Trampled

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Trampled

by reader_chic_2

Summary

Harry just wanted to see Louis Tomlinson in concert again. It'd been years since the band was together, and he just released a new song, and it was everything. It was all Harry could think about. Any thoughts of moving on left his body at the sound of his addicting raspy, silky voice.

So, despite being a famous singer himself, he convinces Niall to sneak away from security to watch Louis at a music festival without Louis knowing because if Louis knew he was watching him, Harry would eternally be deemed a pathetic loser in his mind. While he'd come to terms with Louis hating him and his entire being, he was not okay with Louis thinking him to be that guy who couldn't get over him.

Unfortunately, his plan failed and Harry quickly found himself in a stampede of young, vicious girls claiming to be his fans yet clearly were out for blood.

Of course, Louis would save him.

... 

Or the one where Harry was so desperate to hear Louis' voice live that he risked his life and Louis saved him, which sent them on fast path down memory lane and...forgiveness?

Notes
Hello! Welcome to the new story that started out as a short story and quickly turned a tad long.

Disclaimer: this is all a work of fiction. None of this actually happened. This says nothing about anyone's sexuality or personalities.

FYI there is Freddie in this. Ik it's a sensitive thing in the fandom, but I'm newer to the fandom and I've always felt that there's a line I'm not urged to cross when it comes to celebrities children. I'd hope they wouldn't fake a child because that's just insane to me, but who knows. Regardless, Freddie is adorable and the idea of Louis as a father is adorable. I wanted his child to be genuine and not some random name, so.

Now, I own the story itself, however, there are songs mentioned in this and a few lyrics. So here is a list of awesome songs mentioned:


I also suggest listening to these while you read! These are the songs that inspired this story, after all. The particular one I love is Just Hold On. I made a playlist of these songs along with Harry Styles' album.

So listening to both Louis’ and Harry’s songs, I just felt like the lyrics could easily relate to if Larry had been real in the days of the band and they’d broken up. Of course, most of the lyrics that make me feel this way could easily just apply to a past love in general, but for the story, it worked well for me.

Enjoy :)

See the end of the work for more notes

Trampled

Harry’s leg was shaking the table. Waiting on Niall always proved to be a marathon rather than a sprint. They definitely should have planned to meet up over dinner. There was a good chance Niall was still nursing a hangover in bed.

“Oh my god, you’re Harry Styles, aren’t you?” Said the waitress as she came to his table. Harry felt tightness pull over his chest but offered her a genuine smile nevertheless. Her hand was shaking as she clutched at the pen, clearly trying to still her nerves, and then Harry’s tightness released.

“I am. You’re a clever one, you are,” Harry teased lightly, and the girl let out a shaking breath. “Nice to meet you...Hanna.”

“Y-you too,” she bounced on her feet excitedly, and then shook her head when she remembered where she was. “Oh. You probably want to order, yeah?”

Harry smiled gently and nodded. “Right. I’ll have a large coffee and go ahead and bring over a mocha latte. Niall will be here...eventually.”

“Oh gods, both of you...great,” Hanna said in exasperation, but Harry could tell she was just worried
about having a panic attack. He gave her an extra soft smile. “Any chance I’ll get to see all five of you?”

“Afraid not,” Harry chucked.

“Louis?”

Hardy smiled tightly. “Nope. Sorry, love.”


Harry thanked her gratefully. It always baffled him that they had such loyal fans. It’d been years since the band was together, but they held on loving them.

“Waddup! You look like a proper hippie, Haz,” came Niall’s teasing voice. He was dressed in golf trousers and a collared golf shirt with a vest overtop. His brown hair was in the same quiff he wore throughout most of their years together.

“Is it a rule that professional golfers must wear golf attire everywhere they go?” Harry inquired, eyes lit up at seeing Niall after months of not. He stood up and they wrapped their arms around each other tightly. Niall’s hand dipped down as his thumb jammed up toward Harry’s asshole, and Harry yelped, squirming away while rubbing his bum.

“Hey! You must properly warm me up for that treatment, mate!” Harry said in a faux serious tone. Niall cracked up, falling into the seat across from Harry.

“Right. How is life out of the closet now?” Niall grinned mischievously at him in a way that made Harry shift uncomfortably. “Louis said it was like becoming famous for a second time.”

Harry stiffened at his name. Niall’s laughter faded away, so he clearly noticed. Still, Harry wasn’t going to let that bother him. He could handle a conversation about an ex band mate without going pale in the face. “Yeah, sums it up, I suppose,” Harry found himself agreeing before he frowned. “Wait. No, it’s not. It’s just the same. Except now I don’t get girls throwing themselves at me. That much. Thank god.”

Niall rolled his eyes. “Yeah, mate, had to be terrible.”

Harry laughed, shoving Niall’s shoulder lightly. “Speaking of girls, got you one yet? Surely you’ve found some hot bendy golfer, right?”

Niall snorted. “Bendy isn’t quite the word, but yeah. I have.” He beamed. Harry already knew this. He just didn’t know if the paparazzi post had been a fling or a serious thing. Nobody knew with Niall. “What about you? Any fit lads you’ve got your eye on?” Harry gave him a look. ‘As if,’ it said, and Niall shrugged. “I had to hope, right? Are you at least over him?”

At that, Harry offered a genuine smile. Before he could answer, the waitress came back. “H-here’s your coffee. Can I get you anything else, Niall?”

Niall gave her a perfect smile, to which her cheeks burst into color again. “Yes! Thank you...Hanna. Can I have a buttered croissant, and a cake pop, and a...chocolate croissant.”

“You got it!”

She continued standing there, staring, and then her pen was furiously writing down what he’d said.
When she continued standing there, Niall smiled again at her. She almost fell and took it as her cue to leave.

“So have you?”

Harry took a sip of his coffee and said in a cheerier voice. “If moving on means I no longer stalk his Instagram or hate-listen to the songs he’s written, then yes, Niall. I have moved on.”

Niall meekly swirled his coffee, cheeks slightly pink. He offered a shrug, muttering his words as if he wasn’t sure if they were okay to be said. “His baby is really cute.”

Honestly, he could have done almost anything other than mention his baby and it would have been fine. Harry knew about Freddie. He knew about how absolutely adorable he was. He knew that he was already practicing foottie at the age of four. Harry shouldn’t have been bothered by a four-year-old child. Truthfully, it wasn’t the child that was the problem. It was what the child meant. It was a reminder of the pain Louis had caused him every single day when they were together. It was a reminder that he was bisexual and enjoyed touching and rubbing up close to the girl their PR team assigned to be his girlfriend so mentions of his sexuality weren’t in question.

“I know. Little Freddie,” Harry said as he sucked in a breath of air. It suddenly seemed stuffy inside. “He always wanted kids. I’m happy for him.”

“So did you,” Niall said, cringing as he spoke. Even Niall himself knew when he said something he shouldn’t have. “Well, you did, didn’t you?”

“Yes. I still do,” Harry shrugged. “Like I said, Niall. I’m happy for him.”

Niall surveyed him for another couple minutes, long enough for his food to arrive, before he finally slapped his hand to the table. “Well that’s good! So did you hear his new song? It’s enough to make me question a few things…” He wiggled his eyebrows as he spoke, but the implications were spoiled by the chocolate dribbling from the croissant onto his chin.

“I haven’t heard it. I told you, I – have moved on,” Harry shrugged, nearly slipping over his words while trying to be nonchalant, but every fiber in his body was itching to grab his phone and find that new song.

“Have you heard any of them?” Niall asked.

There were multiple?

Harry frowned, drinking more of his coffee in hopes of hiding his disappointment. “I thought he was just writing…”

Niall shook his head with a wide grin. “Nah, mate. He’s got four really good singles. His latest is with Steve Aoki. It’s magical…even better when you’re high!”

He’d said it was such enthusiasm and volume, a few people in the small café turned to look at them with shock, and half of their faces lit up in recognition. Harry disregarded them for the moment. “I’ll check him out.”

“Yeah. I would. I mean, I want you to move on, don’t get me wrong. And this is definitely going to get in the way of that, but he’s our bandmate first and foremost. So you really have to at least stay up to date on his music,” Niall shrugged, stuffing half the buttered croissant into his mouth in one go. “Speaking of which, congrats on the album release. I loved every one of your songs, Haz.”
Harry grinned, pride bursting in his heart. “Really?”

He’d always wondered if his past bandmates would like his new music. It was drastically different to the music they made, but then again, they all had quite diverse music tastes. Boy band hits weren’t their first choice, then or now, and especially when it came to their own music.

“Yes. Let me know if you’re performing near one of my tournaments. I’ll bug you around backstage,” Niall winked with a promise. His phone buzzed and he cursed. “Shite. I have a tee time in an hour.”

“Great. Leave the fans to me then,” Harry grinned, feeling warmth at the familiarity of this situation. “Just like old times.”

Niall hopped onto his feet and tossed a twenty on the table. “Can’t raise your expectations of me now, can I? Call me when you’re done listening to his songs!”

Harry gave Hanna one last hug and took a picture with her before he left as well. He couldn’t get Niall’s words out of his head. Harry wondered what type of music Louis had made. He’d been into so many kinds back in the days of the One Direction.

So the moment Harry got home, he downloaded all of Louis’ songs. There were only four, really, but they were all recent. That didn’t mean much. Louis always had loads of almost-but-not-quite finished songs in his books.

The first one his listened to was a duet with a girl. At first, Harry thought it was about each other, that they were together, but then he listened to the song a second time. He listened a third time, as well, because Louis’ voice was so damn distracting.

It was odd because it didn’t sound like a normal duet where they were each telling separate versions of one story. It sounded like they were telling the same story, as if they bonded because they shared the same story. When Harry looked at who wrote the song, Louis’ name was first and hers was not there at all.

It was about a past love.

Harry shook his head. Unlike himself, Louis surely had more relationships than just theirs. Harry wasn’t delusional enough to think Louis had cared about him nearly as much as Harry did him. Louis was his everything, but Louis didn’t blink an eye of playing up his PR relationships. He even suggested getting caught snogging and rubbing against the girls many times. If Louis had cared for Harry in the least, he would have never done that and at least shown some hesitation.

At least, that was what Harry kept reminding himself whenever his feelings for the snarky lad came back.

Harry listened to Miss You and Just Like You and couldn’t get the self-indulgent thought that it could possibly be about Harry out of his mind. He deserved to know if it was, he thought. Then again, Harry wrote an entire album about Louis and hadn’t mentioned a word to him.

Harry felt his songs were more than obvious, though. Louis had a kid now and probably didn’t even listen to Harry’s new works, but if he did, he’d understand with no questions. He’d simply start laughing, showing the song to Freddie and making his baby dance and giggle to the pain of an ex-lover, showing Freddie how his dad was so amazing he could get anyone to fall hard for him.

Then, Harry made the mistake of playing Just Hold On.
Immediately, Harry couldn’t breathe. His voice sounded like it was from another world. Once he heard it, there was no turning it off. Harry wanted to listen to it for the rest of his life. It was angelic and electronic and, as Niall put it, literally magical. It cast a spell over Harry, but he wasn’t about to fight it. His bones were tingling from the sound of his beautiful voice.

And then Louis practically screamed, “The sun goes down and it come back up.”

Harry’s knees weakened, and he fell back on the bed, hating himself for feeling his dick spark to life. He lied there, waiting for that energetic chorus to come around again. He didn’t hear anything other than Louis’ enchanting voice, and then it came around again.

“The sun goes down and it comes back up. The world it turns no matter what. Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh.”

Harry cried out as his eyes swam with visions of what it’d be like to see Louis sing this live. He could hear the strain in his voice, the grit that recorded music took away from him. He knew Louis’ voice better than his own, and he knew he had to hear this live. There was no fucking debate. Screw Harry’s feelings. Screw being cautious. Screw moving on. He was going to indulge himself in Louis Tomlinson again after years of ignoring the horrible minx. Screw his self-worth. What was the point of having respect for himself when he was miserable? He was going to do what his body was craving and just deal with the damage later on.

“Niall. We’re going to see Louis perform, and I don’t want to hear a word from you about it.”

And, well, that was that.

As Louis had written on his chest, it is what it is.

...  

“I still don’t understand why we couldn’t have just gotten backstage passes,” Niall grumbled, ducking his head and readjusting his sunglasses. Harry laughed heartily, but then he regretted it because a few girls turned their heads toward him. Niall hit him upside the head. Harry always had a familiar laugh, he’d been told.

They pushed past people until they were deep in the crowd. Harry didn’t risk going to the front even though he desperately wanted to. “He can’t know I’m here, Nialler. Remember?”

Niall rolled his eyes. “He wouldn’t think you’re desperate, Haz. I’m decently sure he misses you too, if those songs are anything to go about.”

Harry crossed his arms over his chest. If he hadn’t been wearing a baseball cap and black aviators, he would have fixed Niall with a glare. Harry loathed the hat he was wearing. As a personal fan of hats, he decided wearing a baseball cap facing forwards was about the laziest and worst of his looks. Still, it was necessary for today. He couldn’t risk Louis looking down from stage and recognizing him. He also couldn’t risk anyone recognizing him.

“Niall?”

“Yes?”

“Shut up.”

“Got it.”
They were at a music festival, so at least Harry had some excuse as to what he was doing there if he got caught. Granted, most famous celebrities that went to music festivals got backstage passes so they weren’t swarmed by fans, but he digressed.

“My security already wants to kill me,” Niall bounced excitedly beside Harry. People were squished in around them tightly. It was Harry’s understanding that most of then were here to see Steve Aoki. However, Louis was going perform his new songs first, then do the one with Steve, and then leave.

Harry could keep himself together for three songs. He definitely could.

“So do mine.”

Niall seemed pleased to be doing something relatively normal. Between teenage girls still bombarding the previous boy band member and golf fans dying to talk for hours about the game, Niall really hadn’t done something normal in a while. Harry at least could. His fans had been fans for so long they tended to wait about thirty minutes before coming up to him. Harry liked to think it wasn’t to stare and stalk him, though.

“Hello everybody!”

Harry caught his breath. He hadn’t heard that voice in real life in years. How had it been so long?

“Thanks for coming out today. Hope you’re all having a good time,” Louis said as he emerged on stage. He was wearing impossibly tight jeans. His bum only seemed bigger from this angle, or maybe it had gotten bigger over the years. Harry didn’t know. His body did remember what it was like to squeeze that delectable bum though.

“This was a bad idea,” he groaned, head falling onto Niall’s shoulder, who only cackled with delight. “You’re a masochist for agreeing to my shitty plan.”

“Maybe,” Niall shrugged. “I think Louis and I are the only ones still able to rock the same haircut we had back in the old days. Looks good, right?”

“Too good,” Harry grimaced. It was swept back over his head more, and it was just starting to curl behind his head. It framed his face impossibly well. “No. It’s longer now.” It provided Louis with an older look, especially when paired with that facial hair. Harry squirmed as his brain imagined what it would be like to have that hair brushing over his body. He knew what it felt like. He knew the red marks it produced and the way it made his hips buck.

“Well, I came here to listen to some great music. And I intend on doing so after this, but first, let’s see if I can give you all a great time, too.”

Harry grinned. Louis never was too articulate on stage. He’d done fine most of the time, but sometimes he’d get flustered or caught up in his head and just…barely make sense.

Without much warning, he jumped into his first song. Miss You. It was the one Harry could handle best, and even then, he was leaning heavily against Niall. It was just that this song almost had to be about him. It talked about how they couldn’t be on the phone or alone anymore, and that was exactly what it had come to in the end. Harry couldn’t stand talking to Louis on the phone because his voice alone tore him apart, and management hardly left them alone if they thought somebody could catch wind of it.

“He’s so beautiful,” Harry groaned, not daring to sing along because his brain was too busy listening to the words, trying to find absolute proof that the song was about him.
“You’re such a ninny,” Niall teased, brushing his hand through Harry’s hair, knocking his hat off in the process. Harry moved slowly while picking up his hat, eyes too focused on the fit boy standing on stage to find the hat.

A few gasps sounded from around them, and two girls pointed and leaned towards their friends to whisper, but Harry got the hat back on fast enough to ignore the rumors. He shoved Niall further into the crowd. That put them closer to the stage, but it was away from those girls, so he figured it was the better risk.

Harry missed the transition into the next song. This was a good one. It was a safer one. These lyrics were easy to pass off as not about Harry. If he wanted to look into it, he could relate some things to him, but Harry honestly believed it wasn’t about him. Which was good. That was how all the songs were, most likely. Louis was using the word ‘you’ to talk about anyone else. It didn’t have to be Harry unless Harry made it about himself. Of course, he tended to, but so did anyone else listening to this song. That was the purpose behind it. Louis was too good.

When the song ended, Harry’s whole body was buzzing with energy. He had a bad feeling. It made him want to leave, but of course he couldn’t even consider doing that. The next song coming on was the one that had, regretfully, been in all his dreams these last few weeks. This song had given him reason for too many wanks. It was horrible, Harry knew, but there was nothing that would keep him from missing this.

“Now, you lovely crowd, let’s bring out the ingenuous Steve Aoki!”

Steve came onto stage with a cool expression. Harry had always been a fan of his work, but he’d never loved something more than this next song.

“I had the greatest pleasure of working with Steve Aoki here on this song, and it’s one of my favorites. Just Hold On, everybody!”

Louis stepped back in front of Steve’s setup. The stage lights dimmed, letting the darkness enhance the anticipation even more. And then, Louis sang in a light, strained voice, “Wish that you could build a time machine.”

Harry saw white spots dance across his vision.

His voice had the magical, alien-esque affect in recording. Live, however, his voice wavered a bit more. It had more roughness to it, making the blood in Harry’s system pound, all running to one area as he bounced along to the music.

When Louis brushed his hair back, belting out perfect, rhythmic ‘oh-oh-oh’s Harry stumbled a bit. Then, Louis practically screamed, voice deeper and rougher than Harry had heard outside of the bedroom ever before, “The sun goes down and it comes back up. The world it turns, no matter what.” His voice was magnetic, pulling Harry forward on its own accord.

“God, look at his mouth. It’s bloody beautiful,” Harry groaned, dragging his hand down his face. “It should be illegal to look so fit on stage.”

“You do, I hear,” Niall pointed out, but it didn’t stop Harry from running a hand through his hair, pulling at his long strands to try to dispel the waves of lust pouring out of his body. In the process, his hat fell off, and he bent down to grab it, but then it was kicked away, and his sunglasses fell off his face, also quickly trampled.

“Fuck,” he groaned, standing up. It was almost over, though. Surely nobody would notice him now.
Harry would be insulted, if so. He himself was too invested on Louis’ spirited performance. His voice burst into a lull deep singing, causing Harry to groan audibly. His eyes were locked on the man singing so roughly. He willed those pools of blue to come his way, to get a good look he could savor for the next ten years it would take for Harry to get over this performance.

As girls suddenly screamed and swarmed around Harry, those eyes did meet his.

No! I hadn’t meant literally!

It was too late, though.

“Harry Styles, oh my god!”

“I love you, Harry!”

“Larry Stylinson is alive!”

“Can I kiss you?”

“Can you sign this?”

“Dance with me, Harry!”

Harry looked around, finally broken from the spell of that electric blue gaze. His body finally figured out it could spare a few minutes of focusing on Louis Tomlinson in order to save his life. Niall was nowhere to be seen. All Harry saw were girls swarming him, all so young.

“Excuse me,” Harry yelled, trying to shove his way out of the crowd. He hadn’t gone out without security since the X-Factor, and even then it ended badly. Today he and Niall went to great lengths to dodge their security, and clearly that was a bad idea. Harry didn’t even know what to do. The fans were rabid. Nobody was listening or moving. Harry stretched on his toes, trying to see over their heads with his extra height for a way out. He got tossed and shoved and turned and found that the music had stopped. Whirling around to look at the stage, Harry just barely met Louis’ eyes before somebody slammed into his back and he forcefully fell to the ground.

This is how I’ll die. Trampled by my own ‘fans.’

“Harry?” Louis’ voice was shrill through the microphones. “Is that…”

Harry managed to get back to his feet, but the girl who helped him up was frantically kissing his neck. He thought he would have avoided this fate when he finally came out last year.


God, if Harry hadn’t been in love with him still, he was now. Despite their horrid parting, Louis still sent his own security out to rescue Harry. Sure, Harry supposed most celebrity acquaintances would do the same, but it still came as such a shock from Louis.

“Get off him! What the fuck is wrong with you all?” Louis shouted running to the edge of the stage. He looked ready to jump into the crowd at any moment. “You’re going to hurt him. Stop it!”

Thankfully, his security worked fast, and at that moment, they got to Harry and physically lifted him up in the air. Harry was so baffled, all he could do was gape. This was honestly scarier than crowd surfing because the people carrying him were physically moving.

Louis sighed with relief on the stage. “Bloody hell, Haz,” Louis breathed, running those dainty
hands through his hair.

“Hallo, Lou!” Harry shouted back, a mix of terror and exhilaration causing his voice to crack. Louis shook his head in disbelief, but there was a smile on his face. It was an older version of the smile he’d worn during pranks. It was the smile that caused Harry to fall in love with him. It still was.

Security brought him backstage, and Louis ran off to meet him. His pulse may have been racing even more than when he was getting mobbed. He hadn’t seen Louis in almost five years, and now…now he was running toward him with concern and amusement in his brilliant smile.

“What the fuck are you doing here, Harry? You could have gotten killed, you bloody wanker!” Louis said as he flung himself at Harry.

“I…don’t…know,” was all Harry could come up with. Louis gave him a weary look, probably trying to decide if he was crazy or not. “M’sorry.”

Louis snorted. “Stay here, mate. I’m going to go try that song again and then…you can make it up to me.”

Oh god.

Not only did Louis show him no mercy by turning on his charm, full force, but he also was going to perform the entire song again. Harry stood at side stage, gaping as Louis jumped back to center stage. ‘First off, you ‘fans’ are not real fans if you’re going to risk Harry’s life just to get his attention! Secondly, he was just here to have some fun. If he’d wanted to meet you all, he would have made it clear. NOW can we try this again? No mobs? Great, thank you.’”

Louis never had been one to be or let anyone be pushed around. It reminded Harry of when they first met…

~ flashback ~

Harry was bouncing on his feet. He couldn’t believe he’d just performed and had gotten sent forward. His whole body was filled with energy that he simply couldn’t contain.

Which translated into his body trying to release that through bodily fluids.

His hands were full of papers and packages for him to go over and sign. It was more than he’d been expecting. Realistically, Harry should have given it to his family to hold, but his brain wasn’t truly functioning well at the moment.

So he held the papers in one hand, unzipped his trousers with the other, and tried to pee. For as much as he felt the urge to pee, he seriously had trouble getting it started. Nerves were a tricky thing. Another man came into the loo, almost at a sprint, and bent over by Harry. He seemed to be breathing much too fast.

“Fuck, fuck, fuck,” he muttered, holding his head in his hands. Harry gave him a curious glance. He was a beautiful boy. All brown hair, tanned skin, and bright blue eyes.

“You okay, mate?” Harry asked, ignoring the fact that the lad’s eyes were perfectly in line with his dick. The boy, of course, looked right there when Harry spoke. “Oi. Up here, please. I am trying to wizz.”

“What? Oh, thanks!” Harry said, still trying to force his body to pee. He felt like an old man, suddenly. “I’m Harry Styles, by the way.”

He began to extend his hand to the guy, but then retracted it considering he’d just been handling his member. The guy and him looked at each other and burst into laughter, clutching their stomachs by the end of it.

“Louis Tomlinson,” the cute boy chuckled. He looked around and, as if he had nothing better to do, stepped up beside Harry in his own urinal. This went against all common toilet rules, but Harry decided not to point that out because he finally was able to pee! “Was Simon as frightening as he sounds?”

At the name Simon, Harry jolted, remembering his penetrating stare of curiosity. Unfortunately, that made his whole body move, and therefore, his penis, which then caused his stream of pee… to move to the left…onto Louis’ shoes.

“Ah!” Louis yelped, his high voice going even higher.

“Shit! Oh my – I’m so sorry! I can’t believe I just did that. Fuck. Fuck, let me clean that up for you,” Harry said as he urged himself to finish peeing. Louis just stared at him, mouth open in what was probably angry shock.

“Dude, it was just a little-,”

“No, please,” Harry said, zipping himself back into his pants. Louis was still peeing by the time Harry came over with paper towels in hand. He dropped his packet of papers on the dirty ground, but he felt so awful he didn’t give one shit. Harry knelt by Louis’ side and frantically scrubbed at his trainers, praying he truly did only get a little pee on his shoe and not enough to soak into them.

“You want to be careful there or you may force me to retaliate,” Louis said in a teasing tone full of amusement. Harry looked up and felt his entire face go red because he found himself staring straight at Louis’ dick and…and it was quite nice. It was thick and large, not horrendously big, but it was simply…nice. “As you said, mate. Up here, yeah?”

Louis was grinning, and then Harry stood, smiling sheepishly at him. “Sorry.”

He tossed the paper towels in the trash and extended Louis a hand, this time not retracting it. He felt him peeing on his foot had brought them close enough to shake hands after both touching their own respective dicks. Louis raised an eyebrow but shook anyways. They ended the handshake by cracking up, Louis slinging an arm around Harry’s shoulders as he struggled to zip up his trousers one handed. “You’re quite remarkable, you know that?” Louis laughed, and Harry found that comment to mean more to him than even Simon’s praise.

“You are, too,” Harry grinned, nuzzling his head against his shoulder instinctively. He didn’t know why, but it just felt right.

“Can you fags take this elsewhere?” said a man neither of them had noticed standing at the urinal furthest from them. Harry didn’t know how long he’d been there, but he’d probably caught him staring at Louis’ penis. Immediately, Harry looked to his feet, redness filling his cheeks. Shame filled him suddenly, which didn’t make any sense. He was into girls, and this surely had just been a random weird experience. Harry wanted to say as much, too, but something stopped him. “Fucking gross.”

Louis didn’t hesitate to bark out, “Yeah? Well your dick is fucking gross.”
Harry never said Louis was smart in his endeavors.

The man cast him murderous glare, angling his body away from the two. Harry could tell the man thought they found his penis interesting, which was such an ignorant train of thought it made Harry laugh.

Louis picked up on this as well.

“Don’t flatter yourself,” Louis snarled. “We’d rather die than come near your smelly body.”

“Good,” the guy grunted. “Just because you think you’re ‘special’ doesn’t mean you can fool around in the toilets. Scram!”

That was the exact opposite way to handle Louis, Harry quickly found. In a matter of seconds, Louis picked up Harry’s papers, slammed them into his chest, and shouted, “We will fool around wherever the fuck we want!”

Then, Louis grabbed Harry’s shirt and pulled their lips together. His lips moved against Harry’s fast and hard, tongue very obviously licking along his lips. Harry struggled to meet his level of intensity, mainly because he was struggling to breathe at all. Louis kissed him like he had something to prove, and maybe he did. Harry was sure he didn’t prove much to the jerk storming out of the bathroom, but he definitely brought enlightenment to Harry.

Louis pulled away grinning. He wiped at his wet lips with a proud smile. “Ha. Showed him. Sorry, Harry. Just had to do it. He was bating me.”

Harry shrugged. “Glad you did.” And then, he said, “M’not gay.”

Louis smirked, patting his chest fondly. He ruffled his hair before stepping away. “Sure you’re not. Never thought a straight guy could kiss like that, but hey, what do I know?”

Then, Louis winked at him and walked away, hips swaying and ass – which was quite big – shaking.

“Good luck, Louis Tomlinson!”

“Thanks, babe!”

~ end flashback ~

When Louis jogged off the stage waving, Harry snapped out of his memories. Fuck. He’d just missed him singing his favorite song a second time. He never even got to hear the ending. That was just his luck. He came to hear this song specifically, and right when he got a taste of that beauty, he zoned out. Then suddenly, Louis was panting in front of Harry, eyes wide and open and…lacking any anger.

Louis didn’t seem to know what to say.

So naturally, Louis flung himself at him.

Again, Harry couldn’t breathe.

It was instincts kicking in when Harry wrapped his arms around Louis and hugged him back just as hard. He inhaled his scent, reveling in the familiar cologne Louis had been and clearly still was obsessed with. Memories whipped Harry across the face as they held each other tight, as if they
hadn’t spent the last five years avoiding each other. All too soon, Louis stepped away. As much as Harry hated that, it did give his head time and space to catch up to what was going on.

“That was – I love that song,” Harry confessed. Whatever Louis had been expecting, it hadn’t been that. His eyebrows shot to his hairline, and a slow smile was building on his face.

“Loved it enough to risk getting trampled like the daft idiot you are, right?” Louis snorted, shaking a hand through his hair. “Come on to the lounge. I still have it while Aoki’s on.”

Harry didn’t hesitate in following Louis backstage. The lounge was a little ways away, but when they got there, it was filled with food and racks of clothes. Harry had been to a few festivals himself, but none where each stage had a personal lounge behind the set.

There were people in there that seemed like stylists and managers, including Louis’ new manager. When they saw Louis coming in followed by Harry, they all stood and began to leave. “Harry Styles. I didn’t think I’d get to meet you,” Louis’ manager, Mark Gillespie, said as he extended his hand to shake.

“Mark! I’ve heard great things about you,” Harry said, finally getting a head back on himself. Now he felt like Harry Styles the celebrity, not Harry Styles the fangirl. “It’s a pleasure.”

Mark surveyed him in the way most managers did, as if searching for a weak link in his armor. Well, after today, Harry surely seemed to have many. “Harry, you know, if you wanted to see Louis, I think we could have managed to sneak you a ticket. Under the radar, of course. Don’t want to stir up any rumors, right? Jeffery might have my head.”

Louis walked past and physically smacked him upside the head, which made Harry snort. “Shut it, Mark. You know he came out in December.”

“Right,” Mark chuckled smugly. “Sorry. I wasn’t sure how much they censor you over there. Let me know if you ever feel like switching. I’m sure Louis can tell you how great we’ve treated him. When did you come out, Louis?”

Louis rolled his eyes as he grabbed a bottle of water and flopped back on the couch. “First thing. Let’s not forget who’s got an album released between the two of us, though. Innit that right, Mark?”

Mark’s eyes turned an entire shade darker. “All in due time, Louis. I’m headed out, but remember… behave yourselves now, boys.”

Harry made a face that Louis did not miss. He followed him to sit on the couch. “Sorry. He’s a bit of a prick when he wants something.”

Harry shrugged. “He’s got a point, though. Jeffery wanted the focus to stay on my music. Said he wanted to wait until I started dropping to release the ‘big bomb.’” Harry chuckled at that, though he couldn’t say why. It was far from funny. “I hated it, but…what can you do?”

Louis offered him a grim smile. “Always a give or take, I suppose. It’s a shame, but your album was stellar, love. Addicting, really.”

Harry’s heart leapt. He didn’t know how they were having this conversation so casually. It was a miracle, really. He had so many questions and so much to say, but he knew that would ruin whatever was going on right now, and he would do everything to avoid that. It’d been so long since he had a normal, non-screaming conversation with Louis.

“Addicting? If it was so addicting, why did you never come see me?” Harry teased. “I mean, I did
come see you.”

Louis crossed a leg over his knee. They had a full seat separating them, as if to provide them a promise that this was nothing like years before. Harry, unfortunately, did not need reminded of that. “Who’s to say I didn’t? You know, some of us know how to actually blend in.”

Harry grinned. “I’m sure it’s easy when you’re short enough for everyone around you to act as a shield?”

Louis’ high-pitched laughter rang through the room, forcing a smile onto Harry’s lips. “Oh wow, that’s very original, Haz. I once remembered a time when you liked my tiny body.”

Harry offered him a wink, not believing that he had the guts to speak the words he spoke. “Who’s to say I still don’t?”

Louis grinned, holding up his drink in cheers before downing half the bottle. Harry watched with an open mouth as Louis’ Adam’s apple bobbed while the water made its way down his throat. Suddenly, Harry was jealous of the water. The bottle with those tantalizing lips wrapped around it, the water feeling the insides of his mouth and throat…yeah, Harry knew what it felt like to be the water bottle and he was very much jealous that he no longer was the water bottle.

“Well, Hazza, care to explain to me why you’re here? I know you didn’t make an impromptu trip just to have a fun flirt with me.” Louis’ eyes always gave away his intelligence. He looked at people with calculation, analyzing them even if he didn’t mean to, which was probably why he sensed Harry was trying to avoid this exact conversation. His alarming eyes made Harry gulp, falling back into the couch in hopes to become less uncomfortable. It didn’t help.

“Who’s to say I didn’t?”

Louis rolled his gorgeous eyes. “You’re not one for pain. You wouldn’t willingly bring up the pain of the past for something as trivial as flirting. You can find that anywhere.”

Harry shrugged. “Pain? Not a chance. This is completely harmless. Are you in pain? Should I leave?” Louis’ eyes narrowed daringly. “You can’t find this anywhere, by the way.”

“Oh Harry Styles, when did you become so forward?” Louis grinned, sipping on his water.

“We learned together, remember?”

~ flashback ~

They were all lounging around the suite’s living room. After a vigorous game of truth or dare, Harry was sitting with his back pressed against Louis’ chest on the couch. They were lounging around lazily while they watched Liam and Zayn argue about what pitch to use in the new song Louis and Harry had written. Niall was playing a video game.

“That was fun. Why didn’t you do more dares, Lou? You love dares,” Harry asked, craning his neck in order to look at Louis. He simply shrugged, a distant expression on his face. “What’s wrong, Lou?”

Louis’ hands dipped beneath Harry’s shirt, rubbing back and forth in a soothing pattern over his chest. “Can’t. Dares aren’t safe for me with Zayn around anymore. He has it out for me.”

Harry snorted, scooting back further into his embrace. “I’m sure he was annoyed you died all his underwear pink, but what’s the worst he can do to you?”
Louis gave him a serious look. That was very uncommon for the jokester that Louis was. Harry rarely saw him in anything but a lighthearted mood. He’d known him for almost a year now, and he could count on his hand the number of times Louis looked so somber.

“He knows something the rest of you don’t know. He knows he can’t be a total dick by asking it in a truth, but he also knows he can expose it through dares,” Louis sighed, nuzzling his head against Harry’s neck.

“Can-?”

“Yes, love, I’ll tell you. Just not quite yet. I’m waiting on something,” Louis admitted, mouth speaking against Harry’s skin. The heat made Harry shiver, and he again was reminded of that question plaguing his brain.

“Does Eleanor know?” Harry asked, trying to hide the pouting jealousy in his voice. Louis snorted, running his hand through Harry’s curls.

“No.”

Harry didn’t know why exactly, but that made him happier. “What are you waiting for?”

Louis gave him a carefree laugh, but there was something hidden in it. Something Harry knew to be nervousness. It’d been so long since Harry had seen Louis nervous. The first time he met him, he was on the verge of a panic attack. Then, before their first live performance, he did have a panic attack. Harry had held him tightly and forced him to breathe to his same beat until he regained his color.

Now, Harry worried he was about to venture into another panic attack, and that was a terrifying thought.

“It’s okay, Louis. Just know…I’m here. Whenever.” Harry held his hand over one of his, closing his eyes and sighing back into his firm chest. He felt lips press against his cheek. “Love you, Lou.”

“I –,” Louis began, but then he stopped himself. Harry peered at him curiously. “You know what? I’m not scared.”

“Good,” Harry said, twisting around to look at him. “You shouldn’t be scared of anything.”

Louis bit his lip, a movement that Harry found himself staring at. Sometimes, he wondered why they were so touchy. Harry wondered why Louis felt like holding him close and clinging onto him and teasing him immensely so much. Harry knew why he felt like that. If he were being honest with himself, he’d known since Louis had kissed him so long ago. Sure, once they were in the band, Louis brushed away any questions Harry had about the kiss. He’d counter him with, “I’m not sure about you, love, but I’m confident enough in my sexuality to kiss guys without flipping out.”

The thing was, Harry wasn’t. The only issue was his ‘flipping out’ hadn’t been in anger, and it quickly turned into a revelation and eventual ‘coming out,’ though only to his family so far. He didn’t know what the boys would think considering how often they were naked in front of each other. Harry felt they were at a time in history where they should have been fine with it, but what if they weren’t? What if he ruined the band camaraderie forever? They were having the time of their lives. There was nothing that could make him want to do that.

“Come on then,” Louis grinned, pulling into their room. If they stayed at hotels, they always had three rooms. Zayn and Niall often switched out on who got the single room. Zayn preferred being alone a lot, but Niall often made his room smell so bad Liam would kick him out. More often than
not, Harry and Louis shared a room. They flowed so well it’d be silly not to. Louis pulled Harry onto one of the beds, facing him with crossed legs. Harry decided not to cross his in order to sit closer to Louis. These days, he did anything to be closer to Louis. It was decidedly not healthy, and Harry couldn’t care less.

“Lou.”

“Haz,” Louis said as he bit his lip again. Harry’s eyes caught on that motion, which then led to Harry simply looking over Louis’ entire face ranging from his chiseled jaw to his high cheek bones to his messy fringe. “Do you…happen to remember how we met?”

Harry grinned, any fear of this secret Louis had been keeping dissipating. It was Louis. It couldn’t be bad. “Yes. I peed on your shoe in the toilets. It was one of my shining moments, how could you expect me to forget it?”

Louis chuckled, and then he blushed. He almost never blushed, not unless Harry grabbed his bum or tickled his stomach. He could talk about filthy sex acts he performed the night before on Eleanor and be completely blush free.

“Do you happen to remember after that?”

Harry smiled fondly. “Yes. You kissed me to piss off the homophobic jerk. Quite a lovely kiss, might I add?” At the way Louis licked his lips, he wondered if he’d gone too far. “Sorry. Was that too forward?”

Then, Louis beamed at him. It was one of those smiles a person could never forget, so bright and hopeful it hurt. “That was not forward enough. Never be afraid of being too forward, love.”

Harry’s eyes bounced between Louis’. He found an inkling of secrecy and decided to take Louis’ word for it, so he leaped. “Okay. It’s your turn to be forward then, Lou.”

Louis licked his lips and nodded. “Let me be perfectly clear,” Louis said, leaning forward onto his knees. He scooted right next to Harry, so close his knees were pressing into his thighs. Harry looked up in confusion, about to scoot away because that almost hurt, but then he noticed Louis wasn’t looking at his eyes. He was looking at his lips, licking his own, and moving forward. His hand attached to Harry’s hair and held him still, and then he moved forward. Harry just had time to close his eyes before their lips connected.

This was a different kiss. It wasn’t fast or heavy. It was soft and hesitant, like Louis was preparing for him to pull away any second now. Harry made a sound he wasn’t proud of, his body floating on cloud nine because he was decently sure all his dreams were coming true. One of his hands came to grasp Louis’ cheek, pulling him closer, giving him the reassurance Louis had been waiting on. Their lips moved against each other’s slowly, both trying to memorize the other’s. Harry grinned into the next kiss, too elated and full of uncontainable energy to stop it. Louis snorted into the kiss, moving closer by resting a hand on Harry’s thigh and leaning into him.

Deciding he didn’t like the extra pressure, Harry gripped Louis around the waist and lifted him onto his lap. Louis grinned, teeth clashing against Harry’s and causing them to break away laughing. “Very smooth, Lou.” Louis retaliated by kissing him again, harder this time, biting Harry’s bottom lip when he pulled away. “Not that I’m complaining, but that wasn’t a very clear way to say… whatever you’re trying to say.”

Louis wiggled his hips devilishly, making Harry inhale sharply. “I’m saying I’m bisexual and really hoping you are, too…”
“Tough luck. I’m not,” Harry shrugged.

“But-,”

Harry darted forward and captured Louis’ lips with his, running his tongue along his bottom lip before pulling away, feeling like his mouth was on fire. “I’m gay.”

Louis grinned, fingers twining in his hair. He licked his lips, and it was all Harry could do not to kiss them again. “And?”

“And I’ve had a thing for you since you kissed me. In the toilets,” Harry muttered, eyes focusing on Louis’ shirt. His cheeks felt like they were on fire, and soon they were as Louis’ hands caressed his face.

“Me too,” he whispered as he moved forward with enough strength to push Harry on his back. They were kissing like they had no time left to live. When their tongues collided, Louis let out a high pitched whimper, and he moved his hips against Harry’s. It urged him to move his hands down his back, all the way until he grabbed at Louis’ bum.

Harry groaned loudly, full of shame but not caring. “You’ve got an amazing arse,” Harry whined into the kiss, and Louis only smirked, moving his hips against Harry even more, causing another sound to escape Harry. Eager to hear noises from Louis, Harry started kissing down his jaw while the boy on top of him relentlessly ground his hips into Harry’s, both of them growing harder by the second. Once he reached his neck, though, it was all over. He kissed him violently, sucking on a spot that had Louis nearly screaming, the sound so high and beautiful Harry knew he could get off on that alone. He was mewling and grinding his hips with a fire that only Louis Tomlinson could contain. It was music to Harry’s ear, and it was soon shattered by a door slamming open.

“We knew it!”

Louis squealed, scrambling off Harry as they both looked at the door in horror. However, their fears were misplaced seeing as it was just three boys hunched over laughing.

“We thought someone was getting murdered in here,” Liam chuckled, looking between the two with too big of a smile.

“Turns out it was just little old Lou,” Zayn teased, and Louis bolted forward, ready to pounce and maul his face off, but Harry grabbed him around the waist and pulled him back down, refusing to let him go.

“You better sleep with one eye open, Malik,” Louis growled, which encouraged Niall to howl with laughter.

“Well I quite like those sounds, thank you. Now if you will, please leave so I can continue hearing them,” Harry tightened his hold around Louis’ waist, nuzzling his face against his neck and beginning to kiss him again. Louis very obviously had to squash any urges to let a sound out of his mouth, but by the way his nails were digging into Harry’s arms, he was struggling.

“You heard him. Go! Leave us alone!” Louis made a shoeing motion, and all three boys cracked up as Harry began kissing up his jaw. It seemed he had used up all restraints because he finally turned his face to meet Harry’s, flipping his whole body around as well.

“At least turn on some music, you horn dogs!” Niall threw one of their phones at them, but Louis kissed him without care.
And then they kind of kept that up for a while.

~ end flashback ~

Louis rolled his eyes. “Yes, Harry. I remember.” He was sitting with crossed legs now, back against the armrest as he surveyed Harry. “Why are you here, Hazza?”

Blushing, Harry scratched at the back of his neck, trying to come up with a plausible answer. None made any sense as to why he was sneaking around without security, so he decided all he had was the truth.

“Okay, I’ll tell you, but let me be ‘forward’ beforehand. This in no way means I’m hung up on you, or whatever. This isn’t my sad attempt to ‘reconnect,’ okay? This is just me being…dumb.”

Louis rubbed his scruff thoughtfully and nodded, very much intrigued by this point. “Right, of course. This isn’t the absolute dumbest thing you’ve done, I’ll give you that.” Harry knew that was a complete lie, but he heard some endearment in his words, so he’d take it.

With a deep breath, Harry explained. “Well, I caught up with Niall the other day, and we talked about your lad – who is even cuter than you were when you were a baby, by the way – and Niall told me to listen to your songs, which I had been avoiding…for reasons that don’t really matter, and I did and – well, fuck, Lou. Your voice was absolutely enchanting. I felt like it was from some supernatural voice that was created to lure humans in. I was hooked, and that’s completely disregarding the fucking beautiful lyrics you amazing fuck,” Harry said all in one breath. Louis stiffened at the mention of his lyrics, but Harry was on a roll. “And, like, I just – I had to hear you live because I know your voice. I know how gritty it gets live and how rough and, well, hot, but don’t let that get to your head, alright? But apparently, I’m a prideful wanker. So I made Niall come with me undercover. We snuck away from our security, and we were doing fine! And then you had to bloody rough up your hair and sing like you were dying and dammit, that’s just not fair, Lou. It’s really not. So…this is all your fault, really.”

Louis stared at him as if he had two heads. Maybe he did. Maybe that was why he couldn’t stop talking. After all, Harry was a slow talker, and it felt like he got through that in ages, but really, Louis just gave him five minutes to pour out his heart. It was like they’d completely switched roles because Louis was never speechless, but he was now.

“My fault? You getting mobbed was my fault?” Louis snorted hysterically before he fell face first into the cushion separating them. “God, Haz, I’ve missed you.”

Harry laughed nervously because really? He missed him? A rambling mess? Also, the words ‘I’ve missed you’ were always something he’d dreamed of hearing from Louis, though a hot hook up and wedding normally followed those said words, and he had a feeling that was not the case at the moment.

“You’re truly something else,” Louis said when he came up for air. He was holding his stomach from laughing too much. A part of Harry never wanted him to stop. There had been times at the end where Louis hadn’t laughed around him much at all. There had been times where it was just silent glares, hate sex, and hurtful, loud angry words. “I’m flattered, really-,”

“Oh, get off it,” Harry said, but the smile split his face apart without his permission. “This is exactly why I didn’t ask for a ticket, you egotistical bastard!”

Louis and him both burst into a fit of laughter, holding each other’s gaze all throughout, relishing in how nice it felt to laugh beside each other again. “So where the fuck is Niall?”
Harry paled. “Shit. I should have checked on that…” Louis’ eyes went wide, and then they both pulled out their phones. Harry got a text with a simple wink. Louis clearly got something similar because he flushed red and tucked his phone away. Harry did the same. “Right, well, he’s fine.”

“So…which song was it you wanted to hear?”

“The last one. Just Hold On. It was even better than I expected,” Harry grinned, deciding not to let it slip that he still didn’t hear the ending of it. He was sure he could find a video online somewhere. Louis grinned.

“It was my favorite to make,” Louis admitted. His eyes gave Harry a once over, and then he seemed to let his shoulders sag. “Well, I totally freaked about your album, as well, if that helps any. I expect proper tickets to your next show in return for saving your life.”

Harry grimaced. “I don’t have anything lined up for ages, mate. I’m sorry.” Louis’ bottom lip protruded and his eyes went wide and a little glossy. It was his classic puppy dog look, but all it did this time was make Harry giggle. “You look quite ridiculous. An adult with facial hair trying to look innocent? Your days of innocence are long gone, Lou.”

In return, Louis dropped his pout and settled for a smug smirk. “You made sure of that, didn’t you, Haz?”

Harry grinned ruefully. He should not be enjoying this so much. “That I did.” He bit his bottom lip, already regretting the words he was about to say, but he couldn’t help himself. “If you really want, I could always give you a private performance.”

Louis’ eyes licked him up and down in ways that Harry desperately missed. He hated to admit that his semi had returned, unabashed and prominent, but at least Louis couldn’t see that. It hurt Harry enough to know that fact himself.

“I’d like that, actually,” Louis finally said after ages, and his answer made Harry’s heart stop. “I can’t today, but we absolutely must.”

Harry prayed he wasn’t just letting him down gently. Thinking on it, he knew he wasn’t. Louis had plenty of excuses to use if he didn’t want to, and he had even more reasons not to want to, but for whatever reason, he agreed.

“Can I ask you something?” Louis said, eyes bright like they weren’t looking at the man who caused them so much pain. As guilty as Harry felt, Louis shared an equal amount of blame. Years down the road, looking back at their time together, Harry realized he never had or would focus much on the blame. Even back then, neither of them truly was to blame when it came down to it. Their management was the reason Harry ever had to experience heartbreak.

“Sure,” Harry said.

“Your songs…” Louis began slowly. His eyes held so much hope in them it confused Harry. “Were they, um, about us? Possibly?”

Harry didn’t want to answer this, but he knew what he was getting himself into when he wrote them.
He knew Louis would probably listen to them. He knew he hadn’t been subtle. So he merely shrugged. “Yeah, Lou. They were.”

Louis laughed dryly. It was missing the happy ring to it that made it chime. “Hey, maybe you got something out of your Taylor Swift ‘relationship’ after all.”

Harry didn’t know exactly what did it, but every muscle in his body stiffened. He supposed it was the fake relationship reference. He’d been forced into a few, but Louis had been in a longer, more serious one. Louis had actually dated Eleanor at one time, and continued ‘dating’ her well into and through most of their band career. Well through his and Harry’s relationship.

“Sorry,” Louis coughed, and Harry gave him a grim smile. Maybe it was still a touchy subject. Maybe he wanted to talk about it with Louis, now that they were both out, but he wouldn’t. If he talked about it with Louis, he knew he’d come to one conclusion, that there was nothing stopping them now. And that was simple insanity talking. There were years of toxic times, disregard for the other’s feelings, and overall pain that gave them more than enough reasons to not give it a go again. It gave them plenty of reason not to hash it up, even.

“I don’t mean this to sound idealistic, but I’ve done my best to ignore your personal life, so I wouldn’t know if you have another great love story, which is why I really must ask-,”

“Yes, Harry,” Louis groaned, falling back against the couch and covering his eyes with his hand. “They were about you. What the bloody hell did you think? I just found someone else to miss? If I fucking missed them, I’d be with them. Nobody else has given me such…issues.”


Louis snorted.

“But you did have a baby with someone. You’d think you’d write a song about that…” Harry said in a softer tone. It teased Louis enough for him to drop his hand.

“Don’t get me started on that she-devil,” Louis hissed. Harry could feel his anger rolling off him, though it wasn’t directed toward Harry, so that was good. It was understandable anger, of course.

“I was worried about you when I heard,” Harry said with sympathy. “I don’t know her, but considering you never tried for a relationship…I can’t imagine trying to co-parent my child with someone I didn’t like well enough to even date, let alone love.”

Louis let out a snort. “That’s what I’m saying,” he pulled himself upright finally, looking at Harry curiously. “And I can’t write about her or him or any of that ‘mess.’ That’s what management called my lad. A mess…fucking pricks at times, I tell you.”

Harry bit his lip. “Can’t believe you didn’t swing at them.”

Louis flashed him a malicious grin. “I did.” Harry grinned. That was the Louis he knew and loved. “As much as I miss him, I’ll get her credit. She’s a good mum to him, even if it means I can’t see him for half his fucking life.”

Harry couldn’t imagine his frustration at that.

“You know the worst part of it all?” Harry asked, and Louis raised an expectant eyebrow. “I bet he doesn’t have a proper English accent.”

“I BLOODY KNOW!”
They both burst into laughter, falling into the space between them with ease as they tried to catch their breath. Harry knew he should have moved the moment their shoulders touched, but he didn’t have it in him. It ended up with Harry’s legs splayed across the couch, his head side by side to Louis’ as his body was resting over the other side of the couch.

“Steve’s almost done. You want to come check out the rest of the festival with us?” Louis asked after a nice moment of silence. All Harry wanted to do was say yes, but when he looked at Louis, he recalled something.

“And give the Larry fans newfound hope? Don’t you think we’ve teased their hearts long enough?” Harry asked with true concern, and Louis instantly burst into laughter again, eyes squeezing shut. It was possibly the most beautiful expression Harry had seen on the elfish boy yet.

“Hope is a good thing, Harry! Come on, haven’t you learned that?”

Hope. Yeah, hope was something powerful all right. Harry had his experience of hope. He remembered hoping Louis would take his concerns into consideration. He remembered hoping management would take pity on them and let them come out. He remembered hoping for years after they departed from that shitty management team that Louis would ring him up, but then again, how could he? After what Harry said? And then did? How could Louis just let that go? Harry single handedly crushed his own hopes of every stabilizing things with Louis.

And yet, here they were. Stable. Not together, but stable.

“Hope might be the most painful to experience in this life,” Harry grimaced. “It ruins lives.”

“Ah, that’s where you’re wrong,” Louis said with a tap to Harry’s nose as he turned on his side to look at him. Harry refused to do the same. Louis sounded happy, as if hope was still alive inside him. “Hope shapes lives.”

Harry gave an uneventful snort. “Well, hope has shaped my life to be a joke, hasn’t she? Nearly killed trying to secretly listen to my ex sing. What a life.”

“Aw, no time for the pity party now, Haz,” Louis reached over and ruffled Harry’s hair. “You’ve done good with your life. A lot of it, according to the philanthropist tabloids. The personal shit, I have a feeling, will come your way soon.”

Harry did not look too deeply into that. Nope. Not for a second.

All he could manage was one quick huff, and then he was sitting up. “Thank you, Lou, but I really must find Niall. I believe he wants to ‘teach me how to swing.’”

Louis grinned. “Can’t pass up on that. Niall is always moving about.” He jumped to his feet, grabbing a pen from a nearby table. “Well, ring me, okay? Now that you’ve offered, I can’t spend much longer without hearing you sing. Maybe we can write a little, like the old days, yeah?”

“Definitely,” Harry said, not realizing that his voice had dropped an octave. That tended to happen with Louis around. The shorter man took hold of Harry’s arm, pushed up his jumper’s sleeve, and wrote very clearly in Sharpie a seven-digit number. Harry could hear his pulse pounding. “Thanks again, Lou.”

Without thinking about it, Harry reached forward and wrapped an arm around him, pressing his lips firmly against his cheeks. There was a sharp intake of breath from Louis’ side, but they both decidedly ignored that fact, or that they both came away flushed.
“Anytime, love.”

Harry had debated texting Louis for four days. It was four days of constant bugging from Niall. It was four days of fear that Louis hadn’t been serious. It was four days of resisting an urge, which he eventually found stupid because soon the tabloids were out.

Liam and Zayn had been caught making out at a club in the toilets.

Now he had to text Louis.

I can’t believe that wasn’t us – Harry

Of course, he also checked up on Liam and Zayn, who weren’t too fazed by it. Aside from it casting Liam as the guy who was scared to come out, they had been ready to open their relationship to the public.

It should have been ;) – Louis

Harry yelped and dropped his phone, causing his band to give him a weird look. He shook them off, hurriedly texting back.

Been meaning to text you. Still want to meet up for a…jam session? That sounds odd, but? – Harry

Harry went through two whole songs before he felt his phone buzz. They were just beginning a new song, but Harry stopped them, erupting a chorus of groans. When he said it was important but wouldn’t elaborate, they were decently close to hitting him with a drum stick.

For as charming as you come off in interviews and on stage, you’re still that quirky little boy, Harry. I love it. I’m free tomorrow, are you? – Louis

They did hit him with a drumstick when he took even longer to respond.

Yes. Does 7 work? – Harry

Perfect. Can’t wait. I’ll even have a sign so you can make a funny comment about it when between songs! - Louis

Ha. Ha. So funny. Well, people don’t get trampled watching me so – Harry

Right. Next time I’ll just let the idiot get trampled – Louis

Even if it’d ruin his pretty face – Louis

Harry’s mouth dropped open. What even was this? It was like they were meeting for the first time. This was the flirting that had started something so great so long ago. What happened to the Louis that never wanted to see him again? What happened to the Louis that said he was happy they were taking a hiatus?

Harry shook his head. He wasn’t going to question it, not yet.

Gee thanks – Harry

Anytime, babe. See you tomorrow ;) – Louis
Tomorrow couldn’t come fast enough. Harry spent all of the night debating if he should or shouldn’t text Louis that he was currently watching Grease. It was Louis’ favorite movie, and Harry was dying just to watch it with him like they did more than ten times back during their tours.

Still, he restrained himself. He was not going to ruin this new thing too soon. Louis had always appreciated his weirdness, but he didn’t want to scare him off. Also, Harry tended to overthink some things. Oh well.

Around eleven in the morning, however, he got a call. Harry rolled out of bed and was immediately thankful that the vibrations even got him up. Louis’ name was prominent, and Harry felt silly for not putting in an old photo of him for his contact. Answering the phone and putting it to speaker, he rummaged back through old photos to find one.

“Hello,” Harry said, surprised at his voice. He supposed almost noon was still considered morning if one wakes up at that time. Either way, his voice was deeper than normal, but he wasn’t complaining. He knew Louis used to love his voice. It seemed like he still did. “How are you?”

“Er – annoyed?” It sounded like a question, his voice wavering.

“You don’t sound sure about that.” Harry rolled out of bed, pulling on some underwear.

“Here’s the thing, Haz. I wasn’t supposed to get Freddie until tomorrow, but Briana’s manager scheduled her for an extra shoot this evening, so she showed up at my doorstep at nine this morning – an ungodly hour, truly. And now…well, now I have Freddie.” Louis breathed. Harry could practically see him running his hands through his hair in frustration.

“Aw, and that is why you’re confused. You’re not sure if your love for your son comes before fangirling about a personal session with the Harry Styles,” Harry mused with satisfaction as he rubbed at his eyes. He let out a yawn. “I see how it is.”

“Okay, personal session sounds very sexual, Harry,” Louis warned with a laugh. “I’m sorry.”

Harry snorted. “Don’t apologize, Lou. I’d be very concerned if you didn’t put Freddie first. I know I’m cute and all, but can you really compete with that little lad?”

Louis laughed, and Harry could hear the grin within it. “He really is adorable…um, well, we’re just hanging around my place tonight…if you want to meet him? Is that too odd?”

Harry’s heart stilled in its chest. He had to pinch himself to make sure it was still working. Ever since Louis had his boy, there was always a small tinge of sadness when he realized he’d never get to see that cute baby. It was half of Louis, after all. Harry was just dying to meet a second little Louis.

“It’s definitely not too odd! I’d love to meet him. Maybe I can teach him a few footie moves,” Harry suggested giddily. Louis barked in laughter.

“God, Haz, we’re trying not to ruin him, yeah?” Louis always had loved to tease him about his horrible coordination. “Well, swing by any time after five. And feel free to bring food because God knows I shouldn’t try cooking.”

“Yeah. Not trying to kill him and all that,” Harry grinned. “I’ll be there.”

Hours later, Harry was at Niall’s new apartment pacing. Originally, it was to get any paparazzi off his trail, but really, it was to hyperventilate. “I’m meeting his child, Niall. This is so fucking weird! In all my fantasies I never-,”
“So you admit you’ve had fantasies about him,” Niall mused, brushing his non-existent beard in thought. “Interesting.”

Harry threw up his hands in frustration. “Of course I have! I was in love with him for years, you knob!”

Niall was all too pleased to hear that. “You mean you are in love with him.”

“Niall?”

“Yes.”

“Shut up!”

“Okay.” Niall said, but he did not follow through. When he glanced at his phone, he snorted. “Well, done, Harry. You’ve given the pap enough time to track you here. Now how are you going to get to Louis’ without being followed?”

Harry opened his mouth and scowled. “I’m not sure.”

Niall and him sat around for another hour, both pondering their limited options. Avoiding the pap was never a fun task. They all had their fair share of it. Then, something caught Harry’s eye. “Did you get a new washer?”

Niall frowned suspiciously. “Yeah, why?”

Harry grinned. “Do you remember how we got into that one show?”

Niall paled. “Oh god. Harry, are you serious?”

Harry shrugged. “We may be older, but we’re never too old for a prank.”

That was how, thirty minutes later, Harry found himself being wheeled out of the SUV up a driveway. Immediately, Harry thought of rich comments to tease Louis about. His driveway was much too large for a modest house. Then again, Harry’s house wasn’t exactly modest either. When the doorbell rang, his heart was pounding in anticipation. The door swung open a little later.

“Daddy. We got a box!”

Harry felt himself crumple even further in on himself, if that was possible in this cramped space. Freddie’s little voice was so high pitched and cheery and absolutely adorable. Hearing him alone made his day.

“A box? Get away from there, Freddie,” Louis’ voice sounded further away. “How did you even open the door, babe?”

In response, the boy giggled.

It was too cute.

“It’s alright, Mr. Tomlinson. We’ve checked it. Perfectly harmless,” said one of Louis’ security guards. “Want us to put it inside?”

“Well, who’s it from? What stupid fan would send me – a washer? What the fuck…?”

“Niall Horan,” they responded, and immediately, Louis began laughing.
“He’s such a ninny,” Louis said. “Sure, bring it inside. Come on, Freddie. We got a present from Niall!”

“Niall?”

“The Irish bloke who likes to tickle you,” Louis responded. Harry wanted to murder Niall. He told him that he hadn’t caught up with Louis in years. That selfish pig even got to meet Freddie! Harry was immensely jealous.

Then, Harry was again being carried and placed on the ground. He waited for the door to close before he thought about moving. Then, a knife was being plunged into top of the box, right where the tape was, but it came so deep it touched his hair. So, naturally, Harry screamed.

And then so did Louis.

Harry burst out of the box in a rather uncoordinated fashion, breathless and staring with wide eyes at Louis. “Haven’t you learned to never trust anything Niall sends you? For goodness sakes!”

“Oh my god, Harry. You nearly gave me a heart attack, you wanker!” Louis exclaimed, rushing forward and pulling him into a one-armed hug. It made the whole ‘can-no-longer-feel-my-legs’ thing worth it.

“Woahhh,” said a high voice below the box. Harry turned around, smile bursting onto his face at the sight of the terribly blonde and terribly small boy standing there with his mouth hanging open.

“Did you like that?” Harry asked, and all the boy could manage was a nod in awe.

Louis came around with a rueful grin on his face. “Freddie, this is Harry Styles. We used to sing together.” He picked Freddie up and placed him on his hip with the proudest smile he’d ever worn. “Haz, this is my boy.”

“Hello,” Harry offered him a soft smile. Freddie regarded him with bright blue eyes like his father. Now Harry felt weird obsessing about Louis’ eyes when they were so clearly pasted onto his kid. Freddie then reached forward and tugged on one of Harry’s curls. “Ow. You’re quite strong for your age.”

Freddie laughed, nuzzling his head back into Louis’ neck. “You talk funny. Like da-da.”

Harry met eyes with Louis and burst into laughter while Louis only rolled his eyes and turned his back on Harry. “Yeah, yeah, I know. Me own boy thinks I talk funny. Hilarious.”

“It really is,” Harry followed him into the living room. “How old are you, Freddie?”

“Four!” He said, thrusting four fingers at him over Louis’ back. “Daddy, I’m hungry.”

Louis paused, looking over at Harry with dismay. “Well, Harry here was going to bring us some food, but I guess we can find some mac and cheese. How does that sound?”

“Hey! Take away didn’t fit well in the box with me, okay?” Harry protested. “You can’t feed him mac and cheese. That’s not a proper dinner, Lou.”

Louis gave him a pointed look as he sat Freddie down on the couch. “Do not judge my parenting style, Harold. I’ll have you know Freddie happens to love mac and cheese.”

Harry tossed his hands in the air and jumped beside Freddie, who seemed intrigued in their light
banter. “Honestly, Lou. I expected you to gain some cooking abilities when you became a father.”

Louis narrowed his eyes. His nose scrunched and he tightened his hands into fists. This only meant one thing, but Harry could do nothing to stop him. In one go, Louis jumped over the armchair on the couch and landed with his feet tucked under his butt directly on Harry. With a groan, he fell sideways and tried not to think about the bruises he would get.

“You’re so small that hardly hurt,” Harry teased, noticing how Freddie, who was just above his head on the couch, was now playing with his hair.

“Is that right? Well, my small feet surely won’t do you any harm, then, will they?” Louis stuck his tongue out as he turned around on top of a laughing Harry and pushed his feet against Harry’s mouth and nose.

The smell hit him within seconds.

“Oh, god, that’s horrendous,” Harry gagged, trying not to actually vomit and scare Freddie off. “These aren’t safe to be around children, Lou.”

“Daddy’s feet stinkss,” Freddie agreed, waving his hand in front of his nose. Louis gave a loud gasp, sitting up on Harry’s legs to gape at his son.

“Freddie, you traitor! Me own boy! I’m heartbroken!”

Harry looked back at the grinning boy. His smile was almost identical to Louis’, too. “Don’t listen to him, Freddie. He just wants to be pitied. We’re the dream team. You and me.”

Louis gasped.

“I can’t believe you’re trading me out of the dream team for my own son! How dare you, Hazza?”

“Yay! Me and Hazza!”

Harry grinned smugly up at Louis. He looked between the two and sneered, hopping off the couch and pulling Harry after him. “Alright. For that, you’re helping me.”

Harry shook his head, still chuckling. “How about I cook us all a healthy dinner?”

Louis faltered. “Really?”

He shrugged. “Sure. You go play footie with Freddie since it seems like I interrupted,” he said, peering out the window into the large yard with a net set up. Louis flushed, rocking back on his heels.

“Well, that’s there permanently for me, but he has been wanting to play,” Louis rubbed at the back of his neck. “I feel like a right tosser, making you cook and not even helping.”

Harry snorted, already looking into the fridge for something to make. Luckily, it was stocked full. “I say this with as much love as I can manage, but it will be much easier without your help.”

Louis fixed him with an annoyed look.

“Fine then,” he huffed, but Harry could see his lips twitch upward. “Freddie, want to go play some footie?”

Freddie came running into the kitchen at full speed. He didn’t stop until he ran straight into Louis’
legs, a giggling bot of pure joy. It made Harry’s heart swell. As ridiculous as it was, he wanted that. He wanted a little boy to come running at him with a giant smile, like he was his own personal superhero. Harry didn’t doubt that Louis was.

“Daddddy,” Freddie rolled his eyes, still keeping that dopey smile on his face. “It’s called soccer!” Louis made a sound of disgust. “Not in this house, it’s not!”

Harry watched them happily as they ventured out to the backyard. Louis had played a few years of professional soccer over in London, but ultimately, Briana refused to move to England. Anyone had to assume it was too much strain on Louis to be separated from Freddie for so long, so he moved to LA. It also helped his music career. Harry had moved to LA years before for his music. If LA weren’t so big, he would have said it was a miracle they hadn’t ran into each other before.

Harry made them grilled chicken, a salad, seasoned potatoes, and green beans. It was a simple dinner, and he felt a little miffed that he hadn’t cooked something better. Louis had a full fridge, but most of it consisted of lunchables and yogurt and fruit. It was a miracle he even had the chicken to cook.

When dinner was done, Harry ventured onto the porch and watched Louis pass the ball back and forth with Freddie. The kid was very focused. He pouted as he watched the ball rolling toward him, nose scrunched just like Louis’ did, and if he got a solid kick in, his concentration only increased, like he was memorizing how he did it. The frown only disappeared from his face when Louis cheered, and he certainly cheered loudly. He cheered until Freddie gained a giant smile.

“Dinner is done,” Harry called over the railing. Louis and Freddie looked up, both grinning from ear to ear. So was Harry because those three words sounded sweet coming off his lips. It was way too domestic, but then again, Louis and he had always been domestic. Some of his fondest memories with him were spent cuddling on the couch watching Christmas movies while waiting on the brownies they made ‘together’ to finish. Or taking his sisters to the park, though that tended to be ruined quickly when the paparazzi came.

“Come play with us!” Freddie shouted giddily as he kicked the ball with his toe. Louis nodded distractedly before he bent down and showed Freddie how to properly kick the ball. That was honestly the only thing Harry knew about soccer, and that was also because of Louis. Apparently, you have superior control over the ball when kicking it with the inside of the foot, and Louis didn’t hesitate to remind Harry of that when he reluctantly made his way onto the lawn.

“This is actually a really good match. You have a good chance at beating him, Freddie,” Louis said encouragingly as he rubbed Freddie’s tiny shoulders. His eyes were smug as he looked up at Harry, who simply ran his hand through his hair, making sure to leave his middle finger out. Louis snorted, smile too large to be pure.

Harry played a little game with Freddie. At first, it was Harry versus the child, and it was appealing to know he had to restrain himself from beating him. It didn’t stop Louis from cracking up when Freddie scored on him. Later on, Freddie was having too much fun playing a game of keep away from Harry. At one point, the little bugger ran underneath his legs, giggling like he was a genius. He very well may have been. Nevertheless, Harry was not going to stand for that. So when the child passed the ball to Louis, Harry spun around and picked him up. He went into a fit of giggles and screams as Harry held him high above his head.

“Oi! Don’t drop my boy, Harold, alright?”

Harry grinned as Freddie’s hands held onto Harry’s hair desperately. He maneuvered him so that he
sat on his shoulders happily as he patted his forehead. His hair was getting thoroughly messed up, but he couldn’t have cared less.

“I’m not giving him back,” Harry smirked. Louis narrowed his eyes, walking up to Harry until he was craning his neck. He was only half a head shorter, but this close, it was noticeable.

“Look how high I am, Daddy!” Freddie shouted. Harry felt pride at the gleam of excitement in his voice. “I’m never this tall on you!”

Harry promptly stuck out his tongue.

Louis scowled. “Alright. Give him back,” he said, extending his hand as if returning a child was as simple as giving back a few dimes in change.

Harry debated the offered before turning his back on Louis and heading inside. “Only if you can touch him.”

“Wha – oh, that’s a low blow, Harold!” Louis grabbed him by the belt buckle and turned him around. On top of his head, Freddie was laughing so hard Harry was worried he’d let go and fall off. “Yeah, it’s real funny, isn’t it, Freddie? Just wait until you inherit my height, you traitorous little boy!”

“He’s madd,” Freddie whispered into Harry’s ear. Harry was smirking because this was almost as far as it came to being mad for Louis. He personally thought this was one of Louis’ favorite moods.

“I’ve known your daddy longer than you, love. This is a special type of happy he gets,” Harry winked at Louis, who was staring at him with a mixed expression. He was calculating, but he was also trying to hide a grin. His eyes gave him away, the bright blue holding a glint Harry used to know so well. “Jump for him, Lou.”

“I will do no such thing.”

“Don’t you love your son?”

Louis looked like he wanted to stab Harry in the neck, but it did the job. Soon, he was jumping, trying to reach Freddie, except Harry kept leaning back and out of his way. “Oh god, this is cruel!”

“I know,” Harry grinned, finally relenting and pulling Freddie down off his shoulders. Louis snatched him away briskly. “I enjoyed that.”

Louis rolled his eyes. “I’m sure you did, you bastard,”

Freddie was the first one inside, standing on a chair to gaze at the dinner Harry had made for them. His jaw was nearly to the floor. “Woooow.”

Louis walked in alongside Harry, bumping him with his shoulder. “Why do you have to make me look so bad in front of my son?”

Harry snorted, and the two of them didn’t mention the fact that their shoulders stayed connected until they made it to the table. Louis made Freddie his plate, settling the miniature child onto his lap as he helped him eat, which was more than adorable, but then Harry noticed Louis hardly eating. So every now and then, Harry would hold out a bite of chicken for Louis to take.

“I can feed myself, you know,” Louis pointed out, yet he continued to bite every piece of chicken and potato off Harry’s fork. “This is really good, Haz. I’ve missed your cooking.”
“Thank you. I’d like to think I’ve improved,” Harry smiled gratefully. He’d missed cooking for someone. He’d cook for his family and the few dates he’d had, but he lived on his own for the majority.

“Daddy,” Freddie pulled at Louis’ shirt. It was a band shirt, possibly one that Louis hardly even knew. “Daddy, I’m tired.”

Louis glanced at his phone and was surprised by the time. “Right. Let’s get you cleaned up and in bed then, okay?”

“Okay,” the little kid mumbled into the crook of Louis’ arms. “Can you sing to me?”

“Oh, bugger off,” Louis rolled his eyes. “We both know who’s got better stamina between the two of us.”

Harry helped Louis get Freddie bathed, but he wasn’t much help. Louis, who obviously had years of practice at bathing children, seemed able to guess when Freddie was about to attack them with a squirt gun or fall back into the bathtub. Harry, baby of his family, did not. By the end of Freddie’s bath, Harry was just as clean as the toddler, he decided. The entire time, Louis had been laughing at him, finding way too much joy in Harry’s now-see-through white button up.

Freddie was half asleep by the time Louis began carrying him up the stairs. “You already out of shape? You seem to be struggling,” Harry whispered, bending down to speak directly into Louis’ ear. It produced a shiver from Louis that he didn’t even attempt to hide. Harry had to hide his smirk behind a light cough. It was nice to know he still had the same effects on Louis that he used to.

Harry smiled, rushing forward to clasp his hands over Freddie’s ears. In reality, the kid was mostly asleep and probably wasn’t listening to a word. “There are children present!” Louis shook his head smugly and winked. “I don’t recall you ever complaining about my stamina.”

Louis sighed, his eyes glazing over as he looked between the two. “Want to sing one of your songs then, Haz? All mine are a bit upbeat for bedtime.”

“Sweet Creature?”

“Sweeeeet Creatureee!” Freddie sang sleepily, eyes glazing over as he looked between the two. Harry raised an eyebrow, and Louis shrugged.

“We might have listened to you a bit,” he admitted. Harry gave him a toothy smile. That was a
definite ego boost. “Alright, love, come here.” Freddie snuggled up into Louis’ side happily, the blissful smile too beautiful on his face. He looked like a proper angel in the moonlight that was quickly filtering into the room.

And then, they sang.

Harry started it out, but Louis’ voice quickly joined his. They sang the song even softer and slower than normal, and it worked better than he’d have imagined. It’d been so long since they sang together. It’d been so long since Harry had sung with anyone, but Louis had always been extra special. His voice was so unique. It was high pitched, but it wasn’t, and it had this charm to it that not everyone possessed. It was soft but prominent, and it complimented Harry’s so well.

When I run out of road, you bring me home
You’ll bring me home

Freddie was out cold when they finished. Louis kissed his forehead with a soft, happy sigh before stuffing pillows around his side to replace his cuddle buddy. When Louis motioned for the door, Harry found himself not wanting to leave. He did, though, mainly because Louis pulled him from the bed. After the baby monitors were set up, they moved out of the room and down the stairs, Louis’ hand clutching onto Harry’s wrist the entire time, as if he’d get lost without his help.

“Louis, I hate to break it to you,” Harry said when they made it to the basement, both crashing onto the couch, “but I think your little lad has made me love him harder than I ever loved you.”

Louis’ giggled rang throughout the basement without much echo. Harry gazed around the room. Guitars and drums were against most of the walls. It had a pool table and dart board, as well, completing the grungy effect Louis owned with perfection.

“That’s impressive. We’d fallen pretty hard for each other,” Louis’ head fell to the side, looking down at Harry’s, which was casually resting on his thigh. Having no response that would betray how sad Harry was that they had to use past tense, he just hummed. Their eyes connected slowly, as if neither was truly prepared to see the other’s expression. Harry’s heart certainly wasn’t. The moment those blue eyes looked at him with a torn, confused expression, Harry wanted to die on the spot. “What happened to that love?”

He posed it in such a casual way, as if he was just wondering what was for breakfast tomorrow. Still, it made Harry’s head pound with guilt.

“Fame,” Harry sat up, frowning. It was a horrible thought. He mussed up his hair in hopes to distract himself from it. “And jealousy. On my part.”

“Stubbornness on mine,” Louis sighed, this time not even smiling sheepishly. That was what did Harry in. There were few things Louis got completely serious for. Most topics could be spoken of with a smile, but not this, and it hurt. “I still remember the day you ended it. I think about it all the time.”

“Lou,” Harry gulped, placing his hand on his knee. “Stop,” he wanted to say, but the word wouldn’t come out.

Louis shook his head, eyes growing misty and distant. “It escalated so quickly. I said things I barely even felt. Like, I did, but it was such a small feeling, and I threw it in your face anyway.”

“I didn’t come here to rehash this,” Harry whispered, wanting to have the strength to pull away but not possessing it in the least.
Louis’ electric eyes turned on him, anger and insistence prominent. “Well I want to.” Harry felt his heart in his throat. He couldn’t speak. “Please. I need to know what the fuck happened that day.”

“It wasn’t just that day,” Harry reminded him. “It was…it was every day.”

“Do you know how humiliating it would be if they found out?” Eleanor paced back and forth in front of the couch. “I was doing this as a favor to my best friend,” she panted, eyes on a war path as she stared at the PR and management team. Louis and Harry were on the couch, an entire cushion separating them. “But if this gets out, I’d be the cheap ‘beard’ nobody wants. I’m a fashion blogger. My image is worth everything!”

Harry saw where she was coming from, but he personally thought she was taking it a step far. The odds of him and Louis getting out was so small it didn’t matter, and at this point he didn’t see how anyone could be seriously concerned about that.

“How exactly do you think this might get out now, El?” Harry said, sitting more upright as the eyes turned on him. “There is an actual photo of us kissing and we’ve passed it off as photoshop. Unless we made a sex tape, I think we can pass off just about anything.”

Louis shifted closer, giving him ‘the look.’ It was the stern look that was meant to tell him to chill out. It was the look that Harry dreaded. It was the look that meant he wasn’t taking his side on this.

“Harry, the more we push it, the more the fans talk,” Louis said in as gentle a tone as he could manage. It didn’t matter how he said it at this point. It was all he’d been saying for the last month. Siding with Eleanor as the Larry Stylinson fans took it to a new level, affecting the questions interviewers asked them. Even if the subject was banned, they found ways around it. “All they’re suggesting is for a little more PDA and more snogging. It’s not ideal, but-,”

“All’ they’re suggesting?” Harry scoffed, standing up to control the pulsing anger flowing through his body. He tugged on his hair as he pushed it back, trying to understand how Louis could think that was something to ask of lightly. “Well, if that’s it, why don’t you two go ahead and fuck. Because that’s all they’re asking!”

Harry knew he was sounding a little off his rocker, but he felt justified considering the night prior he had to watch in the club as Eleanor ground up on Louis in front of a million cameras while Harry sat off to the side with Taylor Swift, who wouldn’t shut up about how horrible it was what they were forcing upon them. She claimed he should write a song about it. He then said he’d already written half an album. To make matters worse, at the end of the night, Eleanor sneaked in an unplanned snog, so long that they both ended up groping each other. That had happened before, Harry knew, and that was the only reason he didn’t stop it. What hadn’t happened before, however, was for Louis to come away with a boner.

“Sorry,” Harry sat down at the table so he wouldn’t have to look at Louis. Sometimes, that made these conversations easier. Trying to lay out what he was and wasn’t comfortable with in front of Louis put a strain on his soul. When it came down to it, he trusted Louis with all his heart. There was no doubt in his mind that Louis would never cheat on him, but having to stand by and watch him kiss someone else and enjoy it was too much for him.

“Why do they need to do more? Wasn’t last night enough? The pap got plenty of his boner, doesn’t that say enough?” Harry said, palms digging into his eyes. Just thinking about it made his eyes burn. From behind him, Louis made an indulgent sound of annoyance. “Would you drop that fact already,
Harry? Come on!”

Sara, the PR manager, gave Harry a falsely sympathetic look. “It says a lot about his sexuality, but it doesn’t do that much to dispel Larry rumors.”

“Well then give me more to do! Make me more of a womanizer if you bloody have to,” Harry’s hands fell to the table loudly. “At least I won’t enjoy it.”

He shouldn’t have said that last part. He knew he shouldn’t have. This was a subject that had been discussed way too many times between Louis and Harry. It was touchy and never ended well.

Louis came barreling to the seat next to him, hand slamming loudly on the table. “Neither of us want to see the other sucking faces with anyone. Just because you’re gay doesn’t mean it hurts any less, Harry. Can you get your head out of your arse and try to sympathize with both sides here?”

They were on their feet now, faces inches apart. “Head out of my arse? What about yours?” He threw his hand accusingly back at Eleanor, who was watching them with big, ‘innocent’ eyes. “Best friend? Try ex girlfriend. You truly don’t think she wants to get back with you? After publicly dating you for years, nobody is going to actually stop reading her shit, even if we were found out. She’s scraping around for more, and I can only think of one reason why she would.”

Louis’ eyes were on fire. He shoved harshly at Harry’s chest, but neither of them moved. “You just stepped way over the line, Harry. Get your possessive heart out of this. If you trusted us, we wouldn’t have a problem dealing with this bullshit.”

Harry snorted, crossing his arms over his chest as he surveyed Louis. “You think it sucks seeing me suck faces with girls? Imagine if it were a guy. Imagine if I enjoyed it, or even just had the chance to enjoy it. Let’s be honest, Lou. We’re both guys. If you’re into someone physically at one time, that doesn’t really go away.”

Louis scoffed. “Alright, Harry. That’s really fair, now innt? If I wanted her, I’d bloody be with her. Or someone else. Instead, I’m with you. This whole mess is proof of it, right?” He waved his arms around dramatically at the people in the room, all watching with mixed emotions of intrigue and horror.

Harry swallowed thickly, looking around the room while ignoring the burning in his throat. “Right. We’re just a burden to you.”

Louis opened his mouth in his normal scowl, but then something changed in him and his expression darkened noticeably. “With the fit you’re throwing right now? Yeah. It is.”

Harry laughed humorlessly, feet stepping away from Louis without another word. Coldness seeped into his heart, pushing away all burning sensations. He was no longer near tears or choking on fire. He was no longer angry or desperate or hopeless. He was no longer drowning. He was emotionless, cold, and dead.

“Well then. Here’s the simple solution you’re all too coward to bring up.” Harry tossed his hands up and let them fall down, slapping loudly against his thighs. “Let’s just end it.”

His back hit he door, pushing it open. He dared to look into Louis’ eyes, checking to see if he’d made a mistake. All that was there was disbelief and rage and annoyance. It was all that had been there for the last month. It was starting to become all he knew from him.

That night, Harry was drunk by five. Somehow, he’d managed to get out to the clubs around ten, still, even if it was after a few vomiting and crying spells. Niall, as always, had been a good mate
through it all and helped him out. In the clubs, however, Niall kept trying to get him to chill out. Every time Harry tried to dance with a guy – he really wasn’t being picky because he could hardly make out their faces in the first place – Niall would drag him back to the booth saying, “Give it some time before you do something you may regret. This is just temporary. You and Lou will make it work out.”

All Harry heard was Louis’ nickname, the one he’d created.

“If Louis loved me enough to work it out, he’d stop fucking around with Eleanor. He never even tried to hide it from me, Niall,” Harry slurred over his drink. “He didn’t care about the PDA…think he mighta liked it.”

Niall rubbed at Harry’s back while scanning the club. Harry didn’t know who he was looking for, but he really hoped it wasn’t Louis. “He didn’t.” Harry snorted, which almost resulted in him throwing up again. God, the room was so spinny. “Okay, even if he did, does it matter? It’s like…you watching porn? Is that cheating?”

“I don’t touch em with porn.”

Niall faltered. “True. Still, take it from me. He’s only got eyes for you, mate. Never even thought about anyone else.”

Harry was so tired of listening to Niall ramble. He was tired in general, of everything. He was tired of sneaking around and hiding who he was. He was tired of hiding who he loved. He was so tired, and tonight, he was going to not give a shit. As soon as he shook Niall off.

“Niall…think that’s Demi Lovato. She’sawaving.”

Harry pointed in the direction of some girl with black hair, and Niall shot to his feet. “Where?” Naill walked ten feet closer before his shoulders sagged. “That’s not her. You must be truly trashed, Ha – Harry? Where’d you go?”

Harry had made a mad dash for the crowd of dancing bodies. It took him no time to grab the nearest guy in a bright pink shirt shaking his butt like no straight man ever would. “Hey.”

“Are – are you Harry Styles?”

“Yep,” he said. “Dance?”

So they danced for a song or two while Harry tried to make the room still enough to look at the guy. He was…he was not Louis. Not nearly. However, he was sort of cute. His jaw line was nice, Harry supposed, even if his eyes were too close and he had absolutely no ass…or muscle mass at all. Harry could probably break him.

Then, he was kissing him. He didn’t know how that happened, but it did. Next thing Harry knew, a flash was going off centimeters from his face. “Sorry! Nobody would believe me otherwise!”

Harry scowled. “Lemme see.”

The boy handed the phone over immediately. It was a surprisingly clear picture of Harry kissing the boy, half a smile on his lips even though they were kissing. So he texted it to himself, deleted the message, deleted the picture, threw the phone on the ground, stomped on it, and promptly left. Somehow, he lost the angry man in the crowd, finding the booth empty. He sat down and got his phone out, laughing at the picture. God, the guy really wasn’t Louis.
So he decided to text Louis just that.

The picture went through, and before Harry had time to text out a caption, Niall was upon him.
“Harry! Where the fuck did you go?”

“Gonna…be sick,” Harry nodded, distracted and overwhelmed by the heavy scent of Niall’s cologne.

Then, he threw up all over his nice shoes.

... 

Louis nodded his head in recollection. “That picture tore me apart.”

Harry grimaced. “I know. Drunk Harry did sent it so you could laugh at how ugly and unenjoyable it was,” he rolled his eyes. “But maybe I did it because I wanted you to understand how painful it was to see you with Eleanor.”

It wasn’t an apology. Neither of them felt the need to apologize for something that happened so long ago. Words really didn’t help all that they did to each other. So when Louis let out a sharp laugh, it didn’t really surprise Harry.

“It worked.” Louis was staring at him in thought. “Why did you never try to apologize? Why did you never talk about it? I thought…I thought you were done and that was just your horrid way of saying it.”

A whine of disgust slipped out from Harry’s mouth. “I was never done with us,” Harry frowned. “As unhealthy as it ever got for me – and it got quite unhealthy – I never could have actually given up.”

“But you did!” Louis retracted his hand. “You sent me that picture and acted like I never existed. We never even spoke about it!”

“Because I hurt you!” Harry was shouting now, trying to get his point across. “I hurt you. I could see it every time you looked at me. I couldn’t allow myself to hurt you again. I got butthurt and hurt you and I couldn’t forgive myself because you didn’t deserve it.”

And then, Louis was right beside him on his knees. His hands gripped Harry’s head, forcing him to stare into those brilliant blue orbs. “You didn’t deserve what I put you through, either, Haz. Neither of us should have had to do that. We should have been allowed to come out and be together. It’s not your fault.”

Harry couldn’t look away. He couldn’t stop the emotions from building up within him. A tear slipped down his cheek, face breaking as he stared at the wholly good, insistent expression of Louis. “Not directly. What prat is petty enough to-?”

“You’re not petty!” Louis whispered, shaking his head as silent tears of his own fell from his eyes. “Management pushed you and made you do things you aren’t proud of, but I know you. I know you’d never do that normally. You were hurt, and you didn’t know what to do.”

“That gave me no right-,”

Louis kissed him.

He lunged forward, chest pressing against Harry’s arm, and kissed him. It was a long kiss, refusing
to let Harry move away, so Harry had no choice but to kiss back. Louis’ lips moved against his earnestly, tongue running along his lower lips. Louis breathed into the kiss, only tightening his hold on Harry. Their tears mixed together against each other’s cheeks, and that was what did it for Harry.

He broke apart, mouth falling open, lips tasting of Louis’ minty, musky scent. “Lou?”

“I don’t hate you, Harry. I couldn’t ever. It hurt, but…but I loved you too much to rip you out of my life,” Louis breathed, eyes bouncing around like lightning, desperate for Harry to understand him. “It hurt more not being with you.”

“Louis,” Harry’s voice broke. “I can’t ask-,”

“You’re not asking me anything!” Louis shouted. “I kissed you. And I intend to kiss you more, and you can’t do anything about it, alright?”

“That sounds very rapey,” Harry snorted as he cried even harder. Louis’ thumb came up to wipe them away, a gesture so soothing, Harry closed his eyes. “I’m so sorry.”

“I’m sorry, too,” Louis breathed, resting his forehead against Harry’s. It was a familiar act that made him feel like the world was simply righted. “We can make it up to each other, love.”

Harry opened his eyes painfully. “You want to get back together?”

Louis nodded, thumbs rubbing circles into his cheek bones. “Yes. I’d say I want to try, but there’s no trial period here. We know we work. Why fight what we both want?”

“I don’t – I didn’t come here for that,” Harry protested, beginning to pull away, but then Louis slid a leg over both of Harry’s straddling him and refusing to let him look away.

“Stop lying,” Louis pressed his soft lips against Harry’s, and it made his whole world light up like the Fourth of July. “You came to hear me sing. I brought you here to hear you sing. Why do you think we’re so obsessed with each other’s voices?”

Harry spoke without thinking. “Because your voice lights up the world. It makes everything better.”

Louis grinned. “And your voice makes me feel. It makes me feel something in a world that I’ve been so numb to for so long.”

His heart felt like it’d been trampled back in that music festival and was still pulsing with pain.

Louis sighed, as if he had given in everything he had and now was on his last breath. “We came together to hear each other sing because it’s the only thing that can begin to heal the pain of the past.”

Harry groaned, letting his head fall to Louis’ shoulder. “When did you get so cheesy?”

Then, Louis was laughing. All pain and hurt and jealousy were washed away with such a simple sound. It was music to his ears. Harry could finally see in color after years spent in black and white. “When somebody broke my heart,” he hummed, pressing his lips into Harry’s hair.

“Hm. He sounds like a proper asshole,” Harry spoke against Louis’ shirt, wishing it wasn’t there to act as a barrier. “Maybe you should make him pay for it.”

“Oh, I intend to,” Louis whispered with a promise. His hand slowly made its way into Harry’s hair, and in a split second, he twisted it, yanking Harry’s head up. A sharp gasp of pain escaped Harry’s lips momentarily before Louis captured the sound with his own.
Kissing him was both familiar and new. It made his head spin as he tried to get a handle on the emotions rushing between them. But as Louis bit his bottom lip and ran his hand down Harry’s arm, Harry stopped trying. He let go of the emotions, giving them free reign to roam free and do their damage. There was no more holding back, not when Louis was right here in his arms, on his lap. Not when everything he’d ever wanted was in his grasp, right there for the taking.

Harry’s hands ran down his back, pulling him closer as he kissed Louis harder. This made the man on his lap smile. After years of scrolling through Louis Tomlinson fan pages just to get a glimpse at his bum again, it was like heaven when Harry finally slid his hands under Louis’ trousers and gripped his bum. It was so firm and smooth and abundant Harry released a groan, making Louis’ smile grow wider. Annoyed at clashing teeth, Harry licked at Louis’ tongue once more before kissing across his jaw and down his neck, relishing in the little whimpers he made when Harry kissed an especially noticeable spot.

“Haz,” Louis squeaked, tightening his thighs around his waist to still Harry. With a smirk, Harry recognized the signs he used to know by heart. Ghosting his lips up his neck, Harry finally latched down on the spot that caused him to tense. Without warning, Louis ground his bottom into Harry, making them both make embarrassing sounds of desire.

“Are we really-,” Harry panted as he pulled off Louis’ shirt and kissed down his chest, tongue circling his nipple “-going to do this?” Louis’s teeth nibbled on his ear while his hands furiously undid Harry’s belt. “With your son upstairs?”

Louis shook his head, breath rushing over Harry’s neck and making his hips buck up against the man above him. “He’s two floors up. Why do you think I brought you down here?”

A smug smile tugged its way onto Harry’s lips, and then he was pushing Louis over until his back hit the couch. Harry pulled his shirt off and yanked off Louis’ joggers. “You’re horrible.”

“What Freddie doesn’t know won’t kill him,” Louis purred into his ear as his hand ran down Harry’s chest. Louis chose that moment to slip his hand under his clothes, gripping Harry’s hardened member with a purpose.

“How about I stop talking altogether, babe?” Louis smirked, eyes darkening as he scooted down the couch, taking Harry’s trousers and pants with him. Harry’s whole body trembled under Louis’ touch, and that was before Louis wrapped his lips around Harry’s head.

“Fuck,” Harry groaned, hands tangling in Louis’ long hair. “God, I missed your mouth.”

Louis smirked, bobbing his head up and down as Harry tried to keep his eyes open. This was going to go embarrassingly fast judging by the way Louis slowly plunged all the way down on him twice before going back to fast bobbing. He kept switching it up, and Harry’s body simply could not follow him.

Then, he grabbed Harry’s ball, and Harry thrust up into him so hard Louis began gagging, but instead of pulling away, he went deeper until Harry was at the back of his throat, coming so hard his vision grew blurry. “Fuck, Lou…fuck.” By the time Harry could properly see and function, Louis was just popping his mouth off Harry. “That might have been the fastest time I’ve ever came. My apologies.”
Louis crawled back up Harry until he was straddling him again. Licking his lips, Harry was reminded of the minx he truly was. “I dunno. The first time you fucked me—”

“Oh bugger off!” Harry shoved his shoulder, throwing a hand over his flushed face. “I was a virgin! Through and through!”

“So was I, in the bottoming sense, which was why I didn’t understand the hype of bottoming until the third time you fucked me. Literally four thrusts and—ahh, yeah, I suppose you can make up for it now,” Louis squirmed as Harry reached a hand around and spread Louis’ cheeks wide. Harry grinned, laughing as Louis melted in his hands.

When Harry pressed his thumb flat against his hole through his pants, Louis whimpered, clutching Harry’s biceps as hard as he would when he was coming. “How long has it been since you’ve been fingered, babe?”

Harry yanked his pants off, exposing his perfect arse to the air. Harry grabbed fistfuls of his bum, relishing in the warm, fulfilling sensation in his hands. “Too long,” Louis whimpered again, as if he might cry.

A thought occurred to Harry. “How long since you’ve been eaten out?”

At that, Louis really did seem to cry, if only for a second, the thought so tantalizing. “Not since you,” Louis panted as Harry’s finger ran around his rim teasingly. Harry’s jaw dropped. That would simply not do. “I don’t even bother with most girls; they freak out…and you know, that’s a little intimate for a hook up.”

Harry shook his head. That was truly a crime. “Lou?”

His hand came down hard on Louis’ bum, and Louis groaned, pressing back into his thumb that was teasing his hole. “Yes?”

“Turn over.”

In seconds, Louis was on his stomach, pillow under his hips and head buried in his arms. Harry started out on his thighs, licking up each of them and providing a love bite on the inside of them. The higher he got, the more Louis pushed his bum into the air. He was buzzing with excitement.

Without warning, Harry flattened his tongue against Louis’ hole.

“Harry!” Louis screamed, fists clenching into the couch cushion. Satisfaction playing on his lips, Harry grabbed Louis’ hands and held them against his back. “Oh god.”

He sounded scared and turned on and dreading how wrecked he’d be after this.

Harry flicked his tongue around his rim teasingly, making Louis’ voice go higher and higher with every time. With each passing second, Louis’ body trembled. He fought against Harry slightly, desperate for more everything. His hips were moving against the pillow, so Harry reached his hand under and lightly took hold of the tip, finger lazily moving against him.

“Holy fucking shit, Harry, my god,” Louis screamed, voice turning magnetic, pulling on Harry’s heart in similar ways it did when he sang. Harry pushed his tongue in quickly, making Louis tremble. “Babeee,” Louis groaned, head burying itself in the couch as he pushed his bum back into Harry’s tongue. To finish him off, Harry licked his fingers and pushed them inside Louis, finding his prostate and
rubbing against it like a mad man.

Louis screamed so loud Harry worried glass might shatter. His whole body clenched as warm liquid covered Harry’s hand.

“I think I died,” Louis moaned in that raspy low voice that made Harry’s semi that much harder to ignore. When rolled over, there were tears running down his cheeks.

“Daddy?”

Harry froze, eyes going wide at the incredulous look Louis gave him. “That was not me,” Harry said, baffled, and then they were both giggling.

“Dad? Daddy?” The voice was now crying.

“Shit, that’s the baby monitor,” Harry realized, wiping the cum onto the already dirtied pillow. “Freddie’s crying.”

“Dammit,” Louis groaned, beginning to stand up but just managing to fall onto the floor. “I can’t feel my legs.”

Harry gave him a stern look as Freddie began sobbing. “Lou. This isn’t funny. Get up.” Louis pouted, closing his eyes and slowly working his way up, still wobbling. “I seriously blacked out. Couldn’t see at all for a-,”

“For the love of God,” Harry rolled his eyes, hurriedly tugging on his trousers and shirt. Freddie was now out of the sound of the monitor, but Harry could hear his sobs as he roamed the large house

“Where are you going?”

“Saving your child,” Harry shouted before running up the stairs and nearly face planting while at it. “Wash your hands, you perv!”

“Freddie?” Harry called as he made his way up to the top floor. “Freddie, it’s Harry. Where are you?”

He didn’t have to wait a second longer as a four-year-old with white blonde hair came at him wielding a plastic baseball bat and a stuffed teddy bear. Luckily, he dropped the bat and ran straight for Harry, who dropped down to get to his level.

“Hey, you’re alright. Everything’s fine, love,” Harry picked up the little lad, holding his soft head tightly as the boy cried into his shoulder.

“I,” he said in between sobs, “couldn’t find – Daddy.”

“Daddy’s downstairs,” Harry reassured him, blinded by those bright blue eyes so similar to Louis’. “I’ll take you to him, okay?”

“O-okay,” Freddie nodded, sniffling as he tried to stop crying. He rubbed at his eyes furiously, so much so that Harry had to restrain him.

“Hey, it’s okay to cry,” Harry said fondly as he descended into the basement. He hoped his words were loud enough to let Louis know to be dressed. “I do it all the time. Your dad was crying just a little bit ago, weren’t you, Lou?”
Louis said a silent, “Fuck you,” before meeting Harry with wide arms. “Come here, love. Are you alright?”

“I got scared…” Freddie mumbled as he buried his head in Louis’ inside out shirt. Harry decided not to point that out.

“I bet. Did that loud noise wake you?” Harry asked, running his hands through Freddie’s hair affectionately. Louis sent him another world-renown glares, but Freddie nodded, sniffling again. “Sorry, mate. I was just about to sing and hit the drum set.”

“S-sing?” Freddie looked up tiredly. Louis brushed his lips over his cheek, nose, and forehead, letting them rest there as he watched whatever Harry’s story had in mind. Louis sat down on the end of the couch as far from the cum pillow.

“Yes,” Harry nodded. “What should I sign?”

Freddie seemed to think for a second before he mumbled, “Got to get away…got to away!”

Louis frowned while petting his hair gently. “Sign of the times, maybe?” Freddie gave no indignation either way, but Louis was blushing. “We like that one.”

Harry snorted, scratching the back of his neck nervously. “Alright, let me just pour my heart out for a two-person audience…”

Louis rolled his eyes. “Come on, love. For Freddie. You can pull up the track on the speakers.”

Harry narrowed his gaze before reluctantly doing just that. “You two are lucky you’re both so cute.”

At first, he sang it casually, relaxed and mellow. The song required full effort, though. When he looked at Louis and his proud smile, it wasn’t hard to manifest the deep emotion this song always evoked in him.

By the time he got to the end, Freddie was chirping along with him, though Harry’s loud voice drowned him out. He felt like he was screaming, ejecting his emotions into the air for them all to see, and Louis was right there, singing along with him. His eyes were clenched shut as his raspy voice added a special fling to the belting words. His voice always had been unique, the epitome of silk coating over Harry’s deeper grip.

Once the song was over, Harry was breathless and alight with energy. “We got to away! We got to awayyyyyyy!” Freddie kept squealing, adorably out of tune.

Louis was also panting slightly, smiling that elfish grin that would never fail to catch Harry’s eye. “I’m blaming you if my lad takes up bad grammar, Haz.”

Harry grinned, letting his head flop onto Louis’ shoulder before grabbing Freddie’s giggling shoulders and pulling him to lay on Harry, which he happily did. “I’ll take full responsibility.”

Freddie yawned, blinking up at Harry with his big blue eyes. “Daddy, can Harry sleepover?”

Louis’ eyebrows shot to the sky. Hopefully, Freddie didn’t notice the magenta color of his cheeks. “Uh, well, I’m not sure…” He looked up in question. “If he wants to.”

“I’d love to,” Harry bit his lip. “Is that okay with you?” Louis nodded so fast he worried he’d get whiplash. “Well alright then! You know what we need to do now, right?”
Freddie giggled, sitting up right excitedly. “Noooo. What?”

“Let’s build a fort!”

Though Louis looked skeptical, Harry and Freddie pitched in together to build a half-fort. It was half because when they lied down in the fort, even Louis’ legs stuck out of the bottom. Freddie fit completely, though, and the two older men could simply pretend they fit as well. It was nearing eleven by the time they finished it, and Freddie looked ready to fall asleep standing up.

“Are we sleeping here?” Freddie leaned heavily on Harry’s back as they checked out the inside of the fort. Harry nodded with a grin. “Good.”

Louis brought in three giant blankets, one coming off of an entire bed completely. Throughout the construction of the fort, Louis and Harry managed to sneak off and grab a shower (separately), so when Louis suggested sleeping now, nobody disagreed. At first, Freddie was lying between them, but then he cuddled into his dad’s side. Quickly after, however, he missed Harry and pulled him closer.

“Comfy?” Harry asked quietly, voice coming out deeper than intended. Freddie seemed startled by that.

“You sound like a bear,” Freddie giggled. “Daddy doesn’t sound like that.”

Louis threw up his hands. “Yes, Freddie, we know that! Harry is soo much more masculine than me! What did I ever do to either of you?”

Harry offered the little boy a fist pump, and he took it with a mischievous grin. “I like you, Freddie.”

Without the kid realizing it, Harry grabbed Louis’ hand and squeezed, offering him a wink. They both knew Louis wasn’t drastically upset about the masculinity comments. Louis’ anger alone outshone Harry’s on the masculinity scale. Even so, Louis knew how much Harry loved his less-masculine traits. He loved being able to pick him up and manhandle him, and so did Louis. He loved Louis’ bright voice that could light up his soul on the dreariest of days. He loved everything about Louis.

Freddie then climbed on top of Harry, pulling Louis along next to him. They ended up with Freddie splayed on most of Harry’s chest while Louis lied on the small portion of Harry’s chest Freddie wasn’t on, legs intertwining outside of the tent. Harry kept his arm wrapped around Louis’ waist, enjoying the way every time Louis breathed he could feel it on his neck. Freddie was asleep in minutes, fingers fisted in both of their shirts.

“Are you sure this okay?” Harry asked, gazing down at Louis with affection. All he did was smile and press his lips to his shoulder.

“This is everything I’ve ever wanted, love,” Louis breathed, impossibly long eyelashes fluttering. “I’d be concerned about you suddenly disappearing again, thereby crushing my lad’s heart as well as mine, but I know you’re not stupid. You won’t make that mistake again. Besides, you just ate my arse. Don’t think you’d do that without some intention to stay.”

Harry shook with laughter, making Freddie shift below him. Once he was adjusted, Harry bent down, kissing Louis’ forehead deeply. “You’ll have to kill me to get me to leave this, Lou.”

“Yeah?” He sounded so hopeful. Harry nodded, relishing the feeling of Freddie and Louis both in his arms. “Fuck, I love you.”
Louis wasn’t ashamed to say that in the least, and he scrambled up higher so when Harry turned to him, their lips connected in one long, deep, still kiss. “I love you, too,” Harry spoke against his soft, vanilla scented lips. “And your lad.”

“Thank god,” Louis closed his eyes, nuzzling back into Harry’s chest as his leg caressed one of Harry’s.

“I’ll have to get better control around you, though,” Harry mumbled idly. “We can’t let him come that close to catching us. I think his mum would have us both thrown to the bottom of Hollywood for that much trauma.”

Louis giggled but agreed. “We’re not totally in the clear. He could easily stumble across the cum pillow,” he mused, laughing as he went. Harry hated himself for being tempted to laugh. That was beyond wrong. Louis was definitely an interesting father. “Don’t want him meeting his siblings just yet, right?”

“Oh my god,” Harry pinched his cheek. “You’re absolutely horrible.”

“No worse than you for laughing at it!”

“I laugh at everything you say. Not my fault. It’s ingrained in my system.”

“No. It’s because I’m hilarious.”

“Keep telling yourself that, Lou.”

“Nah. I have you for that now, Hazza.”

And he did. Always.

End Notes

Please please please leave a comment! I love hearing what your thoughts are on this! I also love any constructive criticism, as well. Can’t improve without knowing where the problems are.

Anyways, I got an idea for a slightly longer story about them, and I’m about to start it. Hopefully I can finish most of it before college starts up again. Stay tuned because it’s one of my favorite ideas!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!