “Both of you just stop it. I am the only child in this room, and let’s not forget that. You are both here for a reason.”

The men looked at the boy. Lucius wisely closed his mouth. He had just seen everything the boy saw. He did not know how the boy was not in shock.

Arthur stared at Harry in shock. Harry had always been a quiet one. Where had his newfound strength and will come from?

“Thank you, gentlemen. Lucius, you know why you are here. Mr. Weasley, Lucius and I have come to an understanding. Before we are through here today, you will be shocked by all I intend to do.

“First and foremost, I am having Lucius released into my custody. That is part of what you are here for. It will go on record that he has sworn an Unbreakable Vow to me, with you performing the ceremony. The oath practically makes him a prisoner in whatever residence I place him in.”

Mr. Weasley was just about to interrupt when Harry held up his hand. “I know this is a shock to you, but you will not believe what I have witnessed while here. I planned on speaking with one prisoner whom I knew was innocent. Because of this prison’s barbaric rules, he now lies dead because they tortured him. They mutilated his body. I cannot in good conscience leave anyone here. Mr. Malfoy was with me and saw everything I saw. He is going to testify for me when this becomes public knowledge. The Ministry has to get this prison straightened up or I will find a way to get each and every prisoner out of here. This is not a safe environment for a rat to live in!”

Mr. Weasley sat back, shocked at what the boy had said. He looked to Lucius. “Is this all true? The torture and abuse?”

“Yes, it is, Arthur. I have a quite a few new scars from where I was tortured. I have just witnessed the worst torture that I have heard of to date. Others have died before Mr. Shunpike, but his had me in shock. They strapped him down, mutilated his body and then removed his testicles.”

Mr. Weasley paled when he heard the last statement.
“That is right, Mr. Weasley. He was mutilated. Both Lucius and I are going to put our memories into a pensieve for later use. I wanted you here to do it and to protect it as well. Then we are going to go to my house after giving him directions.”

“Harry, is this safe?”

“It is the only thing I can think of. I cannot leave him here. I know they will torture him because of me. I will not let that happen.”

“Fine, Harry, the Minister is not going to be happy with this, but I managed to pull a few strings for you. I got the papers signed based upon what you wrote to me. He is free to go, as soon as we perform the spell.”

Harry looked to Lucius. “You’re a free man, Lucius. Are you ready to escape these walls?”

“What do you think, Harry?” Lucius smiled, actually showing emotion for a change.

“Oh, gentlemen, gather round. You both come to this table willingly?” Arthur began the Unbreakable Vow.

Chapter End Notes

Duran Duran with a View to a Kill: http://youtu.be/I8u1sb6532I - View to a Kill (2011 edition)
Lose it All

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Lucius, Harry, and Arthur walked out of Azkaban and towards the dock where the boat was waiting. A few Aurors were positioned outside the gates and paid them no attention as they boarded the boat. Harry looked over at Lucius. “So how does it feel to breathe air as a free man, again?”

Lucius smiled, “Superb.” He took a deep breath and walked to the rear of the boat, the side facing the prison.

Arthur walked up behind him and handed him a slip of paper. “I need this back after you memorize it.”

Lucius looked down at the strange address. “Thank you, Arthur.” He memorized the address and handed it back to the other man. “I shall be able to find it.”

“Don’t thank me, Lucius. I would have left you in there,” he said, pointing to the prison. “It is Harry who has done this. I still don’t know why, and somehow I don’t think I want to know why.” He shook his head and walked to the front of the ferry.

Lucius looked over to see Harry walking toward him. When the boy looked up at him, he knew he had made the right choice. The boy looked a bit lost in the madness that surrounded him, but Lucius had known that he would not surrender to it. He had seen this boy fight, he never gave up.

Lucius knew the boy before him would be the true victor when the dust settled on the final field of battle. “By all that is in me, you have my loyalty. I thank you from the very depths of my soul for this opportunity and I will fight by your side, Mr. Potter.”

Harry’s smiled was bitter sweet. “You do realize that with that statement, you have now moved up Voldemort’s list of most wanted, right?”

Lucius laughed at that thought. “Well, he has moved up to that place on my list as well, young Harry.” He stared off at the prison as the boat began to move. “Following you will make me a whole man. I will not bow before another person again. Thank you, Harry.”

The two of them stood facing the prison, knowing that they had trials ahead of them. Harry glanced over at one of the Aurors, who was now watching the boat leave. His eyes were fixed firmly on Harry and Lucius. Harry reached for his wand, the feeling of being safe was leaving him. As the ferry moved out further, Harry thought he saw the man’s eyes flicker to a stormy silver color. Harry blinked and the man looked exactly the same. “Draco?” he whispered as they moved further away.

“What was that, Harry?” Lucius asked.

“I think I just saw…no, he wouldn’t, would he?” Harry watched as the man tipped his hat and walked into the guard shack. “Do you think they would stop the ferry?”

“What is it?” Lucius was looking trying to discern what it was that had Harry upset.

“That man. The one who just went inside. I swear I saw his eyes change,” Harry was pointing
towards the booth.

“Draco?” Lucius looked down at the boy. “Would it be him? Here?”

“I want to find out!” Harry was just about to walk to the front and demand to be turned around.

“No! Think, Harry. If it is him, he is in disguise. He could be in danger if someone found out about him. Lucius pleaded. “I want to see my son as much, if not more than, you. However, I will not risk his life.” Lucius held Harry’s gaze. He had his hands on Harry’s shoulders. “You are on a mission, correct?”

Harry nodded his head as the man continued.

“You need help defeating Voldemort. Who better to help you than me? I know the man better than anyone else. I can lead you directly to him, and help you to destroy him once and for all. If that is my son in disguise then he is here on a mission. I am sure that if it were for my former boss, then he would not be hidden.”

Harry listened to what the man said and nodded. He then changed the subject. “What do you know about Horcruxes?”

“Yes, I know about them. Why do you think the man left me here? He was angry about the diary. You destroyed it and a piece of him with it.”

“The others, you know where they are?”

“Although I may not know the exact locations of all of them, I have a firm idea on the location of a few. Did you wish to discuss this here or somewhere safer?” Harry watched the man speaking with him. His answers seemed sincere with his hands opened as he talked.

“Fine, I shall do it your way for now. But I want it known that I plan on destroying him once and for all. Until he is dead, I cannot live my life.” Harry was upset at this point and walked to the front of the boat.

Lucius followed the boy towards his freedom. Neither of them noticed the Auror still watching them smile just before he portkeyed away.

~*~*~*~*~*

Mr. Weasley Apparated back to the Ministry to deal with the final details of Lucius' release from Azkaban. Harry grasped Lucius' arm and Apparated them to the front of Grimmauld Place. Lucius caught Harry as he nearly tripped over Lucius' foot. Harry opened the door and walked in. Lucius followed down the dark corridor, turning into the library after Harry. Lucius looked around the room they were in. He had not been in the Black house for ages, but it seemed to have changed only a bit.

The door opened and in walked three house-elves. One looked fearful, but well-kept. The other was the strange creature that belonged to the Blacks. The final one saw him and reacted with horror. "Master Harry, you brought him to the house!” Dobby cried.

"So, Mr. Potter, apparently you cost me my house-elf and then kept him for yourself?"

Harry looked between Dobby and Lucius. "Dobby, it is fine. Mr. Malfoy is going to be our guest for a while."
"But he is evil. He is planning evil with the bad man!" Dobby stood in front of Harry, trying to block Lucius from him.

"Dobby, I brought him here. He couldn't come here unless I said he could, remember. You watched the spell. I need Mr. Malfoy right now. He can't hurt me." Harry knew the history behind the two, he knew he needed to tread carefully with Dobby before he helped him again like in second year. He looked over to Lucius. "As it happens, I pay Dobby. He is a free elf and is going to stay that way. The other two are mine."

Harry looked at the three house-elves. Kreacher was excited; a true pure-blood was in the house. He knew that Kreacher would willingly serve Lucius. Winky just looked at the man in disgust, noting how his clothes were torn and filthy. "Master Harry, sir. Your guest is needing to clean up, I think, sir. Winky can show him to a room, sir."

"First, I want to talk to you three in front of Mr. Malfoy. There are rules that are going to be put into effect. While Mr. Malfoy is here, he is my guest. He will be treated accordingly, Dobby. Mr. Malfoy will not mistreat you, punish you, kick you, throw things at you, or anything else along those lines. If he has a problem with you, he will come to me about it." Harry looked between the four and saw understanding in a few of the eyes.

"Winky, since you are my most sensitive elf. I promise you will not receive clothes from me or anyone else as an end to your service. I do not ever plan on letting you go. You are too important to this household. Do you understand?"

Winky nodded. She was still going to worry about getting clothes, but Master Harry had promised her. She could serve him forever.

"Kreacher, I know you will be quite happy serving Mr. Malfoy. You are not to give him any information besides what I tell you. This is a direct order. Your punishment will be to have your head cut off and buried. It will never be placed with your ancestors. Although Mr. Malfoy is a guest, there are still things that he does not need to know yet, so you will not tell him." Harry bent down and looked him in the face and smirked evilly. "He has switched sides, so giving him any information on the Order will not work to your advantage." Kreacher's face that had been so lit at the thought of a new wonderful master, then changed as his hopes were crushed in that one sentence.

"Dobby, you have a history with Mr. Malfoy. I realize that you will not be very happy serving him. You will do it, if I need you to. I want you to only interact with him if necessary. Kreacher will have no problem helping my guest. You remember your main job, right?" Dobby nodded, still not happy at the way things were turning out. "Well, it is still just as important. I need you to concentrate on that for me."

Harry looked at the three. He hoped he had been specific enough in his orders. He had to calm Winky's fears, prevent Kreacher from telling secrets, and make sure that Dobby create issues or harm Lucius. During the speech, he hoped that Lucius realized that the house-elves were to answer to Harry and Harry alone and he was the only one that could dole out the punishment.

"Mr. Malfoy, would you like to go take a bath or shower now? I'm sure you would like to feel clean after a year of that place," Harry said.

"Yes, I would, Harry. Thank you. I will respect your wishes concerning the house-elves as well," he replied.

"Please do. Winky, you may show him to his room. He will be staying here for a while, so please
give him a decent room," Harry said as he walked out of the room. "Dobby, come with me please."

Dobby followed Harry out of the room. Kreacher bowed to Lucius, "Anything you wish, Master Malfoy, let Kreacher be knowing. I will be taking good care of Master Malfoy, sir." Lucius nodded at the elf, not at all surprised at Harry's order to the elf now. He looked at the female elf, who curtseyed to him. "Master Malfoy, sir, I be showing you to your rooms now, sir."

"Thank you," he said politely to both elves. Treating elves like this was a new experience for him, but he needed to stay on Harry's good side. Harry was the one thing between him and the Dark Lord and he wanted to keep it that way. He followed the female elf up the stairs and to a set of rooms where he proceeded to bathe and then fall into a deep sleep.  

Harry took Dobby into the kitchen. He knew the other two house-elves would bend over backwards to take care of Lucius, and he needed a few minutes to discuss this with Dobby.

“Dobby, I know you don’t like him, but he is going to have to stay.”

“Master Harry, sir. He is a bad man!” Dobby cried, ready to punish himself for saying that against a guest of Harry’s.

“Dobby, he is an evil man. He is an evil man who was put in prison. I think he has been punished enough at this time. He was punished worse than a house-elf!” Harry said harshly. “I wouldn’t put my worst enemy through what he has been through in that prison.”

“But, Master Harry, sir…”

“Dobby, I have to keep him close. I don’t have to trust him. This is where I need you to help me. Can you help me, Dobby?” Harry asked, hoping that it would distract Dobby if Dobby had a job to do.

“What do you need, Master Harry, sir?” Dobby asked, excited that he had a task.

“I don’t want him left alone in the house. I have to go back to my aunt and uncle’s house tonight, but I will be back tomorrow. I’m sure he will sleep pretty soundly. I need you to come and get me tomorrow if I have not returned when he wakes up. Can you do that for me, Dobby?”

“Yes, Master Harry, sir, yes, Dobby can do this for Master Harry!” Dobby was beside himself. He was being trusted with an important task.

“Thank you, Dobby.” Harry walked out of the kitchen and back into the study. He sat down and opened the book that had been left in Lucius’ cell. He knew that he wouldn’t get much done before he had to leave, but he wanted to make sure that Lucius was taken care of and asleep before he left. He sat downstairs reading through the book, seeing nothing of importance in it.

Harry stood up and stretched. He knew it was getting late. He needed to hurry and get home. He walked up the stairs to his room. He needed to double-check on Lucius, but he also wanted to make sure that his letters from Snape and Draco were well hidden from prying eyes. He saw Winky as he was about to go into his room. “Winky, how is Mr. Malfoy doing?”

“He is sleeping already, Master Harry, sir,” Winky said meekly, happy she had someone to take care of.

“That is good, Winky. Thank you for your help,” Harry said as he walked into his room. He looked
around, making sure everything was where it should be or hidden and then walked out, performing a locking spell on his door.

He walked back downstairs. “Dobby!” The elf appeared almost faster than he finished getting the name out of his mouth. “I’m going now. I will be back tomorrow. Remember, come and get me if he wakes up.”

“Yes, Master Harry.”

Harry willed himself to Privet Drive. He arrived just outside of the wards. He walked through them quickly and into the house. He went into the kitchen and found his aunt. “Hello, Aunt Petunia.”

She looked at him. She didn’t know where he had been, but she could tell it had been a trying day. “Sit down, Harry. Are you alright?”

He lay his head down on the table, not caring about manners. “No, not really.”

She sat down at the table next to him. “Can you tell me about it?”

He raised his weary head. “Yeah, it involves you. Well, what I can tell you. Do you remember me telling you about the wards?” Harry continued telling his aunt the basics about Lucius being a secret keeper, but protecting her from all that he had witnessed. He told her that he was going to bring Lucius by the next day to perform the secret keeper spell. That would protect them from future attacks.

They stopped when they heard the front door open. “It’s your uncle.”

“Yeah, I’m going to go to my room. Please feel free to lock me in if it will make him feel better,” he said, surprised that he didn’t mind the comfort of something he once hated.

Once in his room, Harry pulled out the book again. He lifted the wards around his room and placed a silencing charm on the room as well. He looked down at the book. The book was frustrating him. He flipped through the pages again, hoping something would fall out. “What would Hermione do?” he muttered to himself. He looked at the book and waved his wand, “Finite Incantatem.” Suddenly the book began to transform. It folded into itself and became two letters.

Harry turned the letters over in his hand. It looked as if Harry was going to be on a scavenger hunt searching for letters left all over England. He sighed as he began to read.

\texttt{P,}

\texttt{Apparently you have allowed some knowledge to sink into that idiotic brain of yours. Either that or you have contacted Ms. Granger who has told you exactly what to do, as usual. I pray for the safety of the innocent that you have not involved anyone unnecessarily.}

\texttt{One of my secrets has been told. If not, then you are not the man that I thought you could be. You will have disappointed me and there is not any way in which you could possibly know where your next clue lies.}

\texttt{You are closer to the truth than you were previously. There will be more clues to guide you. Teacups, in most manner, are a sight to behold. Sadly, badgers do not know how to hold onto such treasures and they fall into nests of loyal snakes. Things tend to wither and die if not taken care of properly.}
Enemies shall meet once more, but the time is not yet at hand. More training needs to be done. If the impossible has been managed, then you have what further resources you need to face your greatest challenge.

_HBP_

Harry placed the letter on his desk. Snape said so much within those few paragraphs, yet so little. He assumed that the impossible had been getting Lucius out of Azkaban. How had Snape known that he would end up making that a reality? Tea cups and manners with badgers and snakes? That one was perplexing. He understood the warning clearly. He should not enlist the aid of Hermione. That would create added danger and possibly cause more death. Harry sighed.

He picked up the other letter. What could Draco possibly have to say to him? He still had not dealt with the knowledge that he very possibly had just had an intense affair with Draco. Everything was pointing to that, but he was still in denial. It had to be Tonks. His father had even said that Draco was not strong enough, especially when he was emotional. He groaned as he remembered those nights of passion. Emotions had definitely been as high as possible. He opened the letter fearfully. It was best to get it out of the way.

_Emerald_,

Harry was startled at how the letter started, his fears staring at him. He groaned. He could not take a letter of confession. “No, no, no, NO!” he yelled into his silent room. He threw some of his books against the wall, taking out his frustration on them.

He sank to the floor and began to cry. He hit his head against the wall repeatedly. It couldn’t have been Draco. It just couldn’t. He wiped his face with his shirt and then looked at the letter that was still lying on his bed. He walked to the bed and sat down staring at the piece of paper that he knew was going to tear his heart out.

_Emerald_,

I would assume by now that you know the truth. Now is not the time or place to discuss past issues. Just know that not everything fades with the truth.

I cannot leave much evidence behind in writing. Keep your occlumency lessons up. I will always know if you have not practiced. Our souls have connected in a way of which most never dream. To see behind reality to the true heart changes a person.

Keep him safe. I know you will do the right thing. I have faith in you. You cannot allow any to suffer. It is not only a strong point, but a weakness. Thankfully this weakness will be to my benefit.

When it is safe, you shall see that which your heart desires most. Until then may you have sweet dreams; that is if you ever actually decide to close your eyes and find the nirvana that awaits you.

_Silver_

Harry closed the letter. Tears were running down his face. He couldn’t deny the truth any longer, as much as he wanted to. It was stated directly in front of him. He folded the letter as he let his mind wander. He got ready for bed and lay down, trying to sleep. He just couldn’t get the images out of his head again, all the way to the newest...of the Auror at the ferry landing.
Chapter End Notes

Let us thank the Backstreet Boys and Lose it All for the inspiration:
http://youtu.be/wvk2_n8zP6A
Harry let the wards down around his room and enjoyed the fact that the rest of the house was quiet. He slipped into the bathroom to take a quick shower. He stripped off his clothes and let the water pound on his body. It had been an extremely long day and the hot water felt good rushing over his body.

He leaned his head on the wall of the shower and closed his eyes, his tears mixing with the water as it fell over his head. He sank down to the floor of the shower and laid his head on his knees, letting the cleansing heat take away all of his worries. All of them except for the blond who now occupied his thoughts.

How could it have been Draco? Draco would never touch him like that. They were both boys! It explained a lot. He now knew how Tonks could be in love with Moony. Oh, Merlin! The person he thought he loved was just a figment of someone's imagination.

His body shook as he sat in the puddles of water surrounding him. He hugged his legs tightly and cried. This just wasn't right. It wasn't fair.

Harry finally got out of the shower and dried off. He went back into his room, not feeling any better, but deciding he would try to sleep. Maybe he would be able to sleep. Maybe he wouldn't be haunted by images of what they had done. Maybe.

He lay his head down and began the mental preparations for blocking his mind. With the strain of the day, he was not fully preparing his mind. He fell into a restless sleep, thrown into dreams of himself being tortured by the stinging pain of a flogger wielded by Lucius. Stan was selling tickets to the different Aurors to watch the show. Everyone was laughing, not caring that their "hero" was being tortured. Snape and Draco walked in eating popcorn and shouted out tips on how best to flog the victim to Lucius as they sat down. Arthur sat there shaking his head disapprovingly. Harry woke with his heart pounding, drenched in sweat. He was panting as he tried to get his bearings.

He wasn't sure what it was that had woken him, but he was thankful. He could tell it was still late. He lay back down, trying to forget the images as he closed his eyes again.

Harry took deep breaths and tried to think of anything except his dream. He thought he heard voices in his head, but he decided it would be best to block those out as well. He managed to drown all except for one persistent one that kept saying, "Harry."

He groaned as he rolled over and hit his pillow. He pulled it over his head in hopes that the final voice would be blocked out as well. "Harry." He hit the pillow again and rolled into another position.

"Harry, you can’t hide from me forever. You aren’t strong enough to block me out."

The voice was very practical. He had heard it over and over again for six years. It had haunted him so many times and now it was stuck in his head. "You aren’t real! Go away,” he moaned.

Behind his closed eyes he could see the silvery grey colors swirled forming into eyes. "I’m as real as you are, Harry. All you have to do is remember and feel.”

"Why?” he cried into his pillow.
“I can’t answer that, yet. Soon. When I see you again.”

“Today?”

“Maybe later, but soon. A few more things need to be revealed.”

“Why are you doing this to me?”

“The why doesn’t matter right now, Harry. It is late. You need to sleep so you can take care of my father.”

“Is that what you wanted at Azkaban?”

“It wasn’t quite what I was expecting, but thank you for him. Take care of him for me until it is safe.”

Harry didn’t hear anything else, as he slipped into a dream. White hot lips tormenting him, teasing him. “You are mine, Harry. All mine. Body, heart and soul.” The eyes pierced the darkness of the memories.

Harry was lying in front of the fire in the Room of Requirement. His eyes were closed. He heard the door open and close softly, but did not stir. He had hoped she would come that night. He didn’t move as he heard her moving around the room. He knew she would come to him eventually.

He felt her presence next to him. She slid down onto the floor next to him and began to run her hands over his body. She slipped her hand up his shirt and traced his chest with her nails. He could feel her taking his pants down. He was so warm and comfortable, he couldn't open his eyes, only move to accommodate her as she touched him softly.

"You are the reason I wake up in the morning, Harry. I want to be with you forever," she said as she began to kiss his body.

"I shall love no other but you. With my heart and soul, body and mind, I am yours," Harry replied to her sleepily.

"Will you do something for me, my love?" she asked hesitantly.

He opened his eyes and looked at her. "Anything."

"A spell. It needs to be done between those who have a pure heart and love each other completely. I do love you completely."

He tried to shake the drowsy feeling. "What kind of spell? I don't know..."

"Please," she begged. "It will only show that we love each other. It will help us to stay in contact." She bent down and took him into her mouth and began to suck on it softly. "We will of course, have to seal it by making love, so intense and powerful, no one will be able separate us."

He tried to bring the doubts he had out, but they were silenced in his head. The idea of mind-blowing sex was a definite prospect he could deal with. He nodded yes and moaned as she continued to lick and tease his cock.

She looked up at him and smiled. "Shall we begin, my love? It won't take that long for us to do and the spell is very simple. It is surprising more couples do not use it," she said softly, encouraging him, using those words to let him know it was a wise decision.
She stood up and removed her clothes. She then finished taking Harry's off of him. "Harry, I love you."

"I love you, too," he said as he kissed her softly, letting his erection move between her legs. She turned from him almost as quickly as he wrapped his arms around her.

She quickly accio'd a table, a bowl, and a ceremonial knife. She placed the table between them and placed the bowl and knife perfectly in the center. "This is all we need, and it will show that you are mine and I am yours."

She took his left arm and made a cut along his wrist and then held the knife out to him. He repeated the process on her arm. She then directed the flow of blood into the bowl before them.

He kneeled in a daze while watching her precise movements. She picked up the bowl and swirled the red liquid around for a minute then placed the bowl back down and looked at him. She waved her wand one last time and a red cloth was tied around their arms, holding their wounds together. "Repeat after me, my love."

He nodded and watched her eyes. The pure silver reflecting back at him left him mesmerized. He had come to love it when her eyes were this color.

"You are blood of my blood, and bone of my bone.
I give you my body, that we two might be one.
I give you my spirit, until our life shall be done."

Harry repeated the words with her, as they completed the spell, she held the bowl up with one hand to have him drink from it. He took it from her and then placed it next to her lips, her eyes never leaving his. The bowl was placed between them again, but they crawled around the table until their bodies met.

His lips took hers and kissed her, exploring her mouth, tasting a bitter metallic flavor that was left behind from the spell. He had never wanted her more than at that moment. He lifted her body up and let her straddle him. She slid easily onto him as they moved as one.

They finished and collapsed onto the floor where Harry had originally started. He opened his eyes at his lover and smiled dreamily, running his fingers through the drowsy blonde's hair. "I love you," he whispered not quite comprehending that it was a male beside him and not the girl he thought was there.

Harry sat up, his heart pounding. He had thought that night had only been a dream! "Oh, fuck!"

Oath is from Outlander by Diana Gabaldon
Forgotten

Harry sat in his bed, heart pounding. There was no way that that could have happened. He would have remembered it. He knew that he had not willing performed any spells with Tonks. That had to be something else.

Harry got up and walked to his desk. He looked out the window into the night air. Everything was quiet. He did a quick tempus to see the time, 3 a.m. He groaned. He knew there was no way that he would be able to go back to sleep now.

He was tempted to close his eyes just to see if he could reach the other side of his connection. He was suddenly afraid of what he might find out. He turned back to the window and opened it, hoping the chill of the night would calm him. He saw, in the distance, a bird flying towards his house. He watched as the owl flew directly to him and lifted his leg so that Harry could remove the parchment.

Harry took the parchment and gave the owl a treat. He didn't know who would send him an owl in the middle of the night, but he knew it had to be important. The owl looked tired and seemed as if he were waiting for a response. Harry let him into Hedwig's cage while he performed revelo on the document for any curses before he opened it.

He sat down at the desk and opened the document. It was a copy of a letter to the Ministry of Magic stating that upon the Twenty-ninth day of June, Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-Seven at approximately 12:00 a.m., Draco Malfoy completed the Body, Soul, and Mind Binding with one Harry James Potter. The two are now looked upon in the Wizarding community as being legally wed and no Wizard, Muggle, or other magical being can separate the two.

Harry dropped the letter, which was stamped by the Ministry as approved. His face paled in the dim lighting of his room. He absolutely refused to believe it. He looked down at the letter again and it seemed to look up at him and laugh. Harry began to hyperventilate. "No, no, no!" He threw a book across the room and hit the wall. "We didn't! No! It can't be true." Silently the wards went up around his room so that he wouldn't disturb anyone else as he destroyed the wardrobe. The black owl just looked at him and blinked.

Harry sank to his knees and let his head fall to them. His breathing was coming in rushed and his face had flushed. He looked back over to the seemingly innocent document. He stood up and walked over to it. He then saw there was a letter and envelope attached to it.

Emerald,

You should receive this upon waking from your last dream. I could not send it until I knew that you remembered that night as well as I do. There was a small memory charm placed on our wedding night until it was safe for you to remember. The ministry just received their letter an hour ago. It was delayed so that the Dark Lord would not know until you were away from Hogwarts.

It was a magical night reserved for lovers. It was the last chance that we could perform anything to protect both of us from this war that neither of us wanted to join.

I'm sorry I had to deceive you, but there were no other options.

You have the blood protection from your mother, and now you have the blood protection of the Malfoys - which is just as strong.
You have my father, somewhere. It is best that I don't know where, in case I fall into the hands of the ever-illustrious fraternity that my father joined against his wishes. I do, however, wish to see you again, as soon as possible. There are details that we must work out.

Without the simple ceremony we had, you would be on your own as you fought to win this war. This way, you have help whenever you need it. All you have to do is call upon my name and I will be there. Please accept my apologies for not telling you everything up front, but I know your heart; it beats only for me. I promised you my heart, my body, and my soul; and they are all yours to do with as you will.

The spell has been completed. Please place the ring upon your finger. It will be used to show your status and keep that redheaded bitch away from you. I will await, patiently, the return ring, which I know you have in your vault.

The HBP is giving me dirty looks as I write, so I must hurry. He will be in contact soon. I’m sure you know the next step. I will be waiting for you.

Archimedes will reside with you until you have the ring, and then he will deliver it safely to me. There is no need to add a tracking spell to him; he will not know where he is going, only that he has been ordered to a specific location where he will meet another.

I do love you, my hero, although I'm sure you doubt it.

Please give my warmest regards to my father.

Silver

Harry didn't notice the tears falling from his face as he read the undeniable proof that he had married the Malfoy heir. Gone were his choices. Gone were his future children. He was now legally bound to the blond ponce.

He sat at the window and looked out until the sun came up over the horizon. He got dressed quickly, knowing that he needed to talk to Lucius. Harry penned a note to his aunt before leaving the house, simply stating that he would bring a gentleman by later to protect the house. He Apparated to Grimmauld Place taking Archimedes with him.

He arrived at the house. He slammed the door and went into the library where he began to pace. He was frustrated. He hadn’t had any sleep. He was now, supposedly, a married man who missed the ceremony.

He wanted to barge into Lucius’ room and demand a few answers from the man, but he knew that the man needed to sleep a bit longer. He continued to pace, ignoring Winky when she came in to see if he needed anything.

Harry muttered and complained as he walked around the room. Dobby came in shortly after Winky had left and told him that breakfast was ready if Master Harry wanted it. Harry ignored the elf and continued on in his self-absorbed mind.

“Harry, the house-elves have mentioned that you are going to need new carpet in here. I’m sure that we can find the interior decorator that Narcissa uses for when you wear the carpet out,” Lucius drawled, as he walked into the library after Harry arrived. The man was immaculately dressed in new clothes. Harry assumed that Winky or Dobby had gone to the Manor and procured the clothes for him. That didn’t matter, though. There were much more pressing matters.
“Forget the carpet, Lucius,” Harry said quickly, “we seem to have a larger problem on our hands and I absolutely need you to help me out of this.”

Lucius looked at the younger man and nodded. “Let’s adjourn to the kitchen and discuss this over the breakfast table. It is still quite early and I’m sure those Muggles didn’t feed you this morning.”

Harry looked at the man in shock, “How did you know I went home?”

“It is quite simple, Harry. You have to stay there long enough for the blood protection. I woke in the middle of the night and Dobby was about to get you. I told him there was no need since I planned on going back to sleep. I must say that your bedrooms are quite comfortable. If my body were not used to the prison then I’m sure I would still be lying there sleeping.”

Harry looked up at Lucius and wondered if Dobby was going back on his word. He had specifically told him to come get him when Lucius woke. Then again, if Lucius had gone back to bed, there was no reason for him to have come back.

Lucius watched the boy’s emotions float over his face. He could tell that he had not slept the previous night; in fact, he’d probably not slept in about a week. He motioned for Harry to lead the way to the kitchen.

Harry reluctantly walked out of the library and to the kitchen. Winky had outdone herself now that she had someone to take care of again. He looked at the food spread across the table and groaned. He sat down and grabbed a slice of toast with jam. Lucius ate light as well, with just a bit of egg and toast. He looked to Harry as if waiting for an explanation.

Harry took a deep breath and threw the toast down. “I’m sorry, I just can’t eat this.”

“Harry, come now. We are going to be spending quite a bit of time together from now on. By the time we part ways, you will be able to control your anger and not let anyone know how you are feeling,” Lucius said slowly, watching the boy’s reaction.

“Apparently, we are going to spend even more time together than we had originally planned,” Harry stated vehemently.

Lucius watched expressions play across Harry’s face. Something had happened after he had gone home last night. Something had caused this boy to go into a near-hysterical state. “What is the matter, Harry?”

“According to your son, I am lawfully wedded to him. How in all the bloody blazing levels of hell could I have possibly have married your son? Without knowing it?” Harry practically screamed at the other man. He stood up, knocking his chair over. “I’m sorry, I need to walk or something. I cannot sit here quietly.”

Lucius was stunned. He stared as the young man walked out of the room before following close behind him. “What do you mean? How did you marry my son?”

Harry shook his head and handed Lucius the letter that had been sent from the Ministry. He couldn’t talk; he began to pace again. He ignored Lucius reading the document and ignored Arthur when he came through the floo. He continued to pace.

“Harry,” Arthur tried to stop him. “Harry, we have got to talk.”

Harry continued to walk. Arthur looked at Lucius who looked as dumbfounded as he felt. “Harry, how in the world did you marry Draco Malfoy? Why didn’t you tell me?”
Harry looked at both men and sighed. “I don’t know how I did it. All I want to know is, how do I undo it?”

“Are you sure this is a legal document?” Lucius asked Mr. Weasley.

“As official as they come, Lucius,” he sighed, knowing what the other man held in his hand.

“Then Harry, why aren’t you wearing the Malfoy ring? You need to wear the ring for your own protection,” he said.

Harry stopped pacing and gaped at Lucius. “You want me to put that blasted ring on? YOU? How could you possibly even want me as a son-in-law, let alone want me to have some kind of protection that your name holds?”

“Harry, you don’t understand. That ring is only given when a true wedding takes place. The Malfoys belong to an ancient line, and as such that rings shows that you are under their protection. Nothing can touch you. There are many spells woven into the magic of the ring.” Lucius walked over to Harry and put his hands on Harry’s shoulders. “If my son has chosen you for his husband, then he has obviously seen what is within the depths of your heart. I would be proud to have you as a son.”

Harry couldn’t believe what he was hearing. He sat down right where he was, in the middle of the floor. “I don’t care about the bloody protection. I want to know how in the fuck I got married and how I can get out of it.”

“Harry, please calm down. We will get to the bottom of this,” Arthur said calmly. “What happened between yesterday and this morning?”

He opened his mouth to speak, but the words wouldn’t come. He knew he was going to have to talk about his illicit affair, but he didn’t want it known that Draco could switch forms. For some reason, he felt that that should remain secret for now.

“I have been having strange dreams,” he said cautiously. “Strange dreams involving Malfoy. Last night was the worst. We stood in front of a table. We drew blood and then repeated an oath. When I woke up, an owl dropped this letter off to me.”

He felt like his world was being totally torn apart. He had nothing left to keep him going.

“Harry, this dream, was it really a dream or possibly a forgotten memory?” Lucius asked cautiously, knowing that Harry was trying to keep something a secret.

“It felt like a memory, but I don’t remember it! If I don’t remember it, how can it have happened?” he demanded.

Arthur shook his head. “I wish there were something I could do, son. The family is going to be upset enough over this, but the spell that was performed bound the two of you together, whether you remember it or not. There is no way that this document could have been forged. It was sitting on my desk when I got to work this morning.”

Harry nodded and then put his head in his knees, wanting the world to disappear. Arthur seemed to notice this. In a strange move, he pulled Lucius to the side. “I realize that there is not any love lost between the two of us, but please take care of Harry. He needs someone to look after him. I’m afraid he is just going to keep shutting everyone out.”

"He has begun to shut out his friends, then?” Lucius asked.
Arthur inclined his head. "Yes, he is pushing people away. I have watched him do it when he is afraid that someone will get hurt. I do not know how this is going to affect him."

"Is there anything that I need to be aware of for the immediate future? I plan for him to succeed, especially now."

"Just keep him close and be there if he wants to talk. It has been a rough few weeks for him. He is going to close himself off."

Lucius nodded as his long-time enemy asked for his help. He just kept his eyes on the boy sitting in the middle of a room, crying silently. “I will care for him as if he were my own son, Arthur. Too much is at stake, and we will get him through this so he can fulfill his destiny.”

Arthur nodded at the other man. They apparently had a truce, though the truce only consisted of taking care of Harry. “I must floo back to the office. I am going to have to intercept quite a few questions about this ‘happy occasion’ that I’m sure my supervisors will love.” He took a step toward the fireplace and stopped. He looked at the other man, “He needs someone in his life to take care of him. Someone that will love him. Please make sure that happens. I don’t know how he ended up married to Draco, and I’m sure I don’t want the sordid details, but he is going to need someone.”

He nodded at Arthur as he continued to watch the boy. “I will take care of him. After all he is a Malfoy now.” He turned as the other man left through the fireplace. He walked to the trembling boy and pulled him into his arms. He sat back on the couch and held him as he cried.
My Little Secret

Lucius held the boy until he cried himself to sleep. He didn’t know how this mess had started, but he assumed that Draco had quite a few explanations he needed to give. Apparently he could actually hold onto transformations. Lucius had believed that there was no love lost between the two boys, yet now, amazingly enough, they were married. It didn’t make much sense.

Lucius rose with the boy and carried him up the stairs. He paused briefly by Harry’s heavily warded room and sighed. Even with his talent and skill it would take far too long to open this door, so he continued down the hallway toward another room, one that Winky had made livable. He lay the boy down on the bed and covered him up.

He walked back downstairs and called for Dobby. The house-elf appeared, still more than slightly afraid of the older wizard. “Dobby.”

Dobby looked up at his former master, remembering all of his punishments. “Yes, Master Lucius. Is there something you be needing, sir?” He trembled slightly as he replied, remembering his former punishments.

“Dobby, can you please tell me what is going on with your master? He has many burdens on him right now and isn’t sleeping. I just put him in a spare bedroom,” Lucius said calmly. He knew he needed to get the help of this house-elf if he were to ever understand anything.

“Dobby can’t be telling you that,” Dobby said. He looked at Lucius, wide-eyed, then grabbed a lamp. He was about to start beating himself when Lucius got it away from him.

Lucius then closed his eyes before he continued. “Can you have Winky place a light sleeping spell on Harry so that he can get some rest?”

“Yes, sir, Master Lucius, sir,” Dobby replied, feeling relieved at being able to do something for his former master that didn’t go against Harry’s wishes. "I will be letting her know."

“Oh, and Dobby,” Lucius said in an almost bored tone, “do you think it is possible for me to get copies of the Daily Prophet from say…about a week ago.”

Dobby nodded. “Yes, sir. I can be getting you the newspaper, sir. Is you wanting it now?”

“Yes, please, Dobby.” Lucius said to the elf. He walked away from him and into the kitchen. He got a cup of coffee, realizing that he had yet to have any that day.

He sighed quietly. So much had happened in one day and there was so much to question. Yesterday he would never have imagined the Boy who Lived would have him released from prison, let alone have him living in his house.

Dobby returned quickly with the papers for the past week. He read all about Dumbledore’s death followed by his elaborate funeral. He learned that Snape and Draco were on the run from the Ministry. He read about all of the casualties at Hogwarts.

Winky brought him a sandwich while he was reading the paper. He nodded his thanks to her and continued to read. He then noticed that the day’s paper was suspiciously absent. “Dobby.”

The house-elf appeared quickly next to the man. “Where is the paper for today?”
“Dobby was looking for today’s paper, sir, but it is not being printed yet, sir.”

“Not being printed? That is strange. Thank you, Dobby.” He stood up, pondering this new bit of information. He wondered if the paper had been put on hold due to the circumstances surrounding Harry and Draco. He walked into the front room and was surprised by a curtain hanging over a wall.

He smiled. It had been years since he had been here, but he remembered where he was. He walked up to the wall and pulled the curtain aside looking at the portrait underneath. He smiled pleasantly at the lady about to spout obscenities. “Hello, Mrs. Black.” He bowed gracefully before the painting.

“Lucius, one of the old blood coming back to rescue my house. Oh, at last the blood traitors will be kicked out,” she rattled off happily.

“Can you tell me what has happened so that I may clean your house of these blood traitors? Who are they?” Lucius knew the answer already; he just wanted to know how much the portrait had picked up on.

“There is a group of red-headed blood traitors that come in with all sorts of low-life scum. They even let a Mudblood in! Can you imagine? I’m sure my husband’s bones are rolling in the grave now,” she replied nastily.

“When was the last time you saw them?” he asked politely.

“It has been a while with them, although not too long ago I believe your son came through. He didn’t talk to me. He was with the crooked-nosed half-blood traitor. That one silenced me before I could properly greet the young Malfoy. Then he covered me with the infernal tapestry. Oh if I had my wand, what those Mudblood loving fools would suffer! In my house!” Her voice had reached a new pitch.

“Sorry, about that Lucius. Once she gets started, she won’t shut up.” He rubbed the back of his neck.

“I remember that much about her from when I visited with Narcissa,” Lucius replied.

Harry looked at him and blushed. “Um, thank you for earlier. I’m sorry, I don’t normally do that.”

Lucius walked to Harry and placed his hands on his shoulders. “My boy, if I had been through half as much as you in the past week, I would have succumbed under the strain as well.”

Harry just looked up to the older man and nodded. “Lucius, I know I cannot stop you from doing it, but will you please leave Mrs. Black alone? She brings back unpleasant memories that I would rather not deal with right now.”

The man nodded. He moved from Harry and went to sit in one of the leather-backed chairs. Harry followed him and sat down in the one facing him. “Harry, do you realize that if you convince that woman to like you, you will have a well placed spy within many dark homes?”

“Somehow, Lucius, I doubt she will ever see the light,” Harry laughed.

“Well, maybe she will not see the light, but she would be able to tell you the comings and goings of
any possible family members, including Bellatrix.”

Harry shook his head, “I will let you do the talking with Mrs. Black then, shall I? I am merely a half-blood who has weaseled his way into her house and family.”

Lucius nodded at him, remembering how prejudiced the woman had been in life. “You have a point. I will make sure that any discussions that I have will be done in front of Winky or Dobby so that you have full disclosure of what we spoke of.”

Harry looked down at his lap and then back up to Lucius. “I want to thank you for this morning. I was upset.”

Lucius smiled at the boy. “I could tell that. We need to start our alliance somewhere and begin to trust each other. Now that you are my son-in-law, we really need to work through any differences we may have had.”

“How can you sit there and talk so calmly about this?” Harry asked, wide-eyed.

“I have had a few hours to ponder things. I had Dobby retrieve the Daily Prophet for the last week. That way I would be a bit more up-to-date with the situation at hand.”

Harry shook his head. “You aren’t really a prisoner anymore and you can’t harm me based on the vows we exchanged.”

“That is good,” he replied. “I would still like to talk to you about quite a few things and if possible, I would like to help you on your journey.”

“What all has Voldemort told you of the horcruxes?” Harry asked, not caring if he should jump into this line of questioning or not.

“Before you defeated him as a baby, he told me about his plans on being immortal. There were six in all. I know that. He was going to create his seventh when you defeated him. I know that you have destroyed at least one. That would be the diary. I know that his first life is forfeit. You have to find the remaining five and with the destruction of the final one, he will be defeated.”

“Is there anything else that I need to know? Do you know what they all are?” Harry asked.

“I don’t know all of them. The diary was put in my hands for safe-keeping. I did not find out until later that it was one of the horcruxes, otherwise I would have found a safe place for it. Never would I have suspected that a second year would be able to defeat the Dark Lord,” Lucius replied, gazing thoughtfully at the boy sitting across from him.

Harry smirked. “I guess you are not going to misjudge me again, right?”

“There is no possible way. You are going to defeat the Dark Lord with or without my help, though. I would much rather help. Even with all I just stated, you are my son-in-law.”

“Thank you, Lucius,” Harry replied.

He knew that he needed to finish up at the Dursleys’ in order to begin searching for the horcruxes. “Now I have to ask; are you ready to fulfill your part of our bargain today?”

Lucius looked at him, surprised. He had forgotten that he was to be secret keeper for the boy. “Are you sure that is wise, with the information that will be leaked later in the day?”
Harry nodded. “I need to protect my family. I am only living there for the blood protection at the moment. I plan on leaving there as soon as this is done. Then I do not need to see my relatives again. Voldemort would not believe that I would be stupid enough to make you my secret keeper.”

Lucius nodded. “Have you given thought to the how the wizarding world is going to react to your marriage?”

“How can I even think about how they will react when I am still reacting to it? I just found out that I am married to my enemy from a ceremony that I only remember from a dream. How is that possible?” Harry was filled with frustration again.

“We need to get some things taken care of, one of them being a trip to Diagon Alley.” Lucius told the boy. They had a few goals for the day, now was not the time to get into the discussion of why's.

“What do we need to do?” Harry asked, suddenly tired again.

“For one thing, you need to get your ring. It is be in one of the Potter vaults, I am sure. You also need to be added to the list of heirs on my vaults. First, you need to place Draco’s ring on your finger. This signifies that you are indeed a Malfoy now and that you fall under the ancient protection accorded to the Malfoy family. I am quite sure that the Potter line is equally protected; Draco needs to have proof that he is protected from both lines. If you have his ring, he is without the protection that he needs to quite possibly to keep him alive while he is in enemy territory.”

Harry could only nod his head. This was becoming more and more complex. He didn’t quite know what he should do now. “Is there any way for it to be broken, if I send him back his ring?”

Lucius gazed thoughtfully at the boy. “I’m sorry that a match with my son is not what you planned. In fact, I have no idea how this happened and I for one would like to know how it came about. However, if you return his ring he has lost all protection.”

Lucius got up and walked over to Harry, who had pulled the ring out of his pocket. The man knelt down in front of Harry and took the ring from him. He then picked up Harry’s left hand and slipped the ring on his finger. “Husband of my son, you are hereby recognized and are fully accepted into the House of Malfoy.” Lucius then kissed the ring.

As his lips touched the ring, Harry felt sparks from the ring. He felt it as it became snug on his finger. He looked down at the ring. He moved to touch the piece, looking at the intricate design on it, while trying to remove it. Lucius’ hand stopped him. “It is a part of you now. It will only come off at your death. When your son is born another ring shall be fashioned for him. He will wear it until the day he marries. It will then slip from his finger and be placed on his beloved’s finger.”

Harry could only nod. His head was screaming that this was all wrong. He didn’t want to accept this, but he knew that the proof was on his finger. “Can we go to my aunt’s house now?” he asked shakily, not wanting to disrupt the moment that he had just shared with Lucius, yet not wanting to think about the moment either.

“Yes, let’s get our family protected first.” Lucius said, showing that he now considered Harry's family as part of his. "Will you be returning there after today?"

“I don’t plan on it. Now that Winky has made this place livable again, I can move in here. That will keep my family safe from threats. If it is known that I have publicly renounced my family for the treatment I suffered through my life, then Voldemort will not want to torture them as much. He will see that in some strange way, they were furthering his cause. Well, that is the assumption that
I am going on.”

“It is a wise assumption. No one can truly understand the way of the Dark Lord, but I do not think that he will care about your family if he knows that you are not there anymore. I assume that your treatment will be told to a larger scale than normal. He will realize that you have no feelings for your family,” the older man agreed.

“All right, let’s go then. Please be warned, my family is the worst sort of Muggle there is. They will all look down upon you. I’m warning you in advance so that you will try to remain pleasant,” Harry said, knowing that Lucius was about to be shocked.

He took the other man’s arm and Apparated to Privet Drive. He was thankful that his uncle’s car was still in the driveway. Harry walked to the door and opened it. “Aunt Petunia,” he called as he walked in.

His aunt walked out of the kitchen with a scowl on her face. Harry knew that his aunt reverted back to her former self when her uncle was around. “Aunt Petunia, I would like to introduce you to Lucius Malfoy. He is here to help with the protection that I mentioned to you the other night.”

“A pleasure to meet you, Madam Dursley,” Lucius bent over her hand and kissed it softly.

“Mr. Malfoy,” she said stiffly. “Please come into the kitchen, Harry. Your uncle is not feeling well today so he is home sick. He will not be pleased with this.”

Harry watched his aunt as she talked. He knew that her voice was carrying upstairs for Vernon to hear, if he were listening. “Aunt Petunia, I’m sorry I brought another ‘freak’ into the home, but after we finish today I don’t have to return.”

She nodded and then turned, speaking loudly. “Come on then. Do not disturb your uncle. He has worked hard to provide for you.” She walked into the kitchen with the other two following her.

Harry closed the door behind them and then placed a silencing charm around the door. He explained while his aunt watched him. “We will still hear him if he comes to the door, Aunt Petunia.”

“Did you mean it, Harry? Is this man the one who is going to keep us protected?” she asked looking at the other man as the façade she had just displayed at the foot of the steps disappeared.

“Yes, he is. I do not have to come back anymore and you will be protected from Voldemort,” Harry said softly.

“Harry…” his aunt started to say something.

“Aunt Petunia, I am thankful for the last couple of days. I have seen what a strong woman you are. I have also seen the relationship that we could have had if things had been different. I will leave a way for you to get me if you ever need me or want to see me.” He bit his lip as he looked at his aunt.

She walked over to him and gave him a hug. “It would only be when both Vernon and Dudley were not around, but I would very much like to stay in your life now. I never fully realized before this week that you are a part of me. I see the determination in you that my father had. It was a desire that he always had to prove himself. I never noticed it until I saw your determination when you came home.”

Harry smiled at her. “It will not be safe right now for us to get together. I am going to make it
publicly known that I detest my family and that I have finally escaped your clutches. That way the man after me will not think that I would ever come here for sanctuary. The house is also going to be placed under a Fidelius Charm. This will make the house practically invisible.” Harry took a breath and looked at his aunt, who seemed to be following him.

“The Fidelius Charm will hide the house from anyone who has not specifically been told where it is. I looked up a slight variation from the normal charm. Since this is a Muggle neighborhood, people would wonder why the house disappeared. Muggles that already know where you live will still know where you live. Any wizards that may have known where the house is will not know anymore, not unless Mr. Malfoy tells them the location.”

“So, even though Dudley is not home right now, he will be able to come home?” she asked hesitantly.

“Yes, he will be able to come home. If any of Uncle Vernon's business associates happen to be a wizard then the person will have to be told the address by Lucius to find the house. They will understand as soon as they realize that you are indeed related to a wizard.”

“Oh, but your uncle wouldn’t work with any of your kind,” she said quickly.

“Never be sure of that, Aunt Petunia. Until the war is over, I want to be very careful about who actually gets the information. Before I allow Mr. Malfoy to give them the address, I will have a background check done on them.”

“What about the people that do know how to get here? Can they tell the wizard?” she asked.

“No, only Lucius can reveal the secret to any wizard. This is one of the most finely tuned charms I have seen. Typically the person is hiding from the entire world, but I don’t want your lives to stop because my life is in danger.”

“Oh, Harry.” She hugged him. Then she looked him in the face. “Do you truly trust this man with the secret?”

“Of course, Aunt Petunia. He is practically family now,” Harry laughed.

She looked over at Lucius, who had remained quiet throughout the entire exchange. He stood up and walked to the woman. “I make this solemn vow to you, madam. I will keep your secret safe and let none harm the family of my family.”

She looked at him suspiciously again. “That old man said I was your last relative, Harry. What exactly is going on?”

Harry laughed weakly and then looked to Lucius. “Well, apparently sometime during the last school year, I got married.”

“What?” she stared in shock.

Harry managed to look subdued before he faced her again. “It seems that at some point within the last weeks of school, I performed a bonding ceremony with Lucius’ son. It was only revealed to me last night.”

Lucius smirked at the boy. “Serves both of you right for playing in things you should leave for the adults. I don’t know how many times I have had to rescue the both of you from the scraps.”

“They have done this before?” she asked him.
“The two of them were always fighting. I know I was called to the school a few times over these battles. They finally decided to stop fighting one day. The next day they found a secret spot and decided to pull a prank on someone else. Apparently neither of them realized that what they were performing was a ritual to bind them to each other, and not to have their ‘victim’ bound to the tree they were under,” Lucius said smoothly. He didn’t know why, but he didn’t want the woman to know the truth. It was safer this way. If anyone asked her, she would tell them what she had heard. They would know that she didn’t know the first thing about Harry’s life.

“So he is married to a boy?” His aunt sat down and looked at him. “Harry, what am I going to do with you?”

“I’m sorry, Aunt Petunia. I would have invited you, but like Lucius said, Draco convinced me to prank his friend. He thought it would be great fun. Just wait until I get my hands on the git!”

“Now, now Harry. Both of you planned this prank. You went into the bonding just as willingly as he did. You both have to suffer the consequences. Sadly, I cannot get you two out of.”

“Yes, sir,” Harry managed to look like he was repentant of the evil that they had done. This pleased his aunt.

“I assume that one day in the future I will get to meet this young man? Perhaps sometime I can visit London and meet you there,” she said softly.

“I’m sure that we can arrange that Mrs. Dursley,” Lucius replied smoothly. “In fact, as soon as it is safe, we can have you visit the manor. I’m sure my wife would love to meet the people that raised our Harry.”

“Please, call me Petunia. Yes, that sounds lovely.”

Harry sat meekly as Lucius and his aunt talked to each other civilly about visiting Malfoy Manor. He was shocked that his aunt could be persuaded by Lucius’ smooth tones. “Well, I think we need to perform the spell before Uncle Vernon decides come downstairs.”

“A wise idea, Harry,” Aunt Petunia replied. She then sat back and watched as Harry and Lucius performed the spell that would take her house off of any map that a wizard would see. When they were finished, Harry smiled at his aunt. He stood up and hugged her.

“I know that I can’t do that in a minute, but I will regret the, now that we have started having them.”

“Me too,” she said, gazing into his green eyes. “You take care of yourself. I want to see you soon.”

“Yes, ma’am.” Harry turned to take the silencing spell off the door but stopped. He turned around and said, “If for some reason you have any kind of trouble, run to Mrs. Figg’s house. She has been a lookout for me since I was placed here. She will know how to get in touch with me. She will also have access to an owl if you need to send me a message that way. I will let her know your address just so she can continue to keep an eye on the neighborhood for me.”

“Mrs. Figg? But she hated you!”

“She told me once that she treated me the way she did because she knew that I wouldn’t be allowed to visit her if I actually liked going.”

His aunt looked shamed at this, “You know, I believe she is right in that.”
Harry took down the silencing charm and then walked up the stairs. He opened the door to his room and packed everything quickly. Lucius watched from the door and took in the surroundings. To say he was perplexed about the Dursley household would have been an understatement. After Harry checked under the loose floorboard he levitated his trunk to the door. Lucius backed out of the doorway for him to get out.

Harry looked at the door down the hall and then walked to it. He knocked on it softly and heard his uncle bellow from inside. Harry opened the door softly and stepped in. His uncle looked at him in rage and was about to start yelling. “Please, Uncle Vernon, let me say something before you start.”

His uncle glared at the boy as he continued, “I just wanted to tell you goodbye. I will not be coming back after today. I have packed all of my belongings. I have taken care of the protection that I promised you. You can now live your life free from me.” Harry turned to leave without letting his uncle answer him, but he stopped. “Although I would not mention to your boss that your nephew is Harry Potter; he might get a bit upset after he reads the Daily Prophet tomorrow. He happens to like freaks like me.” Harry walked out as his uncle sputtered.

Harry walked down the stairs happily as he heard his uncle bellow. His aunt looked at him and he only grinned. He whispered so that his uncle wouldn’t hear his voice from the top of the stairs. “I just let him know that his boss just happens is a wizard. Personally, I trust his boss because he has always been nice to me when I have seen him in the Quality Quidditch Shop, but I don’t know that I would trust him just yet with the address.”

Harry had to smother her grin. She had just learned to accept that her nephew was not actually a freak. Now she had to contend with the fact that Vernon would now come home from work muttering about the freak he worked for. “Thank you, Harry. He shall be fun to live with now,” she said sarcastically.

Harry snorted as he opened the cupboard door. He went inside and cleared it of anything that might have shown that he lived in there. He looked around one last time before closing the door and looking to Lucius. “Do you mind a quick walk around the corner? It should only take a few minutes. Mrs. Figg should have heard by now that you have escaped prison.”

Harry heard his aunt gasp as he said that. He gazed at her over his shoulder and winked. “Who better to protect you than one of Voldemort’s most trusted advisors?”

“Harry Potter!” she shrieked.

He rushed over to her and hugged her tightly before kissing her cheek. He was still getting used to this new relationship, but this could be the last time he saw her. “I love you, Aunt Petunia. Don’t worry. He is one of the good guys now.”

He walked out the door listening to his aunt mutter about ax murderers in her house and how St. Brutus’ would have been a much safer school for Harry. Harry only laughed as he walked out of the yard and onto the sidewalk. He was promptly greeted by Tonks, who seemed to be fuming.

“Tonks!” He hugged her tightly before he realized what he was doing. “What are you doing here?”

“Guard duty. Apparently it needs to be adjusted. Do you care to explain why your aunt’s house is no longer visible, even though I know it is right there?”

Harry stepped back from the girl he loved. He hadn’t told anyone what he was doing. He had also forgotten that a team of Order members watched over the house. “Well, I guess guard duty is no longer a necessity. It is now one of the most hidden houses in Britain.”
“Harry, what are you doing and why is Malfoy with you? Have you lost your ever-loving mind?” she asked.

Harry took a step back as he looked into the face of the girl he loved. His eyes filled with pain as he thought of all of the memories they had together. It was not here, though. It hurt. All of his memories were filled with fake personas.

“Well, I don’t plan on staying at the Dursleys’ this summer. I have other things that I have to do. Shouldn’t you run along and find Remus now?” he asked bitterly.

“Remus? What has gotten into you, Harry?” she asked, looking from him to Malfoy.

“I’m sorry,” he said, with his eyes downcast. “I can’t talk about everything right now. It isn’t the time. I’m sorry for my outburst. If you would like to come to the old headquarters, I can tell you some of it. In fact, you had better bring Moony as well.”

“That is the other problem. We can’t get into the headquarters. For some reason, none of us know where it is.”

Harry smiled sheepishly and then handed her a slip of paper from his pocket. “Burn it after you show Moony. I will be back there in about fifteen minutes. I need to speak with Ms. Figg about my family.”

Tonks walked with Harry while keeping an eye on Malfoy as they walked through the neighborhood. It wasn’t that she didn’t trust him with Harry, but well, she didn’t trust him.

“Tonks, I promise he is not going to harm me. You don’t have to glare at him.”

“Harry, I don’t know what ideas you have cooked up in your head, but don’t you remember that he is a Death Eater? How could you forget something like that?”

“I didn’t forget, Tonks, and somehow I don’t think this is a conversation for my neighborhood to hear,” he said stiffly as they approached Mrs. Figg’s house. He walked to her door and rang it, trying to not touch the girl beside him.

His dream girl was not actually Tonks. It hurt to be near her, but he knew that he needed to start separating the two. Remus was madly in love with Tonks. He could never have Tonks. He was married to Malfoy.

Mrs. Figg opened the door and let the three in. She added her glare to Tonks’ when Lucius stepped into the room. “Mrs. Figg, a pleasure to see you again.”

“A bit too soon if you ask me, Mr. Malfoy,” she spat out.

“Mrs. Figg, Mr. Malfoy needs to give you the address to my aunt’s house. It is now under a Fidelius Charm and I need you to continue keeping an eye on the place for me. I have also told my aunt that she is to come to you if she needs me,” Harry said before hateful words could be spoken.

“You did what?” Tonks and Mrs. Figg said at the same time.

“I am protecting my family. My aunt and I have come to an understanding in the past few days and if she needs me, I need you to get in touch with me.”

The older woman nodded. “How am I supposed to do that?”

Harry smirked thinking of what the old woman had to be thinking. Lucius first told Mrs. Figg
where Harry’s aunt lived while Harry wrote out his address on a slip of paper. “That should do it. Thank you, Mrs. Figg, for everything. Would you mind if we used your floo to get back to the house? It could still be a bit dangerous outside. I don’t want anyone to become suspicious of the neighborhood just yet.”

“Certainly, my boy. Certainly.” She handed the slip of paper back to Harry and he pocketed it. He stepped into the fireplace and shouted his address.

He stepped out of the fireplace followed by Lucius. They brushed the soot off of their clothes and Harry yelled for Dobby. “Dobby, Remus and Tonks should be arriving soon. Mrs. Figg has also been given the address. She may need me sometime and if she does, it will be urgent.”

Dobby nodded and popped away. Harry smiled at Lucius, “That didn’t go too horribly, did it?”

The other man shook his head, “Not too horribly at all.”

They walked into the living room into a mass chaos of red. Everyone stopped what they were doing as the door opened. Harry heard the fireplace behind him come to life as Remus and Tonks both came out. “Harry, what is the meaning of all of this?” Remus demanded when he saw the boy.

Ron and Hermione rushed over to where Harry was, both of them questioning him at the same time. Mrs. Weasley pushed the two teens out of the way before hugging the boy tightly. Harry watched Fred and George gape at Lucius.

Harry took in the chaos around him. He heard voices yelling his name, accusing him of things and asking him a million questions. It all stopped when the man beside him spoke up. “Please end this infernal racket! Harry just got back in expecting a quiet sanctuary and he comes in to be harassed by you asking him an indecent amount of questions. Is Arthur here?”
"Yes, Lucius, I am here," Arthur called out as he walked into the room, dusting soot from his clothing. “Now that we are all here I believe we can start with the explanations."

Harry looked over at Arthur and then to Lucius. He nodded to both of them and walked into the room only to be surrounded by the upset Weasleys.

No matter what he said or did, Harry knew this was going to hurt his friends. They were already hurt as it was. He looked around the room taking in their appearances, from Ron and Hermione huddled together with a confused, slightly betrayed expression to Mr. Weasley supporting his wife with a gentle hand.

They were going to be angry and hurt, with good reason of course, and he didn't want to do it, but there was no recourse. Harry took a deep breath before he started. "I'm sorry. I have to say that first because I am so incredibly sorry. I didn't know that two days ago my entire world would begin to crumble."

He gazed around the room, locking eyes with everyone at least for a second, including Lucius, who was quickly becoming his most trusted confidant. He reached inside of himself for a boost of courage to begin the explanations. "There have been so many things that have happened and come to light in just the last couple of days. I don't know all of the facts, but I am going to try to explain it…"

"Bloody hell, Harry. What kind of explanation can you come up with on how the Daily Fucking Prophet knew about my best friend's marriage, to Draco Fucking Malfoy no less, before me?" Ron yelled at him.

"How could you do that to us, Harry?" Hermione added in.

Harry closed his eyes. "I'm sorry. I had no idea that it was going to be in the Daily Prophet today. In fact, until this morning I had no idea about the marriage either," he replied trying to maintain control of his temper.

"This morning? Right, good one, mate. So, was it a private ceremony in front of the Death Eaters?" Ron snapped.

"Ronald!" his mother exclaimed.

"Well, it's true, Mum. Harry didn't even tell you or Dad that he was married. Dad knew about him getting the scum out of prison, but he didn't understand why Harry would care. Why do I have to sit here calmly when we need to question whether or not he has been cursed?" Ron blew up at his mother.

"Ronald Bilius Weasley, you will not talk to your mother that way. You will listen to Harry's explanation or I shall place a silencing spell on you," his father said angrily.

Ron glared at Harry, who felt even more miserable than he had felt that morning. He lowered his head and began to twist the ring on his finger.

"So it is true?" Hermione asked a bit more calmly. "You managed to marry him, without telling a single person. I'm hurt. I am your friend, Harry, or at least I thought I was. Ginny was your girlfriend. Your girlfriend, Harry! How could you?"
"I'm sorry!" he yelled. "I'm sorry I hurt you. I'm sorry I can't be the person you think I am. I am trying to explain it, but I don't even know how to do that. All I know is that I left Hogwarts with every intention of destroying Voldemort. Now I am dealing with a ton of other problems, the least of which is somehow redesigning a fucking prison system that kills innocent people." Harry shook his head. "I can't do this. I can't deal with this. I will be back later when I might be able to talk to someone."

Harry made eye contact with Ginny. "I'm so sorry. I didn't know about the marriage. Bloody hell, I found out sometime around three this morning that I am married. Right now all I'm concerned with is getting it annulled. There should be some law that allows it for when you do it unconsciously..."

"Harry, I already told you that you can't get out of this. It is magically binding. There is nothing that can come between the two of you," Lucius said quietly watching the boy trying to maintain his sanity.

"Lucius, it just isn't fair. I don't even remember it. There has to be some way out of something you only know from dreams! DREAMS! How the hell can I be married to someone and not even remember the ceremony?"

"Harry, I looked into it today for you. Sadly, Lucius is right about this. The bonding that you have done is permanent. It is even stronger than what most marriages are based upon. This bonding is very rare and has never been able to be undone," Arthur said, walking over to Harry and putting his hands on his shoulders.

Harry slumped down. "I'm so sorry I let everyone down."

Tonks and Remus moved over to Harry as well. "I don't understand this, but I am here to support you. You are the only family I have left," Remus said.

Tonks looked at him. "I'm going to get to the bottom of this and if I have to kill that cousin of mine, so that you can be happy, I just might do it." She ruffled his hair in a friendly manner. "You know, I love you, kid."

Harry gazed into her face with tears ready to fall from his eyes. He put his hand on her cheek and whispered mostly to himself, "If only it were true, I would be the happiest man alive."

This earned him two very strange looks from Remus and Tonks. He turned to the others. "I can't do this." Harry turned quickly and walked out of the room, leaving questioning stares behind him.

"Harry!" Hermione yelled. She stood up to go after him. Something strange had happened to her best friend and she wanted to know what it was. Remus stopped her at the door. He solemnly shook his head at her as he Lucius pushed past them and followed Harry.

"Hermione, give him a minute. There is something going on and I would like to know more about it. Harry looks just as confused as the rest of us and all he is getting is accusations."

Hermione looked up at her former professor and nodded. "I'm sorry, Professor."

"Just sit still and we will all have some answers in a minute." Remus looked toward the closed kitchen door through which Harry had gone. With his heightened hearing he could hear strains of what Harry was saying to Lucius. What he was hearing didn't quite make sense. Being his unofficial godfather, he decided he should be in there as well as Lucius so he followed with Arthur at his side. "Don't anyone else leave this room," he said as they walked out.

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"Lucius, I can't do this! I can't go in there and lie. I can't tell them the truth," Harry cried as he sat in a chair with his head on his knees.

"Harry, you need to calm down. This is your family, right?" Lucius paused while Harry nodded into his legs. "If they truly are your family, they will support you no matter what. Haven't you learned that yet?"

"When have I ever had the chance? I haven't exactly had a normal family."

"Pull yourself together, Harry. You just said that the Weasleys and the other two were your family. Haven't the last six years shown you anything? Your family will not turn their backs on you, and if they did then they do not deserve your loyalty. They might not like the circumstances, but they will stand beside you," Lucius said, trying to reason with the boy. He knew his young friend was under a great deal of strain, but Harry needed to calm down.

"He's right, Harry," Remus said from the doorway. "I was one of your father's closest friends. I couldn't love you more if you were my own son. I don't know what happened, but I'm here to support you. If it means that I have to accept this De…Lucius into your life, then I will." Remus walked over to Harry, put his hand on the boy's head, and knelt down beside him. "I don't know what happened, but I will sit calmly and listen to what you have done this week."

"For that matter, Harry, I know everything, and despite it all, you are still a Weasley. You may have changed your last name to Malfoy, but you will always remain one of us. He will be welcomed into the house as well, providing of course he does not end up in Azkaban," Arthur said sincerely as Lucius sent him an evil glare.

"Now, now, Lucius, I have a point to make. Draco was the reason that Dumbledore died. Snape may have performed the spell, as I'm sure you know by now, but it was Draco's task to fulfill. I gave the copies of the paper to Dobby just to make sure you knew what was going on. I just didn't have today's paper at that point. For some reason it was being held," he said with a wry grin.

Lucius glanced at Harry. "Trust me, Arthur, I plan on getting to the bottom of this. My son is not a killer and I cannot see Severus killing the Headmaster by choice. This much I know. That is unimportant. Right now we need to focus on Harry."

Harry looked at the three other men in the room. His eyes were bloodshot with crying. He looked over as Tonks opened the door to the kitchen. "Is everything going alright in here?"

"Yes, Tonks, it is," Harry said softly. He then looked at Lucius. "I can't tell them the truth. The truth is not my secret to reveal. It is bad enough that I keep getting it in bits and pieces. I don't think anyone can truly handle the truth. I'm still having issues with it."

Lucius gazed at the boy sitting in front of him. He had seen courage in this boy. He had watched this boy fight against Voldemort at fifteen. This boy had already faced so many challenges, yet he was afraid of the truth. He was afraid that it would not only hurt his family, but his husband as well. Harry's depth of compassion amazed Lucius. He saw it when Harry ordered him released from prison. It wasn't until this moment that he truly realized how loyal and faithful this boy, no, make that young man, before him was.

"Harry," he began, "I know that in the end you will be fair. I have already sworn my allegiance to you. You, not the Order. You are the one who will be in the final battle. If you feel the need to expose this secret, to save my son, then I will support you completely. Even if you are not able to save him from the choices that he has made, I will be behind you."
Harry's stared into the older man's face. "Even if this secret could be what ultimately destroys him?"

"The bonding ceremony can never be severed. With the ceremony, you became my son. As my son, I am honor bound to keep you protected. Hopefully the secret will not leave this house, but we will cross that bridge when we arrive at it."

Harry nodded and looked at the other occupants of the kitchen. They were all curious as to what was being kept secret. "If you don't mind, I don't want to repeat this more than I have to. I would also like an oath that none shall talk of this. It will endanger lives." The other three nodded.

Harry stood up and walked into the other room where the rest of his family was waiting. He had walked into the kitchen a broken boy, but he walked out a strong man. His head, now, was held high and he walked as if he owned the world. He knew the others would be shocked when he revealed the truth to them, possibly even hate him. It needed to be done; there was no other choice.

He stood in the center of the room. A single glance silenced the room as Lucius and the others flanked him. Lifting his head into the air just a bit more, Harry spoke the spell clearly. "Specialis votum loquor nullus." He looked around at the shocked faces. They had essentially been sworn to secrecy. Hermione and Ron looked at each other knowing that this was definitely larger than they had originally thought.

"I'm sorry I had to do that, but what I'm going to talk about cannot leave this room. There are many lives at stake now, not just mine." Harry looked everyone in the face before he continued, "I cannot risk anything I say being spoken of outside this room. I refuse to have more deaths on my hands that could have been prevented."

Arthur walked over to Molly and she clutched his hand. She just knew that Harry was already in trouble. She knew she should have convinced him to stay at the Burrow longer.

"It begins with a tale of love, a love so pure that it should never have been hidden." He looked over at Tonks who just looked at him, confused before she sat in a chair near him. "Sadly, I'm still affected by this vision of love."

Ginny was about to say something when Harry looked at her. "I'm sorry, Ginny, but you will be hurt. I'm sorry that I am not able to take the pain away, but everyone is insistent upon the truth. Just know that I never meant for you to be hurt. I do love you, but someone else claimed my heart." Ginny began to cry again silently.

"Ron and Hermione, I love you both dearly, and I know this will hurt you as well. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I couldn't be more open and honest about what I was going through, but I tried. I just couldn't tell you everything. There were reasons why I was so 'obsessed' with Draco and they had nothing to do with him." He closed his eyes and thought back. "Well, actually it had everything to do with him, but as you both know I first tried to find out what he was doing in the Room of Requirement. I knew that he was planning something, but I couldn't find out what."

He gazed around the room again; even the twins were silent. "It was during the times I was trying to spy on Draco that I fell in love. She was wonderful and beautiful and completely knocked me off my feet." Harry looked down at Tonks, letting emotion actually show in his eyes. "I loved her deeply; she became my heart and soul. I would do anything for her."

Harry knelt down in front of Tonks, pouring his heart out to her as he had longed to do for so long. Remus was looking between the two, trying to figure out their connection. "I don't know what it was that made me fall in love with her. I admit, the year before when we met I had a crush on her,
but I knew that she was older than me. She wouldn't be allowed to be with me."

"Harry…" she said, looking into his eyes, seeing his heart breaking as he focused on her.

"I don't know if it was the purple hair or the spirit she always had when she was around." Harry heard the gasps behind him as he described Tonks. "She attracted me like a moth to a candle. Our romance began very quickly and passion sparked out of control. She was everything I needed and so much more."

"Nymphadora, is there something I need to know?" Remus asked with a growl.

"Harry, I don't know what you are talking about," she said, looking into his face, confused. "I have never led you to believe…"

"No, Remus," Harry answered for her. He looked at his adoptive godparent and shook his head. "Sadly, she doesn't need to tell you anything." Harry closed his eyes as a tear fell from one of them. Tonks reached up and wiped it away.

"What happened next?" she asked quietly trying to get him to finish the story.

"I can't say when exactly it was that we started seeing each other. The first time I remember seeing her was on the train the day we arrived at Hogwarts. She found me in a compartment on the train with a broken nose. She said that it was the only compartment with the light on, so she went to check it out."

"Harry, I didn't see you that night." Tonks was really beginning to get worried. "Whoever it was is going to be arrested for impersonating an Auror."

"No, Tonks, you can't arrest her. That is all a part of the secret."

"Harry, someone pretended to be me and started some kind of relationship with you. I am going to kill the person. I have never thought of you that way," she stressed.

He looked down at her as if his heart were breaking again. "I realized that something was wrong last week when you professed your undying love to Remus. It took me quite a few days to discover the truth. So, please don't say that you never thought of me that way. I'm asking this for my sanity. I am having a hard enough time separating reality from fantasy as it is."

"I'm sorry," she whispered.

"I guess that does clear something up: it wasn't you that came back for me on the train. I think I already knew that. I think that it was just a test to see if the person could fool me and it worked."

Harry looked away from Tonks. Gazing at Ginny, he continued. "I'm not sure of exactly when my feelings changed for her. I had an enormous crush on Ginny the entire year. She was the only person I could think of, until I started spying. It was a dream come true when she became my girlfriend. I didn't realize I was falling in love with someone else at the same time."

"It was very magical and overwhelming. Some nights I felt as if I were being drugged. I'm not sure if it was from the incense that was in the room or if I was actually drugged with something. The first night we met outside of the Room of Requirements she kissed me. She pulled me into the room and we had sex. She claimed my body in a way I didn't think was possible." Harry blushed slightly as he continued the story. He hated watching the silent tears fall from Ginny's eyes. He wanted to wipe them all away, but he knew that he couldn't. He would be lucky if his "family" still wanted to associate with him after this.
"The next time it was just as passionate. She became very possessive of me. She hated any time that I spent with Ginny. She kept telling me that I needed to get rid of her. She didn't listen when I told her it wasn't that simple. She would get mad and get forceful in bed taking out her frustration on me.

"She would also spend a few hours just talking to me; talking like we had never talked before. She wanted to know about my family. I told her about the Dursleys, thinking that it was strange, since she had been to their house before. I shrugged it off. We talked of our love of flying and different things. She really came to know me as a person, the way no one else ever had. It more than made up for her possessive streak.

"Everything changed the night before Dumbledore died. That is a night that I didn't remember happening until just last night. Apparently, we performed an ancient spell together. I was quite willing to do anything she asked of me. We both cut our arms and repeated sacred words. A timing spell was obviously placed upon the document that needed to go to the Ministry. It was not sent until I remembered the dream."

"Polyjuice!" Hermione yelled, "The fucking bastard used Polyjuice to convince you that you were with Tonks."

Harry smiled sadly at his friend. "If only that were the case, Hermione. We were together for longer than an hour at a time. In fact, if I remember correctly I even woke up in her arms one morning, neither of us going back to our dorms."

"Bloody hell, Harry! You had sex with Draco fucking Malfoy and you didn't know it?" Ron yelled and then looked at his sister, "Behind my sister's back at that! I'm going to pound you." Ron jumped up but Ginny held him back.

"No, Ron. I'm not saying that I forgive him yet, but can't you look at him and see how this has torn him apart? Letting him live is torture. Letting him see how he tore apart your friendship is so much worse than actually hurting him physically," she said vengefully, no longer silently crying but ready for him to hurt.

"Ronald and Ginevra, both of you will settle down this instant. Harry is suffering quite enough without the two of you trying to begin something. He apologized to everyone with a specific one to both of you. Harry is a part of our family no matter what has happened, and I won't have either of you turning him away!" Mrs. Weasley began. She wasn't that thrilled with Harry now either, but she could tell that he was suffering. The poor dear thought he was in love with Tonks!

"Thank you, Mrs. Weasley. I knew they would not take this well. That is why I didn't plan to tell anyone. Mr. Weasley knows most of what has happened this week, as does Lucius."

"Harry," Hermione said slowly. She had been controlling her temper as well. She could see that her friend had been tempted away; it wasn't entirely his fault. "If it wasn't Polyjuice Potion then what did Draco use?"

He closed his eyes and then felt Lucius' hands on his shoulders. "Go on, son. I'm right here behind you." He was shaken by what Harry had revealed. He had no idea that Draco had been that strong.

"Well, it seems that there is another Metamorphmagus in the Black family. It was closely guarded secret. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, no one knew how powerful he really is."

Tonks looked at him, visibly shaken, "Draco?"
Harry nodded his head. "Somewhere in the few months we were together I fell madly in love with him. He would willingly show me the many transformations he could do, just as you did. He loved to torment me with his actual face. I should have figured it out, but I didn't."

"This explains why you barely said two words to me after the funeral. I was with the woman you loved," Remus said softly before standing up. He wrapped his arms around Harry, "I'm so sorry, cub. I'm so sorry you have to hurt this way. I wish I could take the pain for you."

Harry leaned into the hug and let his anger leave him. He pulled back and looked around the room at everyone. He could see mixed emotions as they all stared at him.

"As for the other explanation I know you all want, I'm sure Mr. Weasley can inform you of why I now trust Lucius. The two of us have seen things that should never have occurred. Right now, I don't think I feel up to talking to anyone. If you will all excuse me, I am going to lie down. I do not wish to be disturbed with questions about what I have just told you. I will talk about it with you when I am ready. I have only told you this much because I love each of you and you needed to know."

"Hey, Harry," Fred said.

"When is the bachelor party?" George asked, continuing Fred's thought. The twins fell against the wall in laughter.

Harry grinned then turned around and walked out of the door. He didn't look back, but he knew that everyone was watching him. He walked up the stairs to his room. After putting up silencing and locking charms, he finally threw himself onto the bed and cried.

"Harry."

"Go away, Draco. Just go away. I need to be alone."

"Harry, we need to talk. I need to see you."

Harry groaned as he heard the words in his subconscious. "Dammit, can't I even get a nap?"

He could hear the smirk in the voice. "Yes, you can take a nap. You can also become a widower faster than you became a husband."
"Merlin, Draco!" Harry said miserably. "I have just put myself through hell for my 'family' and now instead of calming down I have more to deal with?" Harry typically didn't say that much when talking to the voice in his head, but he just couldn't help it this time.

"I need you now, Harry. I hate saying it, but I do. He is mad. We are going to die soon."

Harry groaned. He couldn't tell if the voice was being overdramatic or there was actually danger present. "What do you want me to do?"

"Can you get out in about two hours? Meet me behind Madam Malkin’s. You will know it is me when you see me."

Harry sighed. "Fine. I will go face them again." He barely heard a thank you as he rolled over and hit his pillow. He took a deep breath and got out of bed.

He walked down the stairs and listened to the Weasleys arguing. He still felt bad that he had had to hurt them, but they would not have settled for the half-truths that wouldn't hurt as much.

He stepped into the room he had just left and glanced around. His eyes fell on Lucius who was sitting in the corner with a smirk on his face. He seemed to be enjoying the front row seat of a Weasley quarrel. Harry walked over. "Let's go to Diagon Alley now. We have things that need to be done."

Lucius nodded and smiled at the boy. "Gladly." As he rose from the chair, everyone looked over at him. They had apparently forgotten that he was in the room.

"We are going to Diagon Alley," Harry said firmly. "We will be there for at least two hours after which time I hope you have decided if you will still support me. I don't have time to question if you are still going to accept me. Each of you has my trust or you wouldn't be here. While I'm gone, please think about this. If you don't think that you can move beyond this, then please find your way out of the house." He glared at Ron as he finished his speech, hoping the look would actually get through to Ron.

Harry turned quickly and strode out of the room. He walked into the room where the floo was located. He grabbed a handful of powder and tossed it into the fireplace. "Diagon Alley."

He stepped out of the floo and dusted himself off. Within seconds Lucius was gracefully stepping out of the floo. "Where are we going first, Harry?"

"Gringotts." Harry walked through the Leaky Cauldron and to the secret entrance of Diagon Alley. Fortunately not many people had seen Harry as he walked next to Lucius. They went straight to Gringotts to be shown to Harry’s vault by the goblin Griphook.

"Leave us please. I need to look for something and I'm not sure how long we will be," Harry said to the goblin.

"Sir, would this be in reference to any jewelry that you may be in need of?" he asked politely.

Harry looked at the goblin. "Yes, it is."

"Then, Mr. Potter, you need your other vault."
Harry was shocked. The surprise had to show on his face.

"Mr. Potter, there is another vault that was to go to you upon marriage or your twenty-first birthday, whichever came first. We were instructed to keep it from you until that day. You are married now, sir, correct?"

"Yes he is, Mr. Gripshook," Lucius inserted while Harry was still processing this information. "Is there a key he should have?"

The goblin looked at the other man. "Mr. Malfoy, this is specifically for the Potter heir."

"Of course it is. I do not wish to imply otherwise. Mr. Potter has had a few shocks within recent weeks. I am merely trying to assist my son-in-law."

"So the rumor is true? Well if it isn't, the vault will know."

Harry was about to speak up when Gripshook took him by the arm and led him to a wall. "Mr. Potter, there are wards built into the vault that will only open if the conditions are met. Just place your hand on this rock and whisper *Alohamora* and the vault will open."

Harry followed the instruction and the wall slid open. "Thank you, Mr. Gripshook," he said softly, gazing around the room that had just been revealed.

Harry took a step in and gazed around. There was antique furniture lining the back wall of the vault. There were portraits lying against another wall. At least fifteen trunks were stacked in a corner. Harry was shocked. He didn't think anything had survived Godric's Hollow.

"Your father had much of this in storage because he wanted to have new furniture with his young wife," Gripshook said as he watched Harry's face. "I believe that you will find a letter on the desk in that corner. I was told specifically to make sure you received the letter when you found the vault."

Harry walked numbly to the desk and picked up the letter. He could see his name written on the outside in bold black letters. It was sealed with what he could only think was the Potter seal. "Mr. Potter, would you like for me to return in an hour? That should give you plenty of time to find what you need, correct?"

Lucius watched Harry as he sat down and stared at the letter. "Yes, that should be plenty of time. I shall contact you by the normal method if we need to leave before that."

Gripshook nodded remaining impartial to the customers. He walked back to his cart and rode back to the surface of the bank.

Lucius pulled up a chair, close to Harry, but still giving him some space. Harry was shaking as he moved his finger under the seal, opening the letter that had sat for at least 15 years.

*My Dearest Son,*

*It was my wish that I could see you grow up, but if you have been given access to your vault that means you are now an adult. It is dangerous right now, and I only hope that you have been taken care of. I'm afraid that I might not live much longer with Voldemort still on the loose.*

*Your mother and I have faced him already and I'm afraid the next time it will not be as pleasant. It is our wish for you to grow up happy and safe, but being a part of the Order is making that harder and harder. Dumbledore has just told us that we need to go into hiding because you are the next target of Voldemort.*
He did not go into the details, but I pray that you will be safe. This is my last "trip" to the outside world before our entire family disappears.

Times are rough. Hopefully you know your godfather and the other Marauders. They are my closest friends and the ones I trust the most. We have chosen Peter to keep our secret. Although, I still feel as if I am letting Sirius down by not letting him be our Secret Keeper. Everyone suspects that it would be him anyway.

I have so much that I need to say, but I cannot even begin to think of where to start. You are either twenty-one, which I am hoping for, or you have just got married. Your mother and I feel that this is the best time for you to have access to the rest of your inheritance.

If you have just got married then you need to get the Potter ring. It was not placed upon your finger growing up for fear that it would lead Voldemort to you if anything happens to us. However, you will be protected if anything has happened. Your mother placed protection spells on you that are the same as the ones in the ring. It is an ancient pure-blood tradition, but your mother studied it so that she could perform it. The power and strength in the family will be woven through the power of the ring. The ring will protect you if you are to wear it. It will protect your spouse when you get married. The protection in the ring will help with small accidents, but will also call upon the power of the family's power if you are faced in a duel.

The ring is in the top drawer of this desk. You need to place it on your spouse as soon as possible. The words are quite simple. Simply state to the ring that the person is your mate and the protection will be transferred. Sirius or Dumbledore should be able to help you if you are not marrying another pure-blood.

I must go, my son. The time draws near when I must go into hiding. I love you, my boy, and I hope that I was able to spend as much time with you as possible. There is so much I want to say, but the words are not forthcoming. Know that you are loved very dearly. You are our whole world. You will be given the key to this vault when you are twenty-one. This vault contains what you will need to start a family. I love you, my son.

Love,

Dad

Harry had tears running down his face as he read the letter. He was shaking from the shock of seeing his father's love before him. The knowledge that the two James had trusted most with Harry were both dead. Harry laid his head on the desk and cried.

Lucius sat quietly next to the boy, not disturbing him. He knew that this was an emotional moment. He watched as the boy's face went pale from shock. He watched the first tears start to fall and stain the letter Harry was reading. He watched the strong man in front of him break down at the very first and only letter he had ever received from his father. Lucius felt his own heart breaking thinking of how he would have felt writing such a letter to Draco, knowing that he was going to die. His cool mask of indifference was beginning to fall as well. He stood up and walked over to Harry and put his hand on his back, soothing him the way he did Draco upon occasion.

Harry composed himself and nodded to Lucius. Neither spoke for a few minutes. Harry reached for the drawer where the ring should be. He opened it and found a small black box. He picked up a box and opened it. In it was a plain silver ring with the words "eternal love" engraved on the inside. Harry fingered the ring on his hand. It was elegant and almost demanded that someone notice it. This new ring was plain and spoke of love. "Could this be it, or do you think it is another ring?"
"I would say that was it. The Potters always preferred to keep things simple, whereas our family has always had something to show our status." Lucius was controlling the urge to turn his nose in the air.

"Alright then, shall we go now?" Harry asked wanting to get away now that he had what he needed. Lucius nodded. On the way out, Harry grabbed a bag full of galleons from his regular vault. He didn't know how much money he had on him at Grimmauld Place, but he knew that he would need some soon.

They had just walked to the door of his vault when Griphook arrived with the cart to return to the lobby. "Ready, sirs?"

"Yes, we are ready. While we are here, I need to conduct some business as well," Lucius said. "I need to make sure that the Malfoy funds are taken care of for the spouse of the Malfoy heir as well as making sure that the appropriate forms are filled out for beneficiaries and such."

"Yes, sir. Would Mr. Potter need to do this as well for his own personal vaults, as well as the Black estate?"

Harry just nodded and groaned. He held on during the roller coaster ride back to the top of the bank. The next hour was filled with official documents being signed and accounts being assigned not only to Harry from the Malfoy funds, but also to Draco from the Potter/Black estates. It was noted that technically, there was a dowry set up, but since both families benefited in some way, there was no reason to have a real dowry. Harry also filled out forms for a will, making sure that not only Draco got his share, as his husband, but that those he truly cared about such as the Weasleys and Remus were taken care of. He knew that Draco did not need anything, but the others did.

They walked out of Gringotts to the flash of a camera. "Harry, do you have anything you want to say about your marriage to Draco Malfoy?"

"Harry, did you only get Lucius Malfoy released because of your marriage?"

"Mr. Potter, why did you choose to marry the son of a convicted Death Eater?"

"Harry, what did you wear for your marriage ceremony? Describe it to your adoring fans, please!"

Harry's eyes opened wide and he looked over at Lucius. He was standing there regally and so Harry copied his posture. He looked at the crowd of reporters and photographers. He had to think quickly. He knew that whatever he said, if he said anything at all, would be on the front page of all the newspapers. He stood up straight and took a deep breath.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please, I can only answer one question at a time," he said calmly although he was afraid. "Hello, Luna, how are you doing?" he asked his friend, seeing her standing there.

"Hi, Harry. I'm doing well. My father has me working this summer," she replied dreamily.

"I'm sure that is a good learning experience. Did you have a question for me?"

"Yes, Harry. Is it true that you had Mr. Malfoy released from prison for a non-personal reason? For some reason, no one believes me."

"You are correct. There are very specific reasons as to why Mr. Malfoy was released from Azkaban into my custody. I will gladly sit down with you, Luna, in a more personal setting. I will give you the exclusive story, especially if I do not start seeing the changes that I demanded the
"Mr. Potter, could you tell us as well?" Another reporter pushed Luna out of the way and held up a recording device.

"I'm sorry, but I trust the integrity of Luna Lovegood and I know that she will print the truth. Her father's paper has always printed the truth with regards to me. They will always be granted exclusives, unlike the Daily Prophet, which is under the thumb of the Ministry of Magic. When they begin to print every story that needs to be printed and not just speculation on the non-important things, then I might cooperate with them. That goes for all newspapers and magazines," Harry stated to the rude reporter.

"I will also give everyone a statement right now because I do not have time to be harassed while I take care of business in Diagon Alley today. I have married Draco Malfoy. My marriage is not up for discussion. Lucius Malfoy has been released into my care for reasons that are also not going to be discussed on a street corner. Thank you for your time, and have a good day."

Harry walked down the rest of the steps and took Luna's hand. He pulled her through the crowd as the others continued to yell questions at him. Lucius followed behind them just as regally as he had stood beside Harry. Harry leaned over and whispered his address into Luna's ear and told her that she could use it in emergencies. He also told her that he would send her a letter when they could get together for the interview.

Luna smiled at him and wandered off into the crowd. Harry chuckled as the reporters tried to find out where she was going to meet him. Harry looked up at Lucius. "Well, how did I do for being attacked immediately?"

"I am proud of you. I thought for sure that you were going to either blurt something out or run through the crowd."

"I decided to play nicely. It is also known that you cannot trust the word of anyone except the Quibbler for stories about me. Come on, we need to take you to Madam Malkin’s and get you some new robes, especially if we are going to keep running into reporters." Harry smiled at his father-in-law.

Lucius was stunned by the smile. The boy's face was totally transformed. "Yes, I do need some new clothes. Although, Dobby did go to the Manor and get some of my belongings, which will suffice until we make our trip there."

"That is good. I'm glad that you are cooperating with Dobby. He has been my saving grace, in a strange way, ever since he has been freed."

"Please do not remind me of how I lost my house-elf, Mr. Potter," Lucius said with a gleam in his eye.

Harry just laughed as he walked into the clothing store. He looked around at the robes for a few minutes and then excused himself mentioning an errand he needed to do. Harry glanced at Lucius and patted his pocket where the ring was resting. Lucius looked at him and nodded without saying a word. He understood that Harry was about to meet Draco. He looked down at his watch and noticed the time. He would give the boys thirty minutes and then he would search for Harry to make sure he was still safe.

Harry slipped out the front door and down the alley. He disappeared into the shadows to wait for Draco to show up.
He didn’t have to wait long. He felt a presence behind him in the shadows. “Harry, you came.” He heard a breathless voice behind him.

He turned around slowly and looked into the grey eyes that had always looked at him in hate. Now there was something else in them; he couldn’t quite tell what. “Of course I came. You said he was going to kill you. I assume you mean Voldemort.”

“Shhh! Don’t say his name. You might not be afraid of it, but I have seen what he can do,” Draco said in a panic.

“Trust me, I have seen what he can do. He has affected me my entire life. He killed my parents, remember?” Harry asked feeling his temper rising. “Of course, why stop there. He has tried to murder me just about every year since I found out I was a wizard. Crucio isn’t very much fun, you know that?”

“I’m sorry, Harry. I know you have seen it all, but we aren’t all like you. I am not strong like you. I was raised to bow down to him. That makes it harder for a person to leave,” Draco replied, knowing he had to keep his temper in control. “I can’t be gone too long. We are watched all the time. I just mentioned needing something from Knockturn Alley. I don’t have long.”

“I don’t have long either. I just thought you might need the ring. It sounded so urgent. Your father made it seem like you would die without your own ring,” Harry asked, running a hand through his hair. His new golden ring glinted in the dim lighting.

Draco saw the ring on him. He took Harry’s hand and looked down at it, softly caressing Harry’s hand. “It looks as if it was always there,” he whispered. “I’m sorry.”

“Yeah, well, there isn’t anything we can do about it, right?” Harry asked, knowing he wouldn’t get an answer. He gazed into Draco’s eyes, “Your father is waiting for me. I left him shopping for clothes.”

“My father is here? Are you insane? It isn’t safe for him either.” Draco was about to panic.

“Trust me, Draco, he is safe. There are too many people after us today. Besides, if there was trouble inside, he would come out this door behind us, right?” Draco hadn’t noticed that they were standing directly at the backdoor to Madam Malkin’s.

Harry sighed and took Draco’s left hand. He looked down where the other ring had sat, the ring that was now on his finger. He slipped his other hand into his pocket and pulled out the ring from his father. Harry looked at it just before slipping it onto the pale hand. He murmured the magical words spoken over his ring not so very long ago. He kissed it gently, trying to evade the piercing grey eyes staring at him.

"Harry," Draco said softly.

"No, don't. I can't," he replied softly, still trying to not look the other in the face.

"For what it is worth, I'm sorry I'm not her. If I could have really been her, then you might love me for me and not a face."

Harry finally looked into the misty grey eyes, wondering how they could really be so sad. He opened his mouth to speak, but the words didn't come out.

"Besides that, other than the face, it was me." Draco looked around suddenly, quickly changing forms.
Harry was about to say something when he saw Ron and Hermione turn the corner. "Damn," he whispered.

Draco stiffened as the other two drew near to them. "Hey, Harry," Ron said. He might have understood the circumstances, but he still wasn't happy with his best friend.

"Hey, I'll be with you in a minute. I have to finish talking to my," Harry looked closely at Draco's appearance, "associate. He was with me the day I went into Azkaban."

Ron and Hermione looked at him closely. They both wondered why Harry had not mentioned taking someone to Azkaban with him. Harry continued, "I know you can keep this quiet, but he is one of the guards that was there that day." The friends nodded, understanding showing on their faces.

"Fine, Harry. We will wait for you at the end of the alley then," Hermione said, quickly pulling Ron down the street. Ron just glared at the guard as he was dragged along.

"Dammit, not a moment’s peace anywhere."

"It's fine, Harry. I have to hurry. It isn't safe to be seen with you. There are spies everywhere and they all know that you have to see me sometime soon," he said quickly, glancing both ways down the alley.

"We need to talk sometime, Draco. Really talk."

"I know that. It is hard enough trying to convey emotions into your head, let alone actually have a real conversation with you."

Harry hit the wall. "Fine, listen carefully because I am not going to say this again."

Draco stared at him and nodded his head.

"Number Twelve Grimmauld Place."

Draco began to say it, but Harry put his hand over Draco's mouth. "Don't say a word and you can't repeat it to anyone. At one in the morning, floo in. Make sure you do not tell anyone where you are going. I will make sure that the living room is totally empty of visitors. We can take it from there."

"Harry..."

"You want to talk, we can talk. It is the safest place that I know of right now, besides my aunt's house. I can't tell you how to get there, though."

"Fine, I'll be there at one. No one can see me!" Draco said quickly.

"I know that. Come in like you are now. Ron and Hermione have seen you. If they are there and awake then, I can say that we decided to finish our meeting when no one was around."

Draco nodded and then waved his hands in the direction of Ron and Hermione, muttering under his breath. It was a quick distraction spell, and he took advantage of it. He leaned forward, kissed Harry quickly before he could respond and disappeared before Harry could say anything.

"Damn him," Harry muttered. He walked back to where Ron and Hermione were waiting for him. "Did you guys decide to forgive me?" He was not going to waste his breath if they weren’t.

Ron was still mad and kicked a rock. It was Hermione who spoke up. "Yes, we might not
understand it all, but we are still your best friends. We will stand beside you through thick and thin. We still expect to talk about this.”

Harry felt relief go through his body as he hugged her. He looked over at Ron. He didn’t seem as if he wanted to join in, but Hermione pulled him over. “I’m sorry, guys. Things are going crazy. We have to get back to the house before the Death Eaters show up.”

“Death Eaters?” Ron looked around, expecting them to jump from any building.

“Yeah, I just have a feeling we have about five minutes before they show up,” Harry said. If Draco had been followed, then they would know that he had met Harry. They would also know where Harry was. He walked into Madam Malkin’s shop. “Lucius, are you ready? Madam Malkin, would it be alright for you to owl us the package?”

The woman nodded at him and assured him the clothes would be delivered shortly. Harry cast a glamour spell over himself and Lucius. Hermione and Ron looked on before Hermione did the same for her and Ron. “You haven’t seen us in at least twenty minutes. You heard me tell Lucius to meet me at the bookstore, if anyone asks.”

“Go, Mr. Potter. Your secret is safe with me,” she said.

Harry thanked her and rushed out of the building. The four of them quickly skirted crowds and slipped into the Leaky Cauldron. They heard cracks of Apparition behind them as they entered. They hoped Madam Malkin had closed her shop and left the building. The four quickly moved to the floo and reemerged at Grimmauld Place.
How to Save a Life

The four stood in front of the fireplace breathing heavily. It had been extremely close. "I know I wasn't very careful going out, but we were proving a point. If you are going with me, we have to be even more careful."

Hermione nodded. “We need to come up with some kind of disguise for you; for all of us, really.” She began listing different glamour spells as Harry started to pace.

“Did everything go according to plan, Harry?” Lucius asked.

Ron looked up suspiciously at Harry. “Did what go according to plan?”

Harry looked at Ron and held up his hand. He didn't have time to explain everything. “Yes, everything went well. Another meeting was set up so that we could discuss the affairs in a more discreet location.”

“So, that man you were talking to, you are going to meet him again?” Ron asked, glaring as if Harry was meeting someone notorious.

“Yes, I have to meet with him again and I have to meet with him in private. If the Ministry knew that he was helping me, do you think he would still be free to roam about the country? They were killing people in there, Ron. Something needs to be done.”

"But, Harry, where are you meeting him? Why are you meeting him? What is going on with you? First you get death eaters out of prison and now you meet secretly with Aurors?"

"Yes, there are criminals in there that do not need to roam the streets, but there are others in there as well. Stan Shunpike was murdered. Am I supposed to sit by idly and let them get away with his murder, all because he was a suspected Death Eater? When are you going to trust me?” Harry was frustrated. He was tired of having to explain himself. He ran his fingers through his hair.

“Alright, Harry. Ron and I will try to stop questioning everything you do. I know you are under a lot of pressure, but remember what happens when you don’t talk to us. It takes us longer to figure out the way to survive whatever you get yourself into. We still need to work on the…well you know what…” Hermione saved herself as she looked over at Lucius. "Besides, you just left us without even giving us the plan on what we need to work on. Instead you rush off to Azkaban of all places!"

“Hermione, I know. I know I have to discuss some things with you, but not everything needs to be talked about. Do you really want to hear the horror of how we found Stan’s body? Do you want to know what they do to prisoners if they even think you know any information about Voldemort? It is pure torture.”

“Harry, stop now. You do not have to describe his body. Lucius stood up and walked to where Harry was. He put his hands on Harry’s shoulders and looked into his face. “It was extremely unpleasant, but we do not need to discuss it. It would be best if your friends were left in the dark as to the state of his body. Save them the images that you and I must live with.”

Hermione sat back with her mouth open. She had never thought to see the day when Lucius Malfoy would calm Harry or the day Harry would actually listen. Harry’s anger seemed to dissolve as Lucius spoke to him. She sat back to ponder this.
Ron opened his mouth to speak, but Hermione stilled him with a hand and shook her head. She nodded at Harry and Lucius, hoping that Ron would see what was happening.

Lucius continued, ignoring the two people sitting behind them. “Harry, you have to calm down. You are in your own home and free to show emotion, but you have to learn to control your anger. It is your weakness and the Dark Lord is going to use it to torture your friends. He will kill them right in front of you and watch you fall apart. Do you want that? You need to control your temper and think rationally.”

Harry nodded and visibly wilted in front of Lucius. Lucius wrapped his arms around the boy and pulled him into a hug. “I know it is hard and you have not had years of training but you do not have any more time. We have to finish this war before he becomes stronger. That attack in Diagon Alley was to try and take me to the Dark Lord. He will stop at nothing to win. You know that. You cannot let him see this side of you.”

Hermione stood up and walked up behind Harry. She put her hands on his back and began to rub circles into it, “I never thought I would agree with Lucius Malfoy, but he is right. Voldemort knows that we are your weakness. He knows that you have a heart and you care about people. I hate not knowing everything, but if it keeps you safe, then I will deal with it. Just promise that you will tell us what you can.”

Harry nodded with his face in Lucius’ chest. Ron got up and awkwardly put his hand beside Lucius’ on Harry’s shoulder. “I’m still your best friend. I might not like everything that is going on, but you to talk to us. Small things will do, although you getting married wasn’t a small thing.”

Hermione smacked Ron over the head. “Lovely tact, Ron. Just remind him of why the entire Weasley clan was in his living room this morning.”

“What, Hermione? You know you were mad at him as well. You wanted to know why he didn’t tell you.”

Hermione stepped back from Harry and turned on Ron. “Ronald Weasley! How dare you? Can you not see that he is having a breakdown and the only person that seems to be able to calm him right now is Lucius Malfoy? Are you blind? There are things going on…”

“Which is exactly what he needs to tell us about!”

“No, he doesn’t need to tell us everything. Were you not just listening a minute ago? There are things going on that are best left unsaid. From the looks on both of their faces when they were talking about Stan, it was a gruesome mess. There are some things that we just do not need to know about!”

“But, Hermione…”

“No buts, Ronald. You listen to me…”

“Yes, mother.” Ron said with a smile. Lucius and Harry were silently laughing behind Hermione’s back as she ranted.

She looked at all three of them and glared. “I expect to know more, Harry. Ron, I expect you to listen and pay attention. Mr. Malfoy, I expect you to continue taking care of Harry. If he gets hurt, I am holding you personally responsible and I will kill you myself.” She pointed her wand at the three of them and then stormed out of the room.

“Well, I guess she told us.” Ron said with a little laugh.
“Yeah, we are definitely in trouble now. Maybe you should go talk to her, Ron. I need a nap.” Harry said with a smile, moving away from Lucius.

“I think we could all use one. Remind me to stay on my best manners with her around. She has a sharp tongue,” Lucius remarked with an amused smile as he walked out of the room. The other two laughed in agreement, while following him to their bedrooms.

Lucius placed a hand on Harry’s arm at the bottom of the stairs. ”May I speak with you privately?”

"Yes, come on up to my room and we can talk." Harry walked up the stairs to his room with the other man following him. He sat down on his bed and shut the door. He applied a quick silencing charm to the door.

"Did you see him?"

Harry nodded. He didn't need to know whom Lucius had asked about.

"And?"

"I gave him the ring. We are going to talk tonight after everyone is asleep. Draco and Snape are being watched closely," Harry replied. He didn't really want to disclose everything to Lucius, but he knew that he needed someone to act as a sounding board. Ron and Hermione would not understand his need to actually talk to Draco.

"Are you leaving the house?"

"He will be coming here when everyone should be asleep. He will be disguised as the person you saw when we left," Harry said with a smile.

"Do you think I would be able to see him as well?" Lucius asked. He knew that he might be asking too much to see Draco, but he had not seen his son in over a year.

Harry nodded, "I think that it will be fine, although I'm not supposed to tell anyone. You can stay up with me, waiting for him. I will bring him up here to my room so you can talk privately before I talk to him."

Lucius nodded, "That would be best. Thank you, Harry."

Harry smiled. "I'm going to take my nap now. He is going to be here at one. I should be awake long before then." He sat for a minute in thought as Lucius began to walk to the door, "Maybe we should make plans to find a safe place for both him and Snape. He said that Voldemort was on to them."

"Arrangements can be made, after the manor is taken care of. That is, unless you would like for them to live here with you. After all, it is the proper place for your husband," Lucius added with a smirk.

"Leave the husband business out of this. As it is, both of them are still fugitives. I cannot possibly keep them safe in the headquarters. There are too many people who will be coming in and out of here. Besides that, I do not know that I trust either of them. Snape has been helping me to a degree, but he could be leading me to a trap. Draco, on the other hand, has lied to me the last few months. All I have to go on is my intuition."

"I understand. I will leave you now so that you can rest." Lucius walked out the door and closed it behind him. Harry listened as he put a spell on the door to keep people away. Harry lay back on his
bed. He never would have imagined that he would get along with Lucius Malfoy, let alone trust him with secrets. Something was definitely not right in the universe.

Harry woke to the sound of someone knocking on the door. He rubbed his eyes, feeling like he had actually gotten a decent sleep. He opened the door with a wave of his wand and saw Lucius there. "I wanted to make sure you were up in plenty of time to be presentable. I convinced Mrs. Weasley that you needed sleep and not dinner. She held a plate for you in the kitchen."

"What time is it?" he asked as he sat up in his bed.

"It is nearly midnight. If I'm not mistaken this is the first good sleep you have had in days, correct?"

"Yes, it is. I haven't slept well in quite some time." Harry stood up and ran his fingers through his hair. "I should probably shower and change first. Ron and Hermione are still up, aren't they?"

"They appear to be waiting for you. Hermione has been doing quite a bit of research today." Lucius seemed amused by this.

"You'll get used to Hermione after a while. She is always studying. Somehow I think we are going to have to give them a sleeping potion to get them into bed," Harry sighed. "Alright, I'm going to go make myself presentable. I will be down to eat in just a bit."

Lucius nodded and walked out of the room. Harry stretched and realized that he didn't have any dreams this time. He wondered why. Shaking off those thoughts, he walked to his bathroom and took a quick shower.

When he finished, he dressed carefully. This was the first time he would really see Draco. He pulled on a green t-shirt and some blue jeans. He was still casual enough to not look like he dressed up, but he knew he looked good. He shook his head. He didn't know why he cared, but he did. He walked down the stairs after running his fingers through his wet hair. He decided it was time to face his best friends.

Harry walked down the stairs, not really wanting to talk to anyone but knowing he would have to. He walked into the kitchen and Hermione and Ron looked up at him.

"It’s about time you got up, Harry. Mum was about to have a fit until Mr. Malfoy calmed her down. Still don’t know how he did it," Ron said with his mouth full of a sandwich.

"Did you sleep well? I would have to say you needed it, if you slept that long."

Harry smiled at his friends. "It was the first time I have slept without dreams in quite some time. It was actually pretty peaceful."

Hermione smiled. "Well, I’m off to bed. I will have to tell you about the research that I have been doing tomorrow. I’m tired now.” She looked at Ron pointedly, "Aren’t you tired too, Ronald? Didn’t you want to get some sleep now?"

Ron looked up at her and shook his head. It took him a minute before he realized that they were going to be alone. "Yeah, I’m exhausted. Let me walk you up, Hermione."

Harry laughed as the two of them rushed out. "You know, it isn’t like they didn’t have the whole afternoon to themselves."
“Yes, but during the afternoon there were many adults supervising them,” Lucius said with a smirk. “Let them enjoy themselves. I just hope that someone in that family taught them a proper contraceptive spell. Weasleys are worse than rabbits.”

Although Harry felt a bit disloyal, he had to laugh at that statement. “I wouldn’t worry about it, really. Hermione, Ron, and I have had that talk already. In fact, she sat us down and made sure we knew proper wand movements for specific spells. It was so embarrassing!” He checked the time on his watch before adding, “Do you think we should go to the other room now and make sure the door gets locked?”

“Yes, by all means, let’s.”

The two of them walked into the room with the fireplace and pulled up a couple of chairs. That chatted about nothing in particular as they waited, the time going by very slowly. Both men were tired of talk about the weather by the time they heard the floo. They both looked up to see Draco come in regally, while looking like a guard at Azkaban.

Lucius stood up and walked over to him. He pulled him into his arms and held him tightly. Harry sat back and watched the moment between father and son. He silently slipped to the other room, leaving the two of them alone. He slowly walked up the steps to his room. He trusted Lucius to bring Draco to him when they were finished.

Harry lay back on his bed, tossing his practice snitch in the air and catching it. He didn’t know what he was going to say to Draco. He didn’t know how he was going to react.

He stood up and began to pace around his room. He looked at his watch at least forty times in the space of five minutes. He knew he shouldn’t have left the two Malfoys alone. He knew he shouldn’t. They were going to hatch a plan. He didn’t care about any truce he had made with Lucius. Neither of them would have changed.

He moved to his dresser and put the snitch back in its box and looked at his watch again. What was taking so long?

Harry began to pace again. Maybe Lucius was updating Draco on the changes that had taken place; he could only hope.

He ran his hand through his hair and looked at the watch again; six long minutes had gone by. Harry didn’t even know why he was so anxious to talk to the git. It was all Draco’s fault that he felt this nervous. The pacing began again.

Harry’s thoughts rambled on through his head, none making more sense than the last. Seven long minutes he had waited to talk to Draco. Seven long minutes before he could wring his neck. He knew now that was exactly what he was going to do. He would kill him and then Harry wouldn’t have to worry about being married to him anymore.

He stormed to his door and started to open it. Right outside was Draco, arm poised to knock. “It’s about bloody time you get up here!” Harry hissed at him as he opened the door wider for the other boy to enter.

Draco smirked. “It would seem the Boy Wonder missed me, or I am very much mistaken,” he said sarcastically as he walked into Harry’s room. He looked around with his nose slightly in the air. “So this is home sweet home, eh Potter?”

Harry felt his face turned a lovely red as he shut the door and placed the strongest Silencing Charm
he knew on the door. “Home, sweet fucking home? What the hell, Malfoy? I find out by owl that I’m fucking married to you and all I get from you is you turning your nose up at my house!”

Draco had the audacity to smirk again as he continued walking around the cluttered room. “You know, you could have at least cleaned it up a bit for me.” He pulled out a drawer randomly. “The least you could have done was save room for some of my clothes. I don’t require very many at this time, but that would have been the courteous thing to do.”

Harry whipped out his wand and aimed it at Draco. “How dare you come in here, insult my house and then demand to have space for your clothes! You are nothing but a filthy, lying, little Death Eater who couldn’t even accomplish his one task! Give me one reason as to why I shouldn’t kill you right now!”

Draco stopped inspecting Harry’s clothes and looked over at the man who was his husband. “Simply put, Potter, you can’t legally get away with killing me now. I am your spouse.” Draco waved his hand in the air, flashing the ring Harry had put on it earlier in the day. “You have sworn to protect me with every ounce of your blood. No matter what I may or may not have done, you cannot harm me.” He put the shirt he was holding back in the drawer, quite a bit neater than the way he had found it. “Besides that, who else is going to help you win this war? The weasel? Ha!”

Harry’s temper was beginning to get the best of him. “His name is Ron and he is my best friend. If you are going to be my so-called husband, you need to learn to respect him,” Harry demanded. “How do you think you are going to help me win the war?”

Draco smiled and walked over to the bed. He sat down, still completely calm ignoring Harry’s tirade. “You know, I think you should have actually carried me over the threshold, but I guess since the consummation of the relationship happened awhile back it really doesn’t matter.”

“Consummation of the relationship!” Harry’s eyes were bulging out of his head. “I’m talking war and you are talking about sex!”

Draco laughed, “Of course, my darling husband. Without the consummation of our relationship, I would not be here right now. I would not be guaranteed to survive this war. Granted, I have to make sure you don’t manage to get yourself killed off.”

“Speaking of which, Snape sends his regards. He was going to send a howler with me, but I convinced him that the entire household did not need to know that I was here tonight.”

“You can tell that murderer that I will see him and he is going to pay dearly for the death of Dumbledore!”

Draco looked at the raging man in front of him. “Do you seriously still believe it wasn’t planned?”

“He killed Dumbledore!” Harry shouted.

“Dumbledore told him to!” Draco raised his voice to match Harry’s. “Do you honestly believe that I would still be alive if it weren’t planned? They had to keep me in the dark so that their superior plan could come off without a hitch. They expected me to fail. Everyone expected me to fail.”

Draco stood up and walked over to Harry keeping eye contact as he spoke. “I was the one that was set up. I never imagined that Snape was working for the light. He knew what I was assigned. He knew that I couldn’t kill him. If he had told me half of what he was doing then I could have done something differently. As it was, I was working on pure instinct.” He was directly in front of Harry, glaring at him as the anger built in him. “I knew that I needed to find a way to get Death Eaters into
the castle. I knew that I needed to find a way to kill Dumbledore. My mother’s life was at stake. My father was in prison. I had to do what I could for my family.”

Draco was standing directly in front of Harry now. His calm composure slipped with each word from his mouth. Harry watched the façade fade. “I realized too late that I needed to get out from under the Dark Lord’s thumb. He did not know that I was a Metamorphmagus. Snape only knew because he was my godfather. I had to find a way to escape, and you fell into my lap literally on the train. I knew that if you believed that I was my cousin then there would be a way to survive and save my family as well.”

“What the bloody hell, Draco? You planned to marry me the night you broke my nose!” Harry screamed at him. “When did you realize you were going to stomp on my heart and rip it out? What made you think that I wouldn’t kill you when I found out?”

Draco smirked. “Remember the spell. You cannot hurt me. I just took advantage of a way I could survive. Besides, you take personal responsibility for anyone that is close to you. With you married to me, my parents would both be safe even if I should die at his hands. I did what I had to do to save my family.”

“What you had to do? You could have just not joined the Death Eaters! You could have not gone to Voldemort.”

“The Dark Lord did not give me a choice, Harry,” Draco said softly, the passion leaving his voice. “He knew the care my father was receiving in Azkaban. He knew that the Aurors would end up killing him. He had my mother with threats. He had me right where he wanted me.”

“All you had to do was go to Dumbledore and talk to him! He could have saved you. He wanted to save you before Snape killed him. He gave you the option!”

“How do you know that?” Draco’s eyes narrowed as he watched Harry’s anger boil. “You don’t know what happened that night.”

“I don’t know what happened that night? Where the hell have you been Draco? I was standing on the tower right behind you. I heard every word. I listened to Dumbledore trying to convince you. I watched the other Death Eaters come out and encourage you to kill him. I watched, unable to move, as Snape killed him and dragged you off. I felt his death more than you can even imagine. His spell held me in place until the moment he died and I could do nothing!”

“You watched the entire scene?” Draco asked quietly. “You saw everything?”

“Yes and I know you had a choice! I know he wanted to protect you. You stood there and did nothing and let Snape kill him!”

“I didn’t let Snape kill him. Were you not listening to me? He told me that it had been planned for months, since before school started. They were working closely together. I didn’t trust Snape. I thought he wanted my glory. Then I thought that if I failed he would be the one to kill me.”

“And somewhere in all of this you planned on seducing me?”

Draco looked into Harry’s eyes. “Falling in love with you was not something I planned.” He ran his hand along Harry’s cheek softly. “The first night I just wanted to see if I could convince you that I was her. I did not think I would have to become her to keep you away from what I was doing. I guess it helped that she was stationed at Hogwarts this past year. I wasn’t out of place too much.”

“Why did you have to go through with it? Why did you take it to another level?” Harry had gotten
quieter, he felt the fire dying within him.

Draco smiled at Harry. “You may not believe this, but it was more because I was curious about you. At first I needed to prove that I could hold my shape. Then I decided the Dark Lord would be pleased if I could hand you over. Not long after I started having those thoughts I looked into your eyes. I realized that there was something special in you. I finally saw what everyone else sees, the hero, the friend, the boyfriend. I guess I never noticed it because you would always look at me with hatred. I can’t help falling for you, so pure and innocent. I had to have you by any means I could find.”

“You performed a bonding spell with me!”

“You didn’t object at the time. You willingly submitted yourself to me.”

“I thought you were someone else.”

“You knew who I was; your eyes deceived you, but you knew who I was. I was never dishonest with you with anything I ever said or did in that room. You fell in love with me. ME! Not her. Not the red-headed bitch, but me! You are mine now and neither of them can have you.” Lightning streaked through Draco’s eyes as his possessive nature came out.

“How can you have someone when you weren’t even honest with them!” The room shivered with magical tension.

Draco pushed Harry back onto the bed. “You are mine, Harry. No one else can claim you.”

Harry sat up on the bed glaring at the blond, his temper taking control of him. “Excuse me? No one can claim me...”

Draco pushed him down on the bed and forced his lips onto Harry’s, bruising them as he stopped Harry from replying further. He put his anger into the kiss, claiming every part of Harry’s mouth. “Tonight you are going to be mine completely; no one else’s. No more pretending.” He kissed him again, holding Harry’s arms down.
Harry struggled against the hands that held him down. Draco’s lips held onto his as his tongue ravaged Harry’s mouth. One arm escaped, but betrayed him nonetheless; it wound its way through Draco’s hair pulling him into a deeper, more passionate kiss. That taste, oh how, he remembered that taste - he *loved* that taste, could *drown* in that taste.

Harry struggled, biting Draco’s lips. Draco pulled back; the ice in his eyes was melting with the passion, tension between them. A drop of blood formed on his bottom lip where Harry had bit him.

Harry could only see the droplet of red. He opened his mouth and licked his lips slowly. His green eyes swirled with something he refused to acknowledge.

Draco watched lust beginning to consume Harry. He parted his lips and lowered himself down again. He let his lips barely touch Harry’s, just enough for the bitter taste of iron to fill his mouth. “You are mine, Harry, all mine,” he murmured against Harry’s mouth. He felt Harry’s lips part before he began the brutal assault again.

Harry was lost. Those eyes held him captive. They were the same eyes he had been staring into for the past few months. He was feeling every emotion that had dominated his thoughts, his dreams, his actions since the first meeting. He felt himself surrendering completely under the pressure of Draco’s lips, hands and the look in the eyes. His body remembered this and moved of its own accord, his legs relaxing, letting Draco slide in between them, his moan escaping into the fiery kiss.

Draco’s kiss softened when he felt Harry's submission. He ground his hips into Harry’s groin, showing how much he wanted his husband. His grip loosened on Harry’s other arm. He ran his free hand along Harry’s face and into his messy hair. He pulled back from the kiss and gazed at Harry. “Tell me you’re mine.”

Harry nodded as he gazed into the silvery depths.

“Tell me, Harry.”

The voice was more demanding. His lover was on top of him, wanting him. He would do anything for that person. “I’m yours,” he stuttered softly, still trying to fight the side of his mind telling him that this was Draco.

With that simple confession, Draco smiled. He kissed Harry again, softer this time. He explored Harry’s mouth gently. He let his hands roam over his lover's body, gently but firmly reminding Harry of who was in charge.

Harry’s eyes fluttered closed. He relaxed into the bed as he felt his shirt being removed. He moved his limbs as he needed to, but fell back into the haze. He shivered as Draco slowly removed his clothes. When Draco’s trousers hit the floor, Harry pulled Draco down on top of him and kissed him heatedly. His tongue found entrance into Draco’s mouth, exploring the recesses.

Draco pulled back from the kiss with a smirk on his face. “That’s right. I’m yours.” He leaned down and began to trail kisses along Harry’s body. He explored each inch of his body listening to Harry moan with each new nibble. Draco’s mouth claimed the erection that was making itself known. He began to tease him, slowly moving up and down the shaft. He would occasionally draw out the releasing of the shaft with a continuous sucking that elicited ragged breathing out of the
other man. He moved his hands and began to stroke Harry’s balls softly, letting his fingers slid down and tease Harry’s entrance. Harry’s body moved with Draco’s mouth and hands and only gasped when the first finger entered him.

Draco took his mouth off Harry’s penis and took one of his balls in his mouth and began to suck on it. He lowered himself more to begin licking beside his finger that was slowly fucking Harry, preparing him for larger objects. Harry moaned as Draco slipped in another finger.

Draco glanced up at Harry’s face, which was paralyzed with pleasure. He had never seen anything more beautiful. He slid his fingers out of his lover and replaced them with his well-lubed cock. He slid inside of Harry slowly, letting the green eyes peer into his soul as he took his lover, his husband, his mate. “All mine, Harry,” he whispered as he leaned in to kiss him softly.

The dance continued and moved in time to a music they could hear. Harry could stand it no longer as Draco brushed his prostate. He came with a scream. Draco was soon after, collapsing on top of him, sweat dripping off of both of their bodies.

Draco raised his head and looked at Harry softly before closing his eyes. The boys fell asleep in post-coital bliss. Neither boy stirred until there was a pounding on the door six hours later.

“Harry, open this door immediately!” Lucius yelled through the door.

Harry didn’t even open his eyes as he mumbled for Draco to make his father shut up. They both sat up in a hurry.

“Bloody hell! I’m not supposed to be here.” Draco said, irritated, as he pulled on his clothes. Harry pulled on his shorts and went to the door to open it for Lucius.

“What is it, Lucius?” he asked tiredly.

“Draco has to leave now. He should have been gone already. The Weasleys are beginning to stir,” he said as he walked into the room. “Make yourself presentable at least. Don’t let it look as if you have been shagged all night long.”

Harry’s face burned with the accusation. Draco merely looked up at his father. “For your information, Father, it was only just the once. Someone hasn’t been sleeping well, so I needed to take care of that need first.” Draco buttoned his shirt quickly. He looked in the mirror and ran his fingers through his hair. “Snape is the only one who will see me, but still. I’m not going to hear the end of it.”

He looked at Harry who was just watching with a tired look on his face. “Love, I’m sorry I have to run. It still isn’t safe. I can’t stay away any longer. We will have to plan the next meeting so I can be here longer.” He walked over and kissed him softly. “I have to go fight your war now.”

Harry’s eyes hardened. “My war? Bloody hell, Draco, when did it become my war? This is Voldemort’s war. He dragged me into it. Besides, I don’t see you fighting too hard against going back to the other side. Or was last night you just trying to infiltrate here and take our secrets, to just hand me over?”

“Harry, please, not now. As soon as I can, I will be here for good. You still need a spy to know what is going on, and now you have two. Snape sent a letter for you. He hasn’t let me read any of the letters he has written. He said it is urgent for you to follow through with this assignment.”

Harry ran his hands through his hair, tempted to pull it out by the roots.
“Boys! Behave yourselves, as Malfoys and Potters should. You know better, Draco, and Harry, you are learning. I expect both of you to remain calm. Kiss each other goodbye, and Draco, we will see you as soon as it is safe again,” Lucius said authoritatively as a father would, getting glares from both boys. With that he turned and walked out of the room.

“I won’t make this sappy or mushy or anything,” Draco said with a drawl. He pulled Harry into his arms and kissed him gently, letting his tongue slip into Harry’s mouth. “I will miss you more than you know, but I will hold tonight in my heart.”

“Mush, Draco?” Harry raised an eyebrow. “I expect to fight you properly when we can see each other again. We have so much to discuss.”


With that, Draco slipped out of the room and down the hall. Harry chased after him knowing that they still needed to talk. Harry saw Lucius running interference with Mrs. Weasley who was just walking out of the kitchen. Harry grabbed Draco’s arm just as he was about to grab the floo powder. Draco smirked. “Miss me already?”

“You wish,” Harry responded automatically. With a swish of his wand the door shut and locked. “We have about two minutes to plan a meeting of our minds.”

“Harry, we have to hurry. The weasels are getting out of bed and I have to return before Wormtail realizes that I’m not there. Last night was completely dangerous. I’m on thin ice as it is with the Dark Lord. He doesn’t trust me or Snape very much, so Wormtail is staying with us while we make potions.”

Harry ran a hand through his hair. “I realize this, Draco. We still need to talk and not just have sex.” He closed his eyes and opened them. “Can we meet up at your manor? We have to protect it before Voldemort realizes that Lucius is not going to just hand me back over to him. I can only assume the reason why we haven’t heard from your mother yet is that no one quite knows who side Lucius is on now..”

Draco nodded. “Yes, she told me that the Dark Lord has been asking questions about when Lucius would be returning home. The house is being watched closely. I am supposed to visit with Mother later this afternoon. I will slip into the manor early this morning and send word on when it is safe.”

Draco pulled Harry into his arms for a hug. “Last night was amazing. I can’t wait to be with you again,” he whispered into Harry’s neck. He knew that Harry was still resisting him, but he refused to lie about his feelings for the other’s sake. “I really do have to go. Snape is already going to be pissed that I have been gone this long.” He kissed him softly on the mouth and stepped into the floo, speaking the name of his destination, Spinner’s End.

Harry stood and looked at the empty fireplace. He went and sat on the chair near the fireplace. He pulled his knees up to his chest and rubbed his eyes. They seemed to be filled with early morning dew. He knew that he wasn’t really upset that Draco had left. Not really.

Lucius walked in and shut the door behind him. “I assume that he has returned safely?”

“Yes,” Harry muttered.

“Then I would say that we need to plan a bit better the next time. If I had any idea the two of you would fall asleep…”

“Please, Lucius, not now. I realize that it was bad timing. We need to plan our day today instead.”
Harry turned his weary eyes on to the older man.

Lucius nodded and pulled up a chair. “I assume that this will be another day filled with running all over Wizarding Britain.”

Harry snorted. “You could say that.” He put his feet down on the floor and adjusted his posture before his lessons on how to behave like a Malfoy began. “You and I will be meeting with Draco and your wife later today so that we can protect her. She may be safe at the moment, but the minute that Voldemort suspects that you are not going to turn me over to him, her life is forfeit. I am surprised that threats haven’t already been made against her.”

“She has her family’s history to fall back on. She is from the Most Ancient and Noble House of Black. They have always supported the Dark Lord. There should be no question of her loyalties, even if mine were questioned. Bellatrix is his most loyal servant. She would make sure that Narcissa walks the line.”

Harry growled at the name of his enemy, the one who killed Sirius. “I will have to say that Bellatrix does not fall under my truce. She is going to die and it is going to be a painful death,” Harry stated quite calmly. “I have never had any doubts about her. She will never falter from his service. Are you going to send one of the house-elves over to make sure there aren’t any unwanted visitors?” Lucius asked to change the subject.

“I hadn’t thought of sending a house-elf, but that would make sense. Draco said that he would get in touch with us to give a specific time he can meet. I want to have him there so that he doesn’t have to be retold where the Manor is. Should there be anyone else there?” Harry looked at Lucius thoughtfully, wondering who might be important enough to be included.

“The only other person would be Severus. I want him to have a safe place to go when he needs to escape.” The older man watched the color rise in the boy across from him. He continued, “He will never truly be welcomed here, even after all the details of Dumbledore’s death comes to light. I could see the old man planned out his own death.”

Harry nodded. He was still trying to come to grips with Snape and Dumbledore and Draco and none of it made sense.

“Have you thought more on the horcruxes?” Lucius asked softly, trying to steer the boy’s thoughts in a specific direction.

Harry nodded. “Hermione and Ron have been helping me so far. I am trying to keep them away from harm, but I know they can be just as bullheaded as I am. Hermione will scour the library here for books on the horcruxes. I’m sure that this house should have some.”

“I believe there may be one or two at the manor as well,” Lucius replied thoughtfully. “Other than what I told you the other day, I don’t know anything about them.”

“I don’t know much and I can’t discuss most of what I do know. I do appreciate you telling me what you can.”

Harry and Lucius both turned as there was a knock on the door. “Come in,” responded Harry.

Hermione walked in looking slightly tired with a blemish on the side of her neck. Harry grinned. “Mrs. Weasley wants to know if you would like breakfast now or later?”
“Now is fine, Ms. Granger.” Lucius stood up and nodded to Harry. “I assume that you will keep me informed as to when our next appointment is. In the meantime, maybe you and Ms. Granger can begin to scour the library for the horcruxes as we have discussed.”

Harry didn’t reply, just beckoned Hermione in further. When Lucius was out of the room, she hissed, “Do you trust him with this information, Harry? What has he done to you?”

Harry let out a long breath. “He hasn’t done anything to me. I had asked him a straightforward question and he gave me the response. The response, I might add, is going to help us. Lucius knows that seven horcruxes were made. He was not trusted with all of the information. I will be getting one of them today. I don’t know if Lucius is aware of this, but I believe I have worked out one of the riddles. I believe the teacup is at the manor.”

“The manor! You can’t just waltz into the manor!”

“I can just waltz into the manor. Well, I can after I make sure there aren’t any Death Eaters around,” he said with a smile. “Remember, I’m now married to the legal heir. I plan on taking Lucius with me as well.”

Harry walked to the bookshelves and began looking at their titles. “Right now, you and I have to figure out how we are going to destroy these horcruxes. I mean, I don’t think that it will be as simple as dropping the tea cup and letting it shatter into tiny pieces, do you?” Harry looked somewhat hopeful with his off-the-wall idea.

“No, I don’t think it will be that easy.” She looked at the titles of the books in front of her. “I think you should start with these right here. I’m going to take the ones on the back shelf and begin to look for ways to destroy powerful objects.” She looked towards the ceiling for a minute and tapped her finger on her chin. “I wonder if there is a spell that is so simple as to state ’Destroy this.’ Or do you think that would be too much to ask?” She smiled at Harry as she walked to the far shelf and began to pull a few books down.

Harry grabbed a book and sat down to begin his research, hoping that Ron would be in a good mood. He always needed Ron when they were being pulled into a research lesson with Hermione. “Maybe you should start there? I don’t see why it has to be complicated,” Harry said. “By the way, Hermione, is that a hickey on your neck or did the ghoul attack you at the Burrow when you were there last?”

Harry ducked as a book came flying at his head. “Alright, I’m sorry. Forget I saw anything, but I hope you do cover it up before Mrs. Weasley notices.”

Hermione rolled her eyes at Harry, opened two of the five books she had picked to start with, and didn’t look up again until Mrs. Weasley brought some food into the library for them. Lucius came in and looked at the shelves in front of him. He pulled a book down and sat at the table beside Hermione. He opened the book and read silently until Ron came into the room.

“What’s he doing in here? Is he helping now?” Ron asked angrily.

The three heads looked up in unison at the red-head in the doorway. It was Lucius who replied. “I am helping to research a topic in which the more eyes are looking for the answer the better, especially since, unlike you, I did not sleep in. Would you rather I not help and not let Ms. Granger know that the first three spells she has written down will not work or is it that you want Harry to fail a few times before he gets it right?”

“They won’t work!” Hermione screeched. “What is wrong with them? Why won’t these specific
ones work?” She looked over her list again and picked up the book she had just discarded.

Ron just walked into the room and picked up a book. He sat down in the corner and muttered to himself.

“Ms. Granger, the spells that you have written down would work if you were trying to kill your cat, but we are talking about the destruction of a soul, not just an animal. These objects are so dark that the darkest of magic is going to have to be called forth.”

Hermione nodded as she listened to him. “Would you think that this would work if I could find a reference?”

He looked at the words on another sheet of paper. “Intus spiritus iuguolo. I would perhaps rearrange it to Iuguolo spiritus intus and it might work. I am going to assume that you have something in which to destroy the object as well?”

Harry looked up from his books. “The only things I can find so far involve poisons and potions that I know are beyond my skill level.”

Lucius nodded. “Have you thought about bringing in a skilled potions master?”

Harry narrowed his eyes. “I will turn to him only if he is my last resort. I still don’t completely believe that he was working under Dumbledore’s orders.”

Ron looked up from his corner. “Harry, can you come over here.”

Harry looked over at his friend and walked over to where he was reading. “What is it?”

“It’s just this picture. It’s of the founders.” At this, Hermione and Lucius both looked over at him. Harry picked up the book. “Have you seen that quill before? I think that it is sitting in Dumbledore’s office.”

The four crowded around Ron to look at the photo in the book. “You are right, Ron!” Hermione exclaimed. “I remember seeing it when we were there before at Christmas.”

Lucius nodded his head. “I remember that quill. It has always stood next to the book where the student’s names are recorded. I don’t think that would be it.”

Ron looked as if he could kill Lucius. “It is something, though.” Harry said quickly.

“The quill is enchanted to know the names of all witches and wizards born in the country. If a witch or wizard moves into the country, it knows. I doubt the Dark Lord would have had a chance to get his hands on that quill.”

“So that’s how it is done,” Hermione said in awe. “I had wondered about that…”

Ron and Harry laughed at her. “That is definitely a start, Ron.” Harry said. “What else did Ravenclaw have that might be personal?”

“What about the tiara?” Hermione mentioned.

Lucius gazed at the picture. “That is her diadem. It has been missing for centuries.”

Harry’s eyes opened wide. “I know exactly where it is!”

The other three looked at him. “The Room of Requirements! I saw it there when I was hiding my
potions book! I remember it. It was sitting on the bust of some person.”

“That’s it then. He must have found it and then hid it when he came back for that interview Dumbledore told you about, Harry,” Ron said.

“Right then,” Hermione said. She began to pace the room. “We have the diadem and the cup. We have to find the locket still. The ring and the diary have been taken care of. That is three of the four founders. What do you think he might have found of Gryffindor’s?”

Lucius rubbed his chin and looked thoughtful. “So, he wanted to use the Founder’s items. That would make it more significant. Let me see that picture again.” He gazed at the picture. That shield behind the founders, isn’t that Gryffindor’s shield?”

“I’ve never heard of a shield, but I know his sword is safe,” Harry said.

“Of course!” Hermione took the book from Ron’s lap. She turned the beginning of the book where a few pages were dedicated to Godric Gryffindor. “I’m so proud of you, Ron, reading Hogwarts, a History. It says that Godric Gryffindor would display his shield in the trophy room at Hogwarts. He left it there to remind the students that sometimes they would need to go to battle for something they believe in. Do you suppose it is still there?” Hermione looked into the faces of the three men surrounding her.

“I don’t remember it from that time I had detention in there. All I remember is the one from Tom Riddle,” Ron said, slightly green from the memories of the slugs.

“I guess this means that we need to get into Hogwarts. I need to get a letter to Professor McGonagall to see if we can floo in this week,” Hermione said. She got up and started writing a letter.

“I’ll go and get Hedwig, alright, Harry?” Ron got up and left the room.

“This just means we need to take care of the cup at the manor and I should be ready, right?” Harry gazed at Lucius.

“If our calculations are correct, then yes. You said that he believed seven was the perfect number, right? We then have to determine if he did the spell six times or seven.”

Harry’s eyes got bigger. “What do you mean?”

“Do you think he wanted seven parts of his soul separated from himself – making eight total – or specifically seven parts of his soul in various vessels?”

“I don’t know.” Harry shook his head. “I know that Dumbledore thought that he may have put it into a living object. I would think we need to take care of Nagini as well, but I don’t see how we can very well walk up to Voldemort and kill his snake.”

Lucius nodded. “Let’s worry about the ones that we know about now.”

The three sat in silence; the only sound was the scratching of Hermione’s quill. The fireplace lit up making the three of them jump. Harry and Lucius walked over as a blond head popped in. “In one hour it will be safe. Company is expected back within an hour of that.”

“Be safe,” Lucius said as the head disappeared. Harry and Lucius exchanged glances. “I will firecall Arthur Weasley to meet us here on an urgent matter. Who else needs to go?”
“Ron should be back in a minute. He and Hermione are the only ones who know what we are doing.”

Lucius glanced at Hermione. “Please make sure you have a change of clothes. I have a feeling that we may be at the manor overnight trying to destroy this first horcrux. We will be able to go through my library to see if I have any books on them while we are there. I assume that the diary is the only one you have destroyed, right, Harry?”

Harry sighed. “Yes, that is the only one, and it was with a basilisk fang.”

Ron walked in with Hedwig. Hermione took her from him as Harry filled Ron in on their impromptu trip to the manor. The four parted and went to their separate rooms to prepare for the trip.

intus spiritus iuguolo: Latin for - within spirit destroy
Holding Out for a Hero

Harry led the way through the floo network after Draco had sent word that it was safe. Lucius followed close behind him. He crossed the floor to his wife and wrapped his arms around her. Draco was standing across the room watching his parents greet each other with mist-filled eyes. Ron, Hermione, and Mr. Weasley came in unnoticed by the Malfoy family. Harry motioned them to the side so that the family could reunite properly.

Draco looked at the Weasleys watching his family and made a cough to remind his father of where they were. Lucius looked down at Narcissa who had pale, tear-streaked cheeks. "My beautiful wife." He wiped a tear from her face and kissed her softly. Draco moved to where his parents stood.

Lucius gazed at his son and nodded, for formalities must be kept even at times of war.

"Mother, Father, may I present to you my husband, Harry Potter?" His words were stiff as he glanced over at Harry, holding out a hand to him.

Ron stiffened, but did nothing as Hermione grabbed his wand arm. Mr. Weasley put a hand on his son's shoulder to add to the pressure.

Harry hesitated for a moment before walking over to his new family. He took Draco's hand and faced his mother-in-law, whom he had not seen since the World Cup. This time her face was softer. She smiled at him warmly as Draco's fingers twined around his. The tear stains on her cheeks added to her beauty, making her appear human and less like a statue. Harry could not explain the butterflies that he was feeling in his stomach as she gazed at him.

She stepped away from Lucius and took Harry's hand into hers. "It is a pleasure to meet you, my son. Let me be the first to welcome you into our home." She leaned forward and kissed him softly on the cheek and stepped back to Lucius.

Lucius smiled at Harry. "Please feel free to do as you will here, Harry. My home is now your home. Anything that is known by Malfoy blood will now recognize you as a permanent member of our family."

Harry felt a warm tingle go over his body as the wards surrounding the grounds took note of his magical signature. The sensation lasted seconds, but Harry could still feel the magic surrounding them. He turned to Draco, who squeezed his hand.

"Harry, my love, my mate, welcome to our home. As your husband it is my duty to make sure that you are always taken care of and protected. You wear my ring and the ancient protections associated with it will surround you always." Draco lifted Harry's hand and twisted it to kiss his wrist softly.

"You will always find shelter in our home, you and your family."

It was at this point that Mr. Weasley may a slight cough to remind Harry that they were there. All eyes were upon Harry as he turned and looked at Arthur. He felt Draco's fingers tighten around his in response. "Thank you for the…um…warm welcome." He stumbled over the words, trying to determine exactly what he was supposed to be saying. It would have been nice if Lucius had warned him that they would take part in some sort of ritual the minute they entered the hall. "May I present my adopted father, Arthur Weasley, who has treated me as his son from the time we met?"
Arthur strode forward to the four while Ron and Hermione continued to stand and watch. Hermione had realized that it wasn't often that you were given glimpses into the practices of pure-blood traditionalists. Arthur took the outstretched hand of Lucius Malfoy and shook it. "It is a pleasure to be welcomed into your home and family. As you have welcomed me and my family into your home, so shall it be in mine."

A ring of gold circled the five as the formalities were finished. The gold dissipated and Lucius stepped away from Arthur. Harry looked back at Ron and Hermione. Ron just shrugged. "Right, now that formalities have been kept, we can go about protecting our family," Lucius said while rubbing his hands.

Narcissa nodded and led everyone through the house. The hallways were brightly lit as they walked towards the back of the manor. Harry gazed at the portraits of all the previous Malfoys as he walked.

"I have made sure the Dark Lord was going to oversee the plans to infiltrate St. Mungos. He feels that it is an important battle." She looked to her husband as they continued to walk. "I'm not sure if he is equipped to take the hospital, but he has taken most of his Death Eaters."

Lucius nodded as Harry walked with him and Narcissa, letting go of Draco's hand. He felt a bit of guilt, knowing that Draco had just watched his father walk away with him without as much as a nod. The others followed in turn leaving Draco just standing there. Harry watched as Draco raised his head and walked forward to join the others.

Lucius turned to Mr. Weasley and said, "I assume you can warn the Order about the attack?"

Arthur Weasley just smiled. "I am a step ahead of you."

"So what does that mean for us?" Harry asked quickly.

Narcissa opened the door to the terrace and shook her head as a peacock strolled by. "Please ignore the birds. They were gifts from my father-in-law. Mitzi will bring tea to us."

"This means that we have only a few moments to change the secret keeper of the Malfoy Manor to you, Harry."

Arthur put his arm around Harry and led him to a corner of the terrace where a table and chairs were arranged. He pulled out the book he had taken from Grimmauld Place and opened it to the appropriate place. "Is everyone here?" He looked up at everyone gathered in front of them.

Narcissa looked to Draco silently. "There is one more. I want word that none will hurt him, but he is family and is need of refuge as well," Narcissa said firmly.

Harry ran his hand through his hair. He had a feeling he knew who was going to step out of the door next. Draco walked over to him and stood beside him. Ron and Hermione just watched the door apprehensively.

"Mrs. Malfoy," Arthur began, "I can guarantee that no one will harm your fugitive, or at least until after the spell is performed." He looked at the kids surrounding him. "Their mother will know if they step out of line."

Narcissa nodded and opened a side door to where Snape was standing. Hermione stood staring at the loathed professor as she clutched Ron's hand. The only thing holding Ron back was the threat of his mother’s wrath. Arthur just stood still for a moment to make sure that none of the kids would attack Snape.
"Severus."

"Arthur, pleasure to see you." His answer was curt. "I assume that you are aware that time is of the essence. Thanks to Mr. Malfoy's attachment there is even less time. I have been sent word that my presence is required for the final stages of the plan for St. Mungos."

"Right," Arthur looked down at the open book and began the spell to make Harry secret keeper of Malfoy Manor.

Throughout the ritual Harry glared at Snape. He didn't take his eyes off of the man, though he managed to answer when needed during the complicated ritual. No words were said besides the simple affirmations between Lucius and Harry during the ritual.

"Well, that is that," Arthur said as he closed the book. "I must take my leave and join in the preparations of saving the hospital. Severus, is there anything specific we should know?"

Severus nodded and the two men walked away. Harry glared at the professor as he walked back through the house. "Harry, now is not the time," Lucius said calmly.

Harry turned his glare on his father-in-law. "Do you realize the hell that man has put me through on top of killing Dumbledore?"

"Are you on that, again, Harry?" Draco spoke up. "You need to just drop it. It was planned between the two of them. They just wouldn't tell anyone else the plan."

"Some plan it was!" Harry said bitterly. He turned and walked to the edge of the terrace and looked out on the grounds.

Ron walked over to him. "Hey, mate, we need to get to work." He put his hand on Harry's shoulder. Harry shrugged it off and walked out into the garden.

"Leave him be, Mr. Weasley. He needs to calm down. Narcissa, would you please take Miss Granger and Mr. Weasley to the Founder's tea cup?" Lucius looked to his wife.

Her face paled. "Lucius, you can't mean…"

He nodded. "When I chose to leave with Harry, I swore my allegiance to him and him alone. It was not until after this that we found out about the marriage. For better or worse the Malfoy family is now working for the light. I would hope that our love for each other would make this transition a bit easier for you."

Narcissa paled. "He is going to kill you."

Lucius laughed. "He will have to break Harry before he will ever get to me. I have a feeling that if Harry did not defeat him, our lives would have been forfeit anyway."

"Father," Draco said softly, "What is it you want me to do? I cannot stay hidden, even though I want nothing more than not to leave here. You are practically under house arrest with Harry as your guard. What should I do?"

Lucius dropped his mask for a moment and pulled Draco into his arms again. "My dearest son. You know you have been my joy from the day you were born. I would not make you go back unless you felt the need. I would prefer that you go out into that garden and find your husband and start making amends for all the secrets. Your husband needs you at his side; he does not need to worry about you with his enemies."
Draco hugged his father. He kissed his mother's cheek. He glanced at the outsiders and nodded, then stepped off the terrace to find Harry.

"Now, Miss Granger and Mr. Weasley, please feel welcome in our home." Narcissa was extremely polite as she turned to the guests again. "I am going to assume that you have a plan for our fine china?"

Hermione smiled at her. "Yes, Mrs. Malfoy. We have come up with a couple of options for destroying certain objects. I believe that we are going to experiment with a spell that Mr. Malfoy helped me with. If the cup is destroyed, then we will know it works."

"In that case, I shall direct you to a special study room. There is nothing of extreme value that could not be repaired if your experiment gets out of hand." Narcissa responded politely while leading Lucius, Hermione, and Ron away from the terrace.

Ron looked at Draco's mother for the first time. Really looked at her.

"Excuse me, Mrs. Malfoy."

"Yes, Mr. Weasley?"

"Where did you get that locket?" Ron asked.

"Ronald!" Hermione said to hush him. "It isn't polite."

Narcissa narrowed her eyes at the red-head. "This is an heirloom of my family. One of my faithful house-elves brought it to me after my aunt had passed away."

Hermione gasped and looked at the necklace closely. "Do you think it is the one? That looks like the one that Kreacher took from the study."

Lucius looked between the two teens then back to his wife. "Narcissa, dear, was it Kreacher that brought this to you?" He lifted it from her chest to look at it closely.

She narrowed her eyes at her husband. "You have never had an issue with my family heirlooms before, Lucius."

Instead of responding, he looked into her eyes and kissed her. "My dear, you may have just saved the day. May I?" He reached behind her and undid the clasp and slipped it off. "It does feel heavier than normal. It has a magic coming from it that I don't quite recognize."

Hermione and Ron looked at the locket in Lucius' hands. "That's it! I remember the twins trying to open it, but it wouldn't open."

"We should let Harry know as well. This means two down and two to go! We just have to find the shield and the diadem. I hope we can get to Hogwarts quickly." Hermione stepped away and turned towards the gardens.

"Let them have some time alone, Hermione. We can just surprise Harry when they come back, Ron responded. He smiled wryly when he noticed the shocked looks on their faces with his acceptance.

The four began to walk into the house. "Lucius, I hope you realize that you have much to explain to me," said Narcissa.

"Yes, dear," he said softly as she led them through the maze of the house.
"Harry, wait up."

Harry stopped and waited for his husband to catch up to him.

"Harry." Draco put a hand on his shoulder and turned him slowly. "Look at me."

"What do you want, Draco?"

Draco looked into the weary eyes staring back at him. He moved his fingers softly across Harry’s face. He leaned in and kissed the soft lips in front of him and wrapped his arms around his husband. He put everything he was feeling into his kiss, trying to say with his mouth what was in his heart.

Draco pulled away reluctantly. "I wanted to be the one to show you the garden. It was always one of my favorite places. I could hide for hours and no one could find me." He smiled, letting his hand fall, and wrapped his fingers in between Harry's. He pulled his arm slightly and led him forward.

"Just over here is my favorite spot. I hid from Pansy for two hours one day when she was insistent upon playing Medi-Wizard. I believe that was right after my tenth birthday."

Draco pulled Harry along, talking about small things of no importance. He pointed to a tree in the distance. "I fell out of that tree when I was eight. I was hiding from my tutor. He wanted me to write out my Latin."

They kept walking slowly, Draco trying to show that he wasn't a horrible person. He sat down by a pond. Harry sat down next to him, picking at stones and tossing them into the still water. "I was sitting here the day that I heard the Dark Lord wanted to mark me," he said softly. "My mother brought me here to tell me.

"She told me that I had a choice. I could follow in my father's footsteps and become a valuable asset to the Dark Lord, or I could go to Dumbledore," Draco heard Harry's breath still before he continued. "She told me that it would be my one and only choice. The Dark Lord wanted her to bring me before him that night. She handed me a portkey that would take me to Hogsmeade and all I would need to do was make my way to the castle."

Draco pulled up his knees and looked into the distance. "I asked her why I would want to go join Dumbledore. Her response was quite simple. 'A Slytherin always thinks to save their own skin first and foremost. After they save themselves, then they can save their family.'"

"At the time, I was still mad at you and didn't think the Dark Lord would be quite so…"

"So evil? So ready to kill at a moment's notice? Would not hesitate to use the Cruciatus on you?" Harry asked.

Draco chuckled softly. "Yeah, something like that. I then asked my mother what would happen if I went to Dumbledore. She said that she would be killed. It was that simple. I couldn't let my mother die. No matter how many times I wished I had taken that portkey, I could not lose my mother."

Draco felt Harry's hand on his and he smiled softly.

"I wish you would have come to me. I would have saved her somehow."
The two boys turned their heads, one looking uncertain and the other looking rash. They both leaned in and kissed softly.

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Hermione had her book open on the table. She was experimenting with a shielding spell to enclose the horcruxes before they were destroyed. Ron was sitting in the corner admiring a chess set made from obsidian and ivory. He ran his fingers over the edges, picking up a figure and stroking it softly.

Lucius was at a desk going over old parchment. Narcissa stood behind him with her hands on his shoulders, slowly rubbing them, as if this was a normal occurrence. She leaned down and whispered in his ear. She pointed to something in the document. He turned his head slightly so that his lips could caress her cheek softly.

Hermione gazed at them during one of these completely private moments. She was surprised at how open they were in their own home with guests present. She had expected them to both be cold to her and Ron, but they had been quite the opposite. "Mr. Malfoy?"

He leaned back and took note of the girl. "Yes, Hermione?"

"Do you think it would be safe for us to try the spell now? I think I have found a shielding spell to keep it contained within a small area."

He smiled softly. "Yes, and from what I have been reading, this should actually work." He pushed his chair back and stood. Narcissa walked to the table with him and looked down at the objects lying there, innocent-looking.

"It is amazing how you can capture a part of your soul in small inanimate object." Narcissa's voice was soft as she touched the locket softly. "I'm not even sure where this locket came from, but I would say that it could be traced back to Salazar himself."

Ron's head rose. "Do you really think it's Slytherin's locket?"

Narcissa nodded and walked over to the redhead. "Come with me, Mr. Weasley, let me give you a tour of a few of the other rooms. I feel that Lucius and Miss Granger should be able to handle this task without us."

Ron's eyes flicked between Hermione and Mrs. Malfoy. "Go on, Ron. It is probably better to have fewer people in here when the spell is broken."

"Alright then, if you're sure." He followed the older woman to the door.

"Mr. Weasley, I thought you might like to learn a bit more about Pureblood tradition. I am going to assume that you have not been raised as strictly as our Draco has."

"Mrs. Malfoy, I know as much as I need to know."

"Were you aware that there would be a ceremony welcoming Harry into our family today?"

Ron swallowed the lump in his throat, fearing what he might learn. "I had heard about ceremonies, but had never seen one performed. We’re very laid back."

Narcissa nodded. "It is what I feared. As a young pure-blood in our society, there are going to be times in which you will need to perform a certain way with almost no notice. Harry could be forgiven for not knowing he was going to be introduced officially to the family and the wards, but
he did quite well today. I'm sure his father would have taken him through the appropriate steps, and if not him, then Sirius would have."

"But…"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Weasley, Ron. It is time you learnt more about your heritage. Did you know that we are distantly cousins?"

"No…but…"

"As such, it is my duty to make sure that when we have a formal ceremony for Harry and Draco, you will be able to stand at Harry's side and perform the part of best man to perfection. Are you aware of responsibilities of the best man? You are also his adopted brother, so that takes the ceremony to a new level. Are you prepared to do the rituals required of you?" Narcissa stopped walking and lowered her eyes to the boy in front of her.

Ron was a lovely shade of green. "Formal ceremony?" He gulped. "I guess I do need to learn a bit more." He bit his lip.

Narcissa smiled at the boy and took his arm. "Come, my dear boy, let us start with a tour of the library. There are quite a few portraits you may want to see."

Only after the two cleared the door and their footsteps faded did Hermione finally giggle. "I'm thinking that Ron doesn't know what he just got himself into."

Lucius chuckled beside her. "I fear you may be right. Just remember, it will be your turn soon enough. Though you are not officially "family" for the wards, you will be expected to play your part."

"Oh good Godric," she groaned. "At least I can learn something from it. What will I be expected to do?"

"You will have your own lessons with my wife and she will explain all you need to know." His laughter was slow and melodic. "Now, let's get to business. I think that you need to set the shield in place and then we shall both perform the spell together."

Hermione nodded. She got her wand out and cast an encasement shield around the objects on the table. She raised her eyes and waited for the nod from Lucius before they both spoke the spell.

They kept their wands trained on the two objects on the table. A purple light came from both wands and encircled the teacup and the locket. They rose from the table slightly and fought the purple energy. Hermione felt her arm getting weaker. "Keep holding on and focusing," Lucius whispered.

After what seemed like hours to Hermione, although she was sure that it was only a minute or so, both inanimate objects let out a cry and began to emit a black smoke. It rose to the surface of the encasement surrounding them. Without warning, the cup shattered and the locket broke apart, particles flying quickly to the surrounding shield.

Lucius lowered his wand and gazed at Hermione. "I do believe that is two parts of his soul down. How many more do we need to destroy?"

Hermione's response was shaky. The weariness in her voice was apparent to Lucius. "I think two more, but I think we should have more help. I know I couldn't have done it alone."
Lucius looked at the girl. "Come, let me show you to a room so you can rest. I'm going to assume that Harry will have us stay here for a day or two."

Hermione just nodded her head and took his arm. "Thank you."

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Draco and Harry broke apart at the sound of someone Apparating behind them.

“Well, well if this isn’t lovely. Draco, may I remind you that you were supposed to be at St. Mungo’s attacking the hospital.”

Draco flushed as he faced Snape. “I have decided that my place is beside my husband.”

Snape shook his head. “You were a spy, Draco. That was your part in this war. You just gave up any advantage you had so that you could romp in the sack with this pathetic excuse for a wizard.” He nodded at Harry.

Harry jumped to his feet and flew at Snape, his arms prepared to punch. Snape put up a protective barrier between him and the outraged boy. He laughed sardonically. “Physical violence, Potter? Is this the best that you have in you?”

Harry raised his wand at Snape and fired off an expelliarmus. It was again blocked by the professor. “You’re a bastard!” he yelled at the sallow-faced man.

“I’m a bastard, but I’m the one out there fighting to save this godforsaken world from a madman. What are you doing? Sitting here by a pond and making eyes at your boyfriend.”

“That boyfriend happens to be my husband and if he wants to make eyes at me, he can! Stupefy!”

Snape easily blocked this spell as well and stepped to the side. “Is this it? Is this what I have been waiting for? A measly disarmament. Tell me what you are doing to prepare! What have you done in the past weeks to defeat the Dark Lord?”

Draco walked up behind Harry and put his arms on his shoulders. “Stop it. Don’t fight him. He’s on our side.”

Harry shrugged the hands off his shoulders. “Just because we are getting along, does not mean that I fully believe that you are on my side, Draco. I don’t know why you missed your mission, but nothing has changed,” he said coldly. He turned to Snape and asked, “How many people did you kill today?”

Snape glared at Harry. “I may have killed only a rat, a rat that I’m sure you would have liked to have had your hands on. He saw me protecting the mediwizards and had to die. What have you done? How have you prepared? Why am I fighting this goddamned war for you?”

“You aren’t fighting a war for me! I don’t know what you are doing. You killed Dumbledore. You destroyed the person leading the war!”

“ON HIS ORDERS!” Snape bellowed.

“On his orders or not, don’t you think he would have told someone else? Don’t you think he would have prepared me for it? Why would he want you to kill him when he knew I needed him?” Harry yelled at Snape. He was losing his control, letting his feelings run away with him.
Snape bowed his head for a moment and ran a sweaty hand through the greasy locks. “You saw him quite a bit this year, Potter. Didn’t you realize he wasn’t going to last much longer? Didn’t you realize that he would have given his life for anyone? You were on the fucking tower. He didn’t want Draco to get blood on his hands! Why the bloody hell do I need to explain this to you. If this is the response you give your allies, then I may as well go back and fight for the Dark Lord in earnest!”

“Bloody traitor!”

“At least I’m out there fighting this war. When are you going to finish it? When am I going to see the hero that was promised to me? I have waited sixteen years for a savior, someone to defeat the Dark Lord and make sure that he was never going to return. Where is that savior? Where is the person I’m fighting for? Dumbledore made me promises the way he made them to you. Where the bloody hell is my hero? What the hell are you doing to defeat the Dark Lord?”

The sweat rolled down Harry’s cheek as he lowered his wand. He never thought to hear such a speech from his hated professor.

“Where is the boy who lived and defeated him once before? Excuse me while I interrupt him snogging in the middle of the war.” Snape glared at him and turned to walk to the manor.

Harry watched him stalking away. “Professor.” Harry said softly, unsure of what he was about to do. Snape stopped walking, but did not turn around. “Will you teach me?”

“Envicerate.” Snape did not give a response, only shot out the curse.

"Protego” Harry shot back without thinking. "Levicorpus.”

Snape dodged the spell. “You cannot use my own spells against me, Potter. When are you going to learn that?”

Harry faced the man and bowed. “Ready when you are.”

Snape nodded to Draco to join in the fight as well. “Just be prepared to get dirty.”
Sparks flew as the spells were volleyed between the three wizards. Snape was not holding back his spells as he would for a student. This was Harry, the savior that he was facing.

Harry's breathing was getting heavy as the sweat broke out on his body. He still was not sure how he had gone from being irritated at having to allow Snape access to the manor, to learning about Draco without fighting with him, to throwing curses at Snape for training. He winced as a curse grazed his shoulder.

"Dammit, Potter, focus!" Snape threw another curse at him.

Harry blocked it. Harry returned a cursed and almost stung the man. He turned and blocked another curse from Draco.

"Focus is so much easier when you haven't been fighting for two hours." He took deep breaths as he glanced between the two who had been hexing him.

"The Dark Lord does not rest for anyone." Snape pointed his wand at Harry.

He braced himself for the next onslaught and was surprised when the other man threw the curse at Draco. "No!" Harry dove towards Draco pushing him out of the way, taking the pain-filled curse into his own body.

Draco rolled Harry's body over as Snape ended the curse. "Harry!"

"Mr. Potter, you must keep your head at all times." Snape said as he walked over to the boys. He looked down at the boy on the ground. He kneeled next to the him and ran his wand over him. "This could create an issue. You did not worry about Mr. Malfoy until I chose him as a target. I will need to discuss this with Lucius."

He stood up and looked down at the boys. "Come along. Your mother will not be happy if we are late for dinner. You need to be cleaned up."

"Yes, sir." Draco responded. He took Harry's hand and helped him to stand up. "Come on, Harry. Let's get inside and clean up. Mother will have our heads if we turn up for dinner dressed like this."

Harry tilted his head and gazed at the blond. "I just don't get it. Why do we have to dress up?" He shook his head and began to follow their professor. He moved slowly behind Draco. "This isn't going to be some formal thing, is it?"

Draco stopped and turned around and although the exhaustion was evident in his body, he flashed a golden smile at Harry. "Of course it is formal. My father has been in prison and this is his first dinner home. Come on." Draco let him catch up and grabbed his arm and walked him in.

Lucius and Hermione had just made it to the verandah when the three stragglers came in. Hermione's gasp rivaled Lucius' own thoughts. "Severus, is there something that I need to know?"

Snape looked up at him. "No, Lucius. After a short battle at St. Mungos, the Order prevailed. I came back to find that young Mr. Malfoy had decided to give up his life as a spy, so we began training for battle." He stepped up next to the blond man.

"In that case, please freshen up for dinner and relax."
Snape nodded and brushed past his friend striding into the manor.

Lucius waited patiently as the boys walked up to him more slowly. He crossed his arms as they came up the steps. "Boys, please tell me that neither of you are hurt. Was the fighting worth the feelings of love you claim to be experiencing?"

Draco raised an eyebrow at his father. "Father, I'm married now. There is no need to call me a boy."

"When you act like a man, I will treat you like a man. It looks as if the two of you were scuffling. Harry, you must learn to accept the bond. It is going to help you." Lucius watched the features on Harry's face changing.

"We weren't fighting, Lucius. It was Snape."

Lucius raised his eyebrow at that one. "I believe that you and I have had a discussion in reference to him as well."

"Father, please, leave him alone. He was only training with Professor Snape. We were not fighting. We were talking. I was hoping that he would realize that it really was me he gave his heart to."

Harry's shoulders stiffened. "Yes, my darling husband, why don't you explain to me why you had to trick me. Shall we finish the discussion we were having the other night?" The sarcasm was barely kept out of his voice.

Tension filled Draco's body as he took a deep breath. "I thought we had started to move on. Didn't you relax this afternoon?"

Harry glared at him. "Yes, I did relax. Whether I like it or not, you are my husband. I am also still so fucking mad at being deceived. It is going to take more than one afternoon, Draco." He turned to stalk away to his room when he stopped.

"Lucius, where am I supposed to go?" he asked stiffly.

"Draco, please show your husband to your rooms. I do believe that this would fall into the realm of taking care of your husband," Lucius said formally. He turned sharply and walked away from the boys. "Dinner will be served in the formal dining room. I expect you both to be presentable."

Draco sighed sharply. He walked to Harry who was still facing away from him. He slid his arm through Harry's and led him to their wing. They walked silently through the halls until Draco opened the door to the rooms. He sighed as he looked around. It spoke completely of him. It was all of his things accumulated through his life. "Welcome to our rooms, Harry," he said softly turning to gaze at him.

"Wow! No wonder you were upset over my room." Harry ran his hand through his hair.

Draco smiled at him. "Well, I'm sure that there is plenty of room for you here. If I know Mother, she already has a new wardrobe for you."

Draco crossed the room and opened a door. It led into a huge walk-in closet. Harry followed him at a slower pace. Draco opened one of the wardrobes in the closet. "Yes, just as I suspected. You have officially moved into the manor." Draco turned around holding onto a red sweater that looked suspiciously like a Weasley sweater.

Harry smiled. "I guess we have the house-elves to thank?" He walked over and looked through the
"Not all of this is mine."

Draco smirked. "Trust me, this is not my wardrobe. It is all yours. I'm sure Mother is dying to get her hands on your house as well. She would have got enough so that you would feel comfortable, but would have added her own choices as well."

"I can't take your mother's clothes!" Harry said letting the sleeve of a dress robe fall back into the cabinet.

Draco ran his hand down Harry's cheek and gazed at him. "Yes, you can. You are an heir to the Malfoy family now. Mother will make sure that you dress the part."

Harry closed the door to the closet and leaned back against it. "Sometimes, this is still too much to process."

The blond took closed the distance between them and placed his arms on either side of Harry. "Sometimes it is too much to process, but then you know what I say during those times?" He leaned in to where his lips grazed the others. "Fuck it, I'm going to enjoy myself. Do you want to enjoy yourself, Harry?"

Harry's eyes opened wide as he gazed into the eyes he had fallen in love with. His lips parted to say something, but Draco closed the distance. He leaned in and captured his husband's lips, kissing him. He slipped his tongue into the warm cavern when Harry's lips parted. He pulled back slowly and gazed into the green eyes blinking in shock.

"Draco…"

"Come on, love. We need a shower at least before our meal. I'm not sure about you, but I feel grimy." Draco pulled Harry behind him as he left the closet. He led his husband into the large bathroom and turned on the shower.

Harry just stood and gazed around at the opulence before him. There was a huge tub near a window that overlooked the rose gardens. To the side of it was the shower, large enough for four people. It had a bench seat sitting in the middle of ten jets of water shooting towards it. "Wow."

Draco smirked. "Yes, darling, this is my favorite room." He walked over to the counter that held all of his hair care products. He selected two bottles and placed them inside of the shower. "Come on, let's get your clothes off."

"You can't just demand for me to take my clothes off!" Harry said indignantly.

"Honestly, all I'm saying is let's take a shower. I will even stay on my side. We need a shower before dinner. This is the fastest way."

Draco shook his head and slid off his robes. He slowly unbuttoned his shirt. He took it off the showing his perfect body.

Harry was beginning to feel a tightening in his own pants. His mouth dropped a bit when Draco moved his hand down his chest to his pants. He unbuckled them quickly, never taking his eyes off of Harry.

"Come on, my dear husband. We have to hurry before we are late for dinner." He stepped out of his pants and into the shower. He let the water splash over his body as he lathered his body with soap. He looked over his shoulder as he spread the white bubbles over his cock. His smirk at Harry's dropped jaw was all he needed to turn around and stroke himself.
Harry quickly took his clothes off and stepped into the shower in front of his husband. In a brave first step, his fingers wrapped around Draco's cock. He gazed into Draco's eyes questioningly. He saw an answer in the eyes and leaned in to kiss him. His fingers were sure as he stroked the hard member.

Draco moaned as his husband began to kiss his way down his body. "Oh Harry."

Harry pulled back one more time and gazed deeply at Draco. He smiled and fell to his knees. He took the rock hard cock into his mouth and began to suck. He ran his hands up Draco's torso caressing the soapy body. He bobbed his head over his husband listening to the sounds coming from the other.

Draco pushed him off before he could finish. Harry's face showed the obvious hurt of his husband pushing him away. "No, don't look like that, Harry."

Draco knelt down beside him and kissed him. He ran his hands over Harry's body. He gently laid him backwards as the water poured over them. He slid his fingers down Harry's body and began to prepare him. "I love you, Draco," Harry said softly.

Draco groaned as he slipped into Harry's willing flesh. "I love you, too, Harry. Always I am yours." He captured the lips beneath him as they created magic within the shower neither noticing the golden bonds surrounding them. They finished faster than either would prefer.

Separating, the two stood slowly and washed the other's body sensually. Soft kisses were applied to wet skin. Soap covered their bodies as they explored leisurely in light of their knowledge of being together willingly. It was an hour later that they stepped out of the shower and began to get dressed.

They left their rooms, hands clasped and went to find Lucius. The needed to find out what was going on with the horcruxes.

"This definitely looks promising," Lucius said as they faced him. "An afternoon of resting always does the trick."

"Yes, Father, I find that the afternoon of rest created many promises." Draco pulled Harry over to the chairs to talk to his father.

Lucius nodded and sat back watching the two of them. "Are you both happy?"

Draco squeezed Harry's hand. "I hope so."

"Yes, Lucius, I think we are on our way. It feels different today."

"That is good. Harry, it will only get easier as you accept the bond. I know that it hasn't been very easy on you."

"Father, for what it is worth, I have apologized to Harry for not being completely honest. I hope that as soon as we get this war finished, we can truly heal all of our past issues." He picked up Harry's hand and kissed it.

Lucius nodded. "Alright then, we need to update you on the destruction of the horcruxes."

"Hermione did it?" Harry got excited.

"Yes, she did. I'm sure she will want to tell you all about it at dinner."
Draco watched the fire shining in Harry’s eyes and he smiled. He watched as Harry became animated and questioned Lucius over the details. He felt his heart aching watching his father interact with Harry in a way that he had always wanted. It was bittersweet, but he knew that he would not change anything.

Dinner that evening at the Manor was a festive event. Hermione worried over Harry’s cuts and scratches, even while he was pushing her away. They were a bit more jovial after replaying the events surrounding the destruction of the horcruxes. They discussed how the spell exhausted Hermione and Lucius and that they needed to make sure that there were additional people when they destroyed the final ones. Draco enjoyed hearing about the lessons that Ron received that day from his mother. Hermione blanched when she found out that she was going to receive them as well.

Amidst the laughter, it became serious again as they discussed strategies.

“I got an owl from Professor McGonagall earlier. She said that we would be welcome to come to Hogwarts as soon as we need to.”

“I would suggest that we leave tonight, then,” Severus spoke up gazing pointedly at Harry. “The sooner you destroy what needs to be destroyed, the sooner you can face him and end the war.”

“That would be a wise idea, Harry.” Lucius spoke up. “You and Severus can get into the dungeons and practice some more, and Hermione, Ron and myself will work on the final two.”

Ron nodded with his mouth full of food. “That sounds like a good plan. Madam Pomfrey should still be at the school if any of us get hurt as well.”

“Draco, I need you to stay here with your mother to make sure she is kept safe.” Lucius looked at his son. “You will know if something should happen to either me or Harry. If the worst should happen, then be prepared to take your mother to Grimmauld Place quickly. From there you will need to go to Harry’s aunt’s house.”

Harry shook his head. “Are you sure this is the best way? I’m sure my aunt will turn them away.”

“Do you not remember how large her eyes got when we discussed my wealth with her? If she knows that this is her nephew’s husband and his mother, then she will welcome them both. They can stay there until they get further word. You did send an owl to your aunt, correct?”

He nodded. “I just know how my aunt and uncle are. They thought they’d seen the last of me.”

“Yes, but we did promise them a large wedding after all of this trouble passes us by. Narcissa and Petunia may discuss what you are going to do for the wedding, as if they may have a say in the wedding. You know as well as I do, them going there would be the last resort.”

“Why can’t I fight with you?” Draco sounded as if he were going to pout.

Narcissa laid her hand on his. “Draco, dear, it is not that I need protecting, but that your father believes that he is protecting me. It is the way of husbands.” She gazed at Harry who was watching her intently. “Although your husband may not realize this yet, he is doing the same thing. He is making sure that you are out of the fight and safe.”

Ron spoke up, with his mouth clear of food, “So, why isn’t Hermione staying here as well?”

Harry and Lucius laughed at the look on Hermione’s face. “Ronald Weasley! You know that I am needed to destroy the horcruxes that are remaining. Why don’t you stay here and wait for me to
If it weren’t such a serious subject their laughter would have sounded forced, but it was met with a bit of cheer. “Fine,” Ron grumbled as he put a bite of food into his mouth.

The group met at the fireplace. Snape was dressed in black and carried nothing besides his wand. Hermione had a bag over her shoulders that looked to be empty even though it contained many supplies. Ron was pacing back and forth still thinking of ways to get Hermione to remain.

Lucius pulled Narcissa into his arms and began to whisper in her ear. They held each other tightly and then shared a tender kiss. The others were polite enough to turn away.

Draco faced Harry. “You are a git, you know.”

Harry narrowed his eyes. “Because you still want to go?”

“Even you have to admit that I helped in the training earlier.”

“Who is going to protect your mother and get her to safety?”

“Who is talking as though he is going to die?”

“Who is going to…”

“Enough already!” Ron yelled at them. “Just kiss and say goodbye so we can leave already!”

Harry ducked his head as his face turned red. Draco looked the other way, obviously ignoring the red-headed weasels that were being let loose in his home. Harry looked up and bit his lip. He held out his hand. “See you soon.”

Hermione gasped quietly when she heard that and was tempted to pull out her wand to hex Harry. Draco responded quickly with a firm slap to Harry’s face. “See you soon! Is that all you can say? I’m your goddamned husband and it is about time you start acting like it!”

Draco pulled Harry to him by the offered hand and kissed him firmly, leaving no room for debate as to the message he was sending. “We still have unfinished business to discuss such as why our future home is still in a state of disrepair! I have already told you that we must clear out the junk so that my clothes can be moved in!”

“Clothes! That is all you are worried about? You are a git”

“Yes, clothes! You are going to go out there and defeat the man like you were supposed to do sixteen years ago. If you had done it then, then we wouldn’t have to be standing here right now fighting over it!”

Harry saw red. “I was supposed to defeat him sixteen years ago? How the hell does a baby destroy a madman? How the hell was I supposed to bloody fucking kill the monster when I didn’t even know I was a wizard!”

“Besides that, are you saying that you don’t want to be standing here married to me? You forced this on me! It’s all my fault though. I don’t kill a madman when I’m an infant and so now you are forced into hiding. If I had done it then, you wouldn’t have to be married to someone you hate to suffer a lifetime of never being loved. What do you want out of me? What the fuck was I supposed
“How the fucking hell am I supposed to know. You are such a bastard. Go!” Draco turned from him and walked quickly out the door, because Harry knew that Draco would never have ran away. He felt his heart breaking as he watched his husband leave.

Narcissa kissed Lucius one more time. She followed her son from the room.

Hermione touched Harry’s arm, but he moved away from her. “Let’s go. I have to go kill someone.” Harry grabbed some floo powder and disappeared.

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Professor McGonagall met them at the doors of Hogwarts. She had her wand drawn and pointed at Snape before she would let them pass. “Potter, you are aware that there is a fugitive in your midst?”

Harry rolled his eyes. “Professor, he was apparently a part of Professor Dumbledore's ultimate plan. He just didn’t share it with all of us. Besides how can I complain when I’m married to the other one?”

She grimaced as she let them pass, against her better judgment. She was not sure how Harry could trust the man, but then again if Dumbledore had planned it she would not be surprised.

Harry turned to face her. “We have to destroy two items first, and then I believe that there will be a battle fought not too far from here. Will Hogwarts hold up to a battle?”

Minerva nodded her head. “Yes, she will. I will inform the other professors who are in attendance and I will put out a call to the Order members. I expect a few answers from you shortly, young man.”

Harry smiled and followed Snape to the dungeons to further his training.

Hermione, Ron and Lucius started up the steps quickly. “Um, Professor McGonagall?”

“Yes, Ms. Granger?” she replied.

“Do you think that we could prepare the house-elves? I know a few of them may fight willingly, but I really don’t want them to get hurt over our battle.”

“Hermione! Do you think we can worry about the house-elves later? We have a job to do and you were the one that insisted upon coming.” Ron kissed her firmly on the lips before she could respond.

Covering her laugh behind a cough, the Headmistress agreed to see about the house-elves and any other creatures on the grounds as well.

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Harry followed Snape down to the dungeons. He pulled on a torch and entered a room that Harry knew had never shown up on the map. He stepped through the door cautiously and it slid closed behind him.

"Mr. Potter, we have a few things that we need to discuss without extra people. There are things about the final battle that you need to be prepared for."
Harry sat down in a chair. "What is it? You couldn't tell me this earlier when we were practicing?"

Snape walked to the a wall covered in books. He ran his fingers across some spines before pulling out a specific book. "Professor Dumbledore was afraid of the horcruxes."

"You know?"

The professor turned around and walked to the chair adjacent to Harry. He sat down and began to flip through the book. "Yes, I know. The headmaster was afraid that one of the horcruxes was within your scar. He spoke with me about this to make sure that what needed to happen would happen."

He handed the book across to the boy. "This is a little rare book that was given to me by him. This specifically describes how to create and destroy specific horcruxes. The good news is that you would only have to die."

Harry looked up in shock. "What?"

"Relax, Potter, I have no intention of doing this. The only one that can do this would be the Dark Lord himself. It is quite possible that when it happens, you will just die. On the other hand, this note here at the bottom of the page should give you hope. Simply put the scar that is the vessel and though you may die, your soul may also return. Professor Dumbledore believed this."

"Professor Dumbledore believed this?"

Harry ran his hand through his hair. "So what you are saying is that I have to die, no matter what?"

"I am sorry, Mr. Potter. I know that I did not keep you safe all of these years so that you could die. I am sure that if there is anyone that is able to defy death, it would be you."

Snape waved his wand and a decanter of Scotch and two glasses flew to them. He took them and poured two glasses, handing one to Harry. "I would, however, suggest you make amends with everyone. Mr. Malfoy would be one specific person. The beauty of our plan is that we are the ones that will determine when the final battle will take place. I can give you tonight, but tomorrow morning we would need to finish this."

"Why would I want..."

"I always knew you were a dunderhead. You are in love with Mr. Malfoy. Tonight may be your last time to be with the boy." Snape took a sip from his drink. "He deserves to be loved after what he has gone through to keep you safe. As much as I tried to dissuade him from his course of action, he wanted to keep you safe."

"How is he keeping me safe?"

"Without him, you would still be looking for horcruxes. You are able to finish this quickly instead of a year or two from now with how many casualties. Can you imagine who all could have died if you were still hunting the horcruxes? One of the Weasleys, Ms. Granger, any number of people you are close to. You have the full support of the Malfoy family. You may believe that the ring you are wearing is only a protection from simple things. The protections woven into that ring should help you to succeed in returning back to life."

Harry tipped his glass back and drank the Scotch, sputtering at the burn.

"With the plan that you and I are going to formulate now, no one besides you and I will be at the battle. I will create a spell that will dampen all magic within a radius, excluding myself, you, and the Dark Lord. You will allow him to defeat you willingly, and as soon as that is done, I shall
destroy him. I will then portkey the two of us to the infirmary."

"There is just one issue with this. How can I trust you?"

"Do you really believe that I wish to continue bowing to that man? He killed the one person that I loved. He lost all loyalty I might have had for him."

Harry tilted his head. "You lost someone?"

Snape nodded. "I am only going to show you this because you need to trust me. I can guarantee that I will do everything within my power to protect you." He pulled a locket from his robes. "I do everything for her and keep safe what she held as most precious."

Harry took the locket and opened it. His hands were shaking as he gazed at the picture. "My mum?"

"If you survive, I will tell you about her. I can say this, for Lily I would defy anyone." Snape took another drink from his glass.

Harry nodded. "Okay, I believe you."

Severus stood up and walked to the window. "I can open the floo here and you can spend the night with Draco. If the worst happens, he deserves one last night with the man he loves. Do you want a fight to be the last thing he remembers about you?"

"Yes, I want to see him one last time."

"I will arrange it. You go back to the Great Hall and see if you can help with the horcruxes. Then get a good night's sleep. Tomorrow this ends."
Harry and Snape went up and joined the others in the Great Hall. While they were in the dungeons planning for the next day, the others found the last of the horcruxes. With the professors that were still at Hogwarts, Hermione, Lucius, and Ron were able to destroy the horcruxes. With the added magic of the professors, there was no visible weakening of the wizards and witches.

Everyone gathered in the Great Hall to talk about the plans for the final battle and the excitement of finding the horcruxes in the Room of Requirement. Although the professors were wary of Lucius and Snape, they still had their own fellowship, ignoring that there were three teens eating with them. There was an underlying excitement running through the dinner party. For the professors, they were finally seeing Dumbledore's plan come to fruition. His presence was missed, but they did not let that spoil their mood.

Harry kept glancing down the table to his father-in-law and Snape. He was sure that Lucius was not aware of the plan he had made with Snape as of yet, but that would change as soon as dinner was over. Harry, Ron, and Hermione sat talking about the horcruxes. They tried to keep their entire meal light-hearted.

The pressure of the next day finally got to them. Snape stood up and beckoned Harry to come with him. "Mr. Potter, I have a few more details that we need to discuss. I would like for you to stay in my quarters tonight."

"But…"

Ron started to reply, "That is just wrong! You can't…"

Harry glanced at his friends. "It's okay, guys. You two go and spend tonight together. I need to be finalize the plans tonight."

"Come along. We will practice Occlumency tonight and then you will sleep. At noon we will face the Dark Lord." Snape turned, not waiting for anyone else to give an argument.

Harry quickly hugged Hermione and Ron. "I love you guys. I really need to be in the dungeons tonight."

Hermione wiped a tear from her eye as he turned and followed their professor. Lucius followed behind him.

"Well, you two can go up to Gryffindor tower and rest tonight. We will have breakfast served at 9 am promptly. I expect you both to be here," said Professor McGonagall as she led the others out of the Great Hall and to Gryffindor Tower.

Harry slowed enough so that Lucius would walk with him. They were silent on their trek through the dungeons. Snape led them to the Slytherin Common Room. "The fireplace has been connected to the manor."

Lucius nodded. "Thank you, Severus." He stepped into the fireplace and disappeared quickly.

Harry went to step into the fireplace, but was stopped by Snape grabbing his arm. He faced his professor.
"I expect you here by 6 am. The others will begin getting ready by eight. You and I need to be finished before they have a chance to realize that we had a different plan that will have us back in Hogwarts by the time they are having breakfast."

"Yes, sir, I understand." Harry stepped into the fireplace to go and find his husband.

Harry slid out of the fireplace to find the room empty. He had hoped that once Lucius had arrived there, Draco would be waiting for him. He rushed out of the entry room and into the main part of the house. He took the stairs two at a time, going on memory to find his room.

He slammed the door open and marched in quickly. The blond turned from the window when he walked in. Harry didn't give him a chance to say anything before crossing the room and pulling him into his arms and kissing him. He pulled back and looked into the stormy grey eyes. "I love you, Draco."

"Harry…"

"There is no time to talk. I face him tomorrow. Tonight I want to make love to my husband."

Draco ran his hand through Harry's hair. He pulled Harry in for a kiss. He wrapped himself around Harry. He ended the kiss and looked into his husband's eyes again. "I love you, Harry." He took Harry's hand and walked him to the bed.

They stripped slowly, enjoying every tender caress passing between the two. Their kisses claiming the other's body; their fingers clasping as the passion increased. Soft words were whispered onto hot skin. Cries of ecstasy echoed off of the ceiling.

They fell asleep wrapped around each other. For the first time since Dumbledore had died, they both slept peacefully, never breaking the hold they had on each other.

Harry woke quietly. He lay in bed listening to Draco's breathing. He was not sure how they had got to where they were, but he felt happy just holding the other man. He slid his hand down Draco's back in a soft caress. He knew it was time to get up, but he didn't want to move.

He slipped out of the bed quietly and got dressed. He leaned in and kissed Draco one last time.

Harry ran down the steps and back to the foyer. He flooed back to the castle and into Snape's chambers. The other man was waiting for him.

"You are early, Mr. Potter. Eager to meet your destiny?"

Harry wiped a bit of moisture out of his eye. "I'm ready to live again. Let's do this."

Professor Snape conjured a Patronus and sent the doe to meet Voldemort. They quickly left the castle. Snape said that they had approximately ten minutes to get there. "You remember the plan?"

"Yes, I remember. I stand there and let Tom kill me. I will either be immediately be resurrected and kill him or you will kill him and get me to the infirmary." Harry walked on, focused on their destination just past the gates. He was breathing heavily. Images of Draco were flowing through his mind. Flashes of the memories created with Ron and Hermione at Hagrid's Hut followed those. Memories of many things crossed his mind, including the last time he faced Snape as an enemy. "Do you realize that I am putting my trust in you?"
Snape nodded. "I am aware of this, Mr. Potter. I know I have not earned the trust, except through the Headmaster. It has been a pleasure teaching you this last day. It was as if you truly wished to learn."

Harry smirked. "I guess I did want to learn to survive."

He watched as Snape created a magical barrier just past the gates of Hogwarts. As soon as Voldemort was there, Snape would seal the dome. He took a deep breath as he watched Voldemort apparate in. His scar began to hurt as Voldemort walked closer to them.

"So you have finally succeeded, Severus," Voldemort hissed. "Welcome, Mr. Potter. Today is a joyous day, your death."

Snape knelt on the ground before Voldemort, whispering the sealing spell before the Death Eaters could come any closer.

"Nice to see you, too, Tom. Although, I think today is the day you will die." Harry lifted his head higher, fighting the pain in his scar. He locked eyes with his enemy.

"First I shall kill you, then I shall kill your husband. He has betrayed me." Voldemort looked past Harry seeing something in the distance. "He is coming to meet his demise, it seems. I shall enjoy torturing him."

Harry saw Snape stiffen, but did not move. He turned and watched the blond running towards them. "If you are going to kill me, then do it. No matter what happens to me, you will be dead today."

Voldemort focused on him again and laughed. "In a hurry to die, Harry? Avada Kedavra"

A green light filled the dome. "HARRY!" Draco screamed as his lover fell to the ground. He watched as Voldemort collapsed as well. "Severus, do something!" Snape heard him fall to the ground and begin to sob.

Snape looked up and quickly turned to Harry. He made sure Harry still had his wand. "Come on, Harry. Fight for this. You have to finish it."

"Severus, let us in! He has to be killed!" Lucius yelled over the confusion of the stunning the Death Eaters that were trying to get to Draco.

All action stopped when there was a groan from Harry. He turned his head towards Snape. "Is he dead," he croaked.

"Not yet." Snape helped him to stand up. They faced Voldemort together. The other wizard was aiming his wand as they both yelled the spells they had practiced. The strength of the combined enemy and follower destroyed the Dark Lord. His body caught fire and burned.

As the ashes scattered on the ground, Harry collapsed. Snape lowered the dome. He took note of his surrounds and watch Order members gathering up the last of the Death Eaters. Draco ran to Harry, but was pulled back by Kingsley Shacklebolt. "HARRY!"

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Narcissa was sitting by his bed in the middle of the night. He finally started to stir as she wiped his brow with a cool cloth. "Shhh. We don’t want to be rushed out of the infirmary for disturbing any patients," she said with a smile. "You need to rest so that you can come home to your husband. He
needs you, Harry.”

He closed his eyes and fell back to sleep. When he opened his eyes again, it was a bright new day. He left the infirmary surrounded by his family. His dark head shone around the red headed Weasleys. He remained quiet and did not mention the lack of blonds around him. The first party was at Hogwarts that day. They celebrated into the night.

Harry asked once where Lucius was. Arthur put his hand on his shoulder and walked him out of the room. “He chose to go home and spend this time of celebration with his wife. He had not seen her in quite some time.” That was the last time he questioned this. He was then ushered from party to party, always in constant demand; one award after the other in a never-ceasing cycle.

Harry collapsed onto his bed at Grimmauld Place one evening. Ron and Hermione were down the hall from him. The rest of the family had gone home. Harry pulled off his tie and threw it to the ground. He had dark circles under his eyes. He knew that if he had to face one more party he would scream.

“Dobby!”

“Yes, Master Harry, sir?” Dobby popped in front of him. “How cans I be helping you with?”

“Please make sure that I don’t have anywhere to go tomorrow. I’m tired.”

“But you be having the Ball at the Ministry!”

Harry groaned. “Not another ball!”

Dobby gripped a towel between his hands. “Not to be interfering, sir, but when is Master Draco coming?”

Harry looked at Dobby. “When? I don’t know. He hasn’t even had enough courage to show his face to me in over a week!”

Dobby bit his lip as he looked at the lamp as if to punish himself. “But shouldn’t you be bringing him into the house since you is the master of the house?”

“What are you talking about, Dobby?”

“The master is always bringing the wife home. It’s the master’s job.”

Harry sat down on his bed. “Is that why he hasn’t come? I thought he was just happy to not be forced into hiding anymore. Thank you, Dobby.”

Harry lay in his bed and thought. Did he really want Draco to be in his life? Apparently the next move was up to him. He hadn’t thought in terms of romance since the battle. The ache that had been plaguing him for weeks had diminished. What did he want? What would it take for him to be happy?

Was it just the dream that he had had in his head of his love for Tonks? Was he ready to just forget the heavy ring lying cold on his finger? What did he really want from life; people worshiping him for killing Voldemort or someone that had always told him the painful truth?

After a long sleepless night, Harry got up the next morning. He threw on some clothes and left the house. He didn’t tell anyone where he was going. He apparated to the Manor and walked inside the gates. He stood staring at the massive white building in front of him. It was beautiful, but would he
ever consider himself a part of it?

He took a deep breath and walked purposely forward. He knocked on the front doors of the manor, waiting for someone to answer. He paced impatiently outside of the front doors. He heard the click of the door opening and turned to face his father-in-law. “Lucius.”

Lucius gazed at him with stone cold eyes. “Yes, Mr. Potter. How can I help you today?”

Harry looked at him strangely. “Lucius? What’s wrong?”

The older man stepped out of the house and shut the door behind him. “You come to my house and talk to me as if you are my equal. You have the audacity to even think that we would wish to speak with you after everything that has happened. Well you are wrong, Mr. Potter. We are not here to be used and only brought out for your convenience.”

Harry stepped back. He had not been treated this way by Lucius since before the war. “I don’t know what you are talking about. Where did you disappear to? You were staying with me and then you were gone.”

“I was told that you no longer needed our services. I was also reminded that I was out of bounds being out of prison. I would like to know what has happened to my prison appeal, Mr. Potter, or have you forgotten and are ready to just place me and my family into prison despite our efforts in the war?”

Harry felt as if he had been smacked. “What are you talking about? There hasn’t been any talk about you going back to Azkaban. I didn’t take you from there just to put you back in. I don’t understand.”

Lucius gazed at the boy in front of him with cold hard eyes. “Then why are you not even showing support of your family by taking your husband out with you? Every morning he reads the paper and tells us which soiree you have attended, all without the respect that is due to him. Without our support, you would not have won the war.”

“I’m here now. I have been so caught up with people pushing me here and there. I’m here now. Where is he? I need to talk to him.”

Lucius laughed. “I don’t think he is interested at the moment. The picture of Ginny Weasley holding onto your arm rather tightly had him in a bit of a mood this morning.”

Harry saw red. “I have been faithful to my so-called husband since we have exchanged our vows. I have been completely honest with him…”

“And you told him that you didn’t love him in your parting words to him before the battle.”

“He started it! Besides I told him that I did love him that night.” Harry began to pace again. “I don’t know why I have been kept away from you and I don’t know who is threatening you. I’m not going to stand for it!” He stopped pacing and looked at Lucius. “Lucius, please, you have to believe me. You are my family now. I wouldn’t send you to prison, not with all the effort and change you have made since we left.”

Lucius gazed into the earnest green eyes and saw the truth behind his words. “Harry.”

Harry closed his eyes before staring at the man before him. “I can’t lose you now. You have become my father in so many ways. In a short time, I turned to you when I had a problem. I would talk to you about how I should act or even dress. I never had a real father before and you…”
Lucius wiped the tear that was in the corner of his eye and pulled the boy in for a hug. He held him tightly. “It’s good to have you back, Harry.” He kissed the top of Harry’s head.

Snape was leaning against the door frame with his arms crossed, listening to the exchange. “Oh Lord, do we have to put up with Potter again?”

“Shut it, Severus. He is family.”

Please. If he were so worried about his ‘family,’ he would be in the gardens looking for his husband.”

Harry pushed away from his father-in-law and stared at Snape. He couldn’t believe that Snape had just told him where to find Draco. “Thanks!” He pushed past both men and ran into the manor. He skidded past Narcissa with a wave and ran out the back door.

Harry followed the path that Draco had taken him down not too long ago. He found him sitting at the lake, throwing stones in. “Draco…”

Draco turned around and saw Harry standing there. He stood up and dusted off his trousers. “Harry.”

Harry closed the distance between them and pulled Draco into his arms for a deep kiss. He held on for dear life as if nothing else would save him. He raised his head and stared into the silver eyes. “I love you.”

Draco blinked. “You love me, really?” he questioned softly.

Harry just nodded. That is when he saw the fire burning in Draco’s eyes. “You love me and this is how you show me. Dancing all night long with that scheming red-headed hag! How many times have I told you that you are mine, dammit. She had her claws all over you!”

Harry closed his eyes and sighed softly. “I promise, she won’t have them on me ever again. I’m all yours.” He pulled the resistant man back into his arms and kissed him softly. “Are you ready to move in with me? I’m going to have Dobby and Kreacher begin on the repairs that you have already requested.”

Draco laughed and then smiled at his husband. “Do you really think it will be that easy to make me happy?”

Harry joined him in the laughter. “Merlin, I hope not. I would hate to have a boring life where you agreed with me all the time.”

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It had been a full year since the defeat of Voldemort. Many secrets came out in the weeks and months following his death. Severus Snape had actually been a very close friend of Harry’s mother. Harry had never imagined that he would have long talks with the professor about his mum. Severus seemed to be warming up more and more to Harry. He was no longer sneering at him every time they passed each other in the halls of Hogwarts. He only deducted five points in class from him, as opposed to twenty.

Ron and Hermione settled into their relationship. They were becoming closer and Harry was spending less time with them. It was much easier since they still did not get along with Draco.

Draco, true to form, was extremely possessive of Harry. Ginny learned the hard way to not get
close to Draco's man. He hexed her so badly she had to stay in the infirmary for a week one time when she hugged Harry during a Quidditch match. Draco made up some excuse, saying he had Veela blood coursing through his veins that made him possessive of his husband. Harry didn’t quite believe him, but he just let Draco continue.

Harry made sure that Lucius was not sent to prison. He had actually pushed for Lucius to enter into the Ministry to work on reform for the prison system. People learned that when Lucius talked, Harry backed him up completely – in public. They had quite a few debates outside of the public eye, but according to Malfoy standards, you must always show a solid front. Any disagreements must be kept behind closed doors.

Harry enjoyed the attention that Narcissa bestowed upon him. It was the first time he had felt a mother’s love and he flourished in it. Draco would get jealous because Harry would soak up all of the attention that she would bestow.

The world was right and the world was peaceful, at least until the Dursleys were introduced. Draco was told that he had to be nice to Harry’s family. Family always stood behind each other, even if they did not agree.

He grumbled every time their name was mentioned, but he was nice to them when he met them.

True to his word, Lucius made sure that Narcissa and Aunt Petunia made plans for an official wedding ceremony. Uncle Vernon was speechless and turned many shades of purple as he stared at the house that Harry was living in. Dudley, on the other hand, enjoyed asking the house-elves for everything under the sun to eat.

~~*~~

Harry surveyed the landscape before him. He was standing in the rose garden surrounded by the people he called family plus a few extra hundred guests that Lucius said _had_ to be there. He waited by a gate for his husband to walk to him.

When the blond man approached him, he took his hand and kissed it softly. “Are you ready to do this, publicly, now?”

“I thought you would never ask,” laughed the blond as he gazed into the green eyes in front of him. “Shall I change appearances for you as well?”

“Never! I only want to see this face until I die.”

They clasped hands and walked to where a minister waited. They repeated vows in front of their family, friends, co-workers, acquaintances, and just about anyone else that Draco, his mother or Aunt Petunia had decided needed to be there.

“Without you, I am incomplete, missing a part of my soul.” Harry whispered to Draco as they pulled apart from their chaste kiss. “With you we will rule this world.”

They clasped hands and walked together into the midst of their family and a bright future.

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