Uncomfortably Numb

by mae11

Summary

In a world where omegas can create magic, they give it to trusted alphas. Without this relationship, Draco begins the slide into the insanity that comes with withdrawal. Unfortunately, his health deteriorates while Draco is sentenced in Azkaban during Hermione's prison reform process.

Even worse, for some reason Harry Potter is lurking around doing some kind of obligatory community service.

Notes

I've been reading drarry for years and recently decided that since I have a lot of ideas, I might as well just write it myself.

I'm currently studying reform in private prisons, so this may read a little bit like Victor Hugo talking about gothic architecture in the Hunchback of Notre Dame. However, I also live for A/B/O dynamics and the possible psychology behind that.

I am not, in any way, an author. I just though this might be fun to do, to round out years of reading drarry fics.

See the end of the work for more notes
Draco has always been taught – in school because dynamic wasn’t something his family ever discussed – that omegas were special. The world’s magic has to be born from somewhere. It has to be generated by the connections between people and can be amplified by close relationships. Omegas are natural catalysts for power by carrying love and devotion in spades. An omega can intensify a mediocre wizard into the next phase of his capability. The old stories say that Merlin himself was a relatively weak wizard who relied on his children, all omegas, to amplify his power. A powerful alpha cannot sustain his own magic, they need something to fan it.

That is what omegas are. They are partners and servants to communities. Rare and holding limitless opportunity for power, an omega is an alpha’s true strength.

But, for some reason, Draco is unserviceable as an omega. He hadn’t been necessary in the Dark Lord’s regime – which had always been his greatest fear since presenting – and was mostly ignored. The Death Eaters never seemed to pay him any attention, omega or not.

It’s very difficult for Draco not to ask his father up front if he is broken. Omegas hold a vat of untapped power. They can be a conduit to create magic for alphas. Their love is supposed to be the strongest thing in the magical universe.

And yet, nobody makes any attempt to love Draco.

Five years after the end of the war, Draco is facing Azkaban again after breaking parole.

“Draco,” Barnaby, the Malfoy’s long-suffering lawyer, says to get his attention. Draco is staring at his hands and refuses to meet Barnaby’s eyes. “Draco.”

“Isn’t keeping me out of Azkaban your job?” Draco asks, speaking into the little red phone that allows Barnaby to hear him. Barnaby, a weak and pathetic beta, flinches. He seems very wary of the muggle phone.

“It should be, but I cannot help you with violent crimes.” Barnaby looks as if he is being punished. “I know that you are something of a sweetheart, Dra—”

Draco slams the phone onto the desk so hard that it sounds as if there is an earthquake in Wandsworth Prison. He glares at Barnaby through the glass divider.

“This is the side of you the Wizengamot doesn’t like, Draco!” Barnaby is frantic. Draco can still hear his insufferable voice through the phone, muffled. “Show them the real you.”

“The omega?” Draco asks bitterly after picking up the phone again. “Show them a sweet, simpering omega without an alpha—”

“An omega led astray by alphas!” Barnaby is yelling now. “Tell me how an average omega could have overpowered an alpha drug lord and shot him! How?”

Draco doesn’t believe that he murdered Dolohov in cold blood, but he’s a slight bit offended that Barnaby doesn’t think he has it in him. He also doesn’t relish the Wizengamot hearing about his pathetic withdrawal symptoms. Nobody in that lot wants to hear Barnaby’s shit argument about Draco’s lack of alpha attention being the reason for his criminal activity.
“Can’t you just take my confession and send me to Azkaban?” Draco asks. “Or leave me to rot here?”

Barnaby grimaces. “You are a danger to the statute of security here.” This is true. “The prosecutor has said that you are…” Barnaby looks as if he is slowly being stabbed.

“Spit it out, Barnaby.”

Barnaby looks furious. “Detruit!” He whispers it, as if anybody in a muggle prison would have any idea what that means. “Five years living without an alpha in the muggle world! Please tell me it isn’t true!”

Barnaby is mentioning the colloquial term for being destroyed by his own magic when there is no alpha for Draco to bond with. As an omega, he cannot use most of the magic building inside him, so it attacks his brain and his motor functions as his magic grows stronger. Three more years of this, by Draco’s estimate, and he’ll destroy half of the B-block where he’s currently being housed.

“When can I expect a ministry lackey to come bail me out?”

Typically, the ministry lackey is Granger. Draco is less surprised to see her than Barnaby (who detests these sort of events) and is certainly shocked to see his mother.

Narcissa speaks first. “Are you aware that you have a giant gash on your face?”

It is unsightly. It had happened yesterday morning. To be frank, Draco doesn’t really remember the incident at all because – as Barnaby has so lovingly pointed out the previous week – his mind is being fried by his own excess magic. He has been told by staff that another inmate had tried to steal his books, so Draco punched him in the face and received a charming cut from an old screwdriver in return.

Granger tuts, speaking for the first time. “We’ll get you to St. Mungos soon enough, Malfoy.” She turns to Barnaby, “I can’t believe you didn’t bail him out before this.”

“My Confundus is not ideal, Mrs. Weasley!” Barnaby is always playing the victim. He continues to spout excuses throughout Draco’s quick trip to St. Mungos and his return to house arrest in Malfoy Manor. Draco starts to completely tune them out.

It is unclear why Narcissa came, as she does not make any effort to speak to Draco beyond asking if he may bleed out. When Draco had first presented, his mother had been easy with her affection. It had been simple to transfer the constant magic that flooded his body to her. Recently, Narcissa forces herself into withdrawal by refusing to touch either her son or her husband. Draco has stopped trying to understand it. He doubts she has enough control of her magic, without an omega in her life, to do simple tasks.

Sometimes when the magic threatens to overwhelm him, Draco is floating instead of sinking. It’s like listening to a language that you can barely speak – so easy to tune out and not understand it. He listens to his magic running beneath his skin like a dam broken and tries to see if he can differentiate it, as he can words.

Narcissa and Barnaby are arguing about something while Draco slumps into a chair he doesn’t recognize. “Rose garden…” he mumbles trying to place where he even is in the Manor. Granger puts her hand on his shoulder and deeply shocks him, to the point where Draco doesn’t really recall who she is.
“Lovegood, can you hand me that blanket?” Granger makes a face. Not Lovegood. Another lackey. Another girl with big hair. Not Looney.

When she hands him the blanket, Draco can’t remember why he’s asked for it. The worst part is, she asks him how his past three days have been since leaving the London prison.

It’s getting worse.

Draco goes to Azkaban in the next week because he was already planning on it. His mother and himself are allowed three visits with Lucius every six months. As always, Lucius looks wan and sick upon arrival and his mother withholds every type of affection, even though they are perfectly allowed to touch. After a short discussion about Draco’s latest career accomplishments (notably, murdering an alpha drug dealer with a muggle gun), his mother strides out of the cell and leaves Draco to his own devices. The strangest part is, still, that she doesn’t touch either of them. The guards always look alarmed, which spawns an awkward moment where Lucius and Draco stare at each other. Draco knows that it is the bone-crushing loneliness he doesn’t usually see surface.

Draco has never once discussed his dynamic inheritance with his father, even though they have remarkably similar stories. After seven years of not discussing it, it has become more and more awkward every time the subject is nudged.

Finally, Lucius says, with a signature sneer, “you look awful.”

That’s a bit pot kettle for Draco’s taste. “There’s not a lot I can do about it, is there?”

He means for it to come out bitter and accusing, but instead it seems like a valid question. Something about standing in his father’s cell, which will soon be identical to his cell, is making Draco’s whole personality seem very tiresome.

Lucius scoffs, “find an alpha.”

Draco would love to scream. Of course, he should have an alpha. Of course, his prospects are utter shit at this moment to find somebody suitable enough. But even if things worked out somehow someway with somebody, it’s a bit rich that Lucius would suggest it would actually help him when his father has clearly been in withdrawal for years. Lucius himself is married to a pureblood alpha witch and is still suffering from withdrawal, even when his wife is just outside the door.

Lucius is not detruit though, a small voice in Draco's head reminds him. Lucius is not permanently, clinically insane from withdrawal.

Lucius and Draco are standing in silence when Draco finally says what he’s thinking. “Do you feel better with an alpha?” There is a long pause where Draco tries to convey with heavy eye contact what the elephant in the room is.

Lucius sighs and stares into the wall. “You have to keep the animal in check, Draco.”

In all his life, Draco has never associated his omega with an animal. It’s not something he’s proud of, to be certain, but the omega traits have always been a part of him. Not something separate. Not an animal.

Absurdly, and embarrassingly, this comment makes Draco’s eyes sting. Draco craves affection and approval just as much as anybody. Lucius is typically the most understanding. Of all of the idiots he has seen in the past few days, Draco assumed his father would read between the lines of the
broken parole drug dealer story. From this loaded conversation, Draco is even more upset that his stupid tears are such a classic omega trait.

Lucius is doing a remarkable job of ignoring him. “Do you see me crying every time something goes awry, Draco?”

No. He doesn’t.

“Not every omega is a simpering fool.” This implies that Draco is one. “Not every omega needs an alpha to kiss them goodnight.” This implies that Draco does. “And no omega needs an alpha to be magically powerful.” This, finally, is objectively true. “We are the strongest of wizards – we have no weakness but ourselves.”

So – the answer is constant incompleteness. The answer is to stare longingly at every man he sees on the streets. Draco must accept begging with his eyes to be held by everyone he comes into contact with only to flinch away. He’s just supposed enjoy the consistent magical ability, even though it will slowly drive him insane.

Draco shrugs and for the first time in quite a while, feels like an utter fool. “I’m not enjoying the trade off.”

For a split second, Lucius does look somewhat sympathetic. He quickly schools his features. “Ask Barnaby if you can visit me when you come to Azkaban for good.”

Lucius doesn’t pretend it’s a possibility that Draco won’t be here permanently in two weeks. For that, Draco is thankful.

The next two weeks are a countdown of bitter torture until his trial. It will be a farce—Draco will plead guilty and be thrown into City Holding for one night. Then, Barnaby wins the exquisite pleasure of escorting a demented omega to an Azkaban holding cell and throwing away the key.

The only people in the Manor, ever, are Narcissa and Barnaby who mostly talk in hushed voices over the fireplace. Draco is allowed to go wherever he pleases, legally, as long as he doesn’t leave the country. He steps outside of the wards and apparates to Pansy’s apartment in London.

She’s outside on the balcony, which can be seen from the street. As soon as he pops into the alleyway her eyes settle on his. She gestures simply for him to walk upstairs.

In a replication of every awkward or unpleasant conversation he’s ever had with his parents, he sits daintily across from her on the balcony. She’s drinking whiskey and he goes to pour himself one without asking.

“Slow down,” she cautions. “You know I don’t give omegas drinks in heat.”

Draco was not expecting that she paid any attention to his heat schedule, so this comment throws him a little. “What if I’d never fuck you in a million years with or without heat?”

She tilts her head to the side. This had been a large point of contention for them, over the years. “Wouldn’t fuck me again with or without heat.”

Draco’s face heats, which is exactly what she wants. He doesn’t really know why he came here.

“I tried to give you a child,” Pansy says, out of nowhere, but following Draco’s train of thought.
Draco nods, always having thought that was her plan. Pansy is – as most people are – a beta. She’s a friend that Draco hasn’t seen very often, but he does have a final few shreds of self-preservation. He still has enough will to live to ask the horrifying, embarrassing question he needs to ask.

“But I’m barren.” He knows this is the reason he doesn’t have a child. In the beginning, he’d tried to impregnate muggles, witches, and any other type of creatures to starve off the loneliness and his eventual decline into insanity. It’s caught up to him anyway.

Draco knows how rare withdrawal is, as alphas usually cannot resist omegas. He knows that omegas are built to give children, to provide for their communities. He knows that his bitter anxiety and creeping madness is rooted in needing another person. He needs somebody who claims him, at the very least.

Pansy looks confused, possibly for the first time he’s even known her. “What exactly do you want Draco?”

“I’m going to Azkaban.” Draco says. “I am in withdrawal. My last hope to survive it is a bond bite.”

Bonding bites can only be given during an omega’s heat. They are a permanent mark of ownership. In Draco’s research, it would bind his magic to Pansy’s so that she could tap into it at any time. For Draco, the bite would serve as a reminder that he belongs to somebody. It would be visible, so he wouldn’t be threatened in prison. It would be a tacit reminder, so hopefully Draco could power through withdrawal. This is, in Draco’s inexpert opinion, the reason his father has not become detruit.

His omega would know that Draco wasn’t truly being cherished as he desperately desires, but the bite would help him. It would, very possibly, stop him from permanent impotence and the explosion of his omega magic. Draco is desperate.

“You would be half alive.” Pansy states, drinking slowly. “I have no intentions to marry you. I still want a real relationship.” She pauses, checking if she is being too cruel. “And... I am a beta.”

“I know.”

“Draco, go home. Heats are so arbitrary these days. You don’t need me.” She looks so pitying. “And I’m not going to bite you, Merlin. I don’t believe in that.”

Draco did realize this was a last-ditch effort, unlikely to work. His heat is making the omega so strong and it is dying for attention. He’ll stay for a few hours and drown in her easy companionship, and even that will help a little. “If I die in prison it’s on you.” He does mean for this to be a joke.

Pansy rolls her eyes. “Always a penchant for the dramatic.”

During the rest of their easy conversation, Draco constantly wants to scream ‘I am detruit’ from Pansy’s balcony for everyone to hear. Perhaps it is a testament to his continued sanity that he doesn’t.

After that conversation, and several dressing downs from Barnaby and his mother, Draco feels like utter shit on the day of his trial. He makes Lucius, after five years of withdrawal in Azkaban, look like a top model.
Barnaby’s genius plan to reduce Draco’s sentence is to bring in a doctor who tells the entire courtroom how Draco’s symptoms can only be caused by the lack of a single person in his life who cares for him. His rage, physical strength, and magic are still perfectly intact while his mind goes. This is the opposite of alphas, who maintain their minds but cannot maintain their magic.

This kind of behavior – going blatantly against his client’s wishes – may be acceptable if Draco's sentence were to be truly reduced. However, this is highly unlikely. Draco particularly relishes days like this where his own lawyer adds insult to injury.

Barnaby spins a remarkably cheesy story. Draco is only a pitiful omega being harassed by a big bad alpha. Scared and hurt, Draco just snapped and shot a Death Eater turned Drug Dealer in the face without any reason. It is difficult for Draco not to roll his eyes.

It is not surprising that the Dolohov family has a bit of a better lawyer. He looks like a bulldog come to life. This man reveals that Draco had been peddling muggle drugs from England to the continent for the past five years, working for Dolohov. Narcissa gives him a signature raised-eyebrow look at this information.

Nobody bats an eye when Draco is cutting them a check, but at the trial everybody wants to find out he’s been working for Gringotts or something. Draco thinks that his mother should realize that people always choose money over pride, even omegas.

Barnaby – of course – looks furious. An upstanding citizen like himself would never sell drugs or confund muggle security aurors. “Thanks for not leaving out any information, Draco!”

When it is finally Draco's turn on the stand, Dolohov’s lawyer asks him to explain the events as they occurred.

“It’s easy.” Draco says, which it is. “I take the drugs from London in a suitcase. I confund the muggle plane security officer. I arrive in Moscow and give the suitcase to...” it’s a dark moment.

“To whom, Mr. Malfoy?”

Draco can’t remember, suddenly. The man was wearing a tan trench coat, which had been oddly fashionable. “A muggle.”

The lawyer looks confused, “how could you drop the suitcase with a muggle in Moscow when you murdered Antonin Dolohov in London on the same day?”

His story isn’t straight. Draco knows he went on the plane with the drugs. He returned to London with the empty suitcase and gave it back to a man with a long beard like Dumbledore. He had thought it was a muggle for many years, but recently he noticed the alpha pheromones and assumed it was a wizard. It is much easier to traffic drugs as a wizard.

“I thought it was a muggle in London.... but it was Dolohov.”

The lawyer looks extremely annoyed, even more so than Barnaby, still steaming about Draco’s not-so-secret job. “Mr. Malfoy you are on trial for knowingly killing Antonin Dolohov, a wizard, with a muggle firearm in muggle London.”

Draco can’t breathe very well. The feeling of panic always starts in his throat. He starts counting his fingers to make sure there are ten. Somehow, he counts twelve.

“Am I correct when I say that you had known Antonin Dolohov before your employment in his drug cartel?”
“Yes.” Draco answers quickly. He counts nine fingers.

“How did you not realize it was him?” The lawyer is getting angry. The lawyer is an alpha. “How did you not recognize the man who hired you?”

“I don’t know what happened,” Draco feels his throat closing in, or maybe his tongue is too big for his mouth. “I was worried and didn’t know why. I walked into the warehouse as usual and the man said my drugs were never delivered. He disarmed me and I knew he was a wizard. I swear, I didn’t know I was working for Dolohov. I only suspected a wizard.”

The High Inquisitor holds out her hand to stop Dolohov’s mad-dog lawyer. Draco feels attacked from all sides. “Mr. Malfoy, how did you get into this line of work?”

Draco doesn’t know. Those memories are gone. He wakes up and gets a text to go to a warehouse. The warehouse gives him a plane ticket. That’s all. “After the war?”

“Your Honor, he is clearly lying to avoid a longer sentence!” The lawyer is holding somebody’s hand, somebody on Dolohov’s side. “This omega no longer has an alpha because of Draco Malfoy’s actions!”

Draco tries to look anywhere but at this lawyer. It is the High Inquisitor who speaks. Draco turns his head so fast to meet her eyes that it gives him whiplash. “Mr. Malfoy, you took an oath to tell the story as it happened.”

Did he take an oath?

In a moment of extreme embarrassment, so much so that he can see his mother flinch in the corner of his eye, Draco lets out a long omegan whine that is meant – biologically – to show extreme distress. In theory, everybody in the area should desire to rush to his rescue. It is a sign of true submission.

Draco does seem to get some sympathy, particularly from stupid Barnaby. He doesn’t stop the proceedings though.

“Mr. Malfoy, this song and dance will not sway the Wizengamot.” Mad-Dog seems to be growing taller in his anger, until he’s towering over Draco. “Isn’t it true that the omegan attributes could sway a court?”

“Objection!” Barnaby says, finally. “He’s badgering my client!”

“Yes, please disregard that comment.” Mad-Dog says smugly, growing taller and taller every second, “But let me continue.”

The mad-dog lawyer slashes any sympathy Draco was shown but passing out the pictures of how Draco completely destroyed Dolohov’s face. He takes a great deal of time to go over how Draco not only shot and killed him but also tore into the gunshot wound with his hands. The doctor that Dolohov has called in goes through every bloody detail of every demented thing Draco did to the corpse.

Draco sinks into his chair and stares at his hands. Somewhere between his awful cry for help on the stand and now, Draco has made his way to his seat next to Barnaby. He doesn’t remember how. Everything seems to be going white around the edges, like he’s dying.

The High Inquisitor turns to Draco, finally, and asks if he has anything to say for himself.
Draco’s hands are shaking. In a moment of desperation, he thinks about reaching over and touching Barnaby, to ground himself. He feels like he might throw up. “No.”

He is sentenced to no more than ten but no less than five years in Azkaban, effective beginning tomorrow. Barnaby is celebrating, as Draco has gotten a ‘light’ sentence. He may even be allowed some privileges (without any explanation of what those are) due to the prison reform bill, expected to pass in the Wizengamot next month. Granger is there rattling off about that, but Draco doesn’t really hear it.

There’s no way to really react to the news, especially because he expected this exact outcome. But Draco does look at the pictures of Dolohov’s face and feels quite sick. He barely remembers the incident, but he does recall digging in his forehead for the bullet. It had been a moment of pure self-preservation. He didn’t expect him to go down so easily, especially after working with him and his cronies for five years.

It’s amazing that even when selling filthy muggle drugs, Dolohov still didn’t expect a hand gun after disarming Draco of his wand.

The worst part is seeing Dolohov’s wife crying into somebody’s chest. No - the worst part is that Draco doesn’t feel sorry for killing her husband, but bitterly jealous. Somebody like Dolohov had an omega wife that cared this much for his stupid, ugly ass. Draco doesn’t recognize this woman at all, so she couldn’t have been around during the war. A part of Draco that is entirely omega is screaming – why did that bastard choose her?

Finally, the pictures of Dolohov’s blown out head make Draco sink further into depression. Nobody wants an omega who can stomach shooting an alpha through the head and trying to find the bullet to hide the evidence.

Draco is put into a cell for the night within the Ministry. There is an alpha guard who is looking at him up and down, as if expecting him to snap and break his neck. Draco’s mind is screaming that it would be completely impossible for an omega (a detruit!) to kill a healthy alpha with their bare hands.

Just when he settles down to try and sleep, another prisoner barges into the room with a huge cacophony of sounds. The guard is asking if he can do anything to make this new prisoner more comfortable, which makes Draco want to scream again.

When Draco sits up, he’s not excited to see Harry Potter staring back at him.
Celeste

Chapter Notes

I'm back!

I do have this story somewhat planned, but it's been taking me forever to write the chapters. If you're following, bless you.

Thank you so much for your comments and kudos!

For the first two minutes, Draco is in shock. The feeling quickly fades into elation.

“What did you do?” Harry Potter is in the same cell as Draco, which means he did something. He did something bad enough to be in a ministry holding cell.

Potter looks furious. His spine pokers up and his eyes flame. Draco has been begging for this reaction from Potter since he was eleven. It feels like coming home.

“You started into drugs?” He asks, making Potter look bewildered. Quickly, he rules that option out.

Still standing like he has a metal rod in his spine, Potter doesn’t otherwise react.

“Violence then.” Potter’s face twists, like he’s smelled something bad. “Am I closer?”

“Shut the hell up, Malfoy.” He says it while gritting his teeth, so Draco knows he’s very close.

“Domestic violence?” Draco lifts one of his eyebrows and watches Potter roll his shoulders back. Jackpot.

Potter puts both of his hands into his hair like he’s standing in one of those muggle plane metal detectors. His face gets bright red – a feat for somebody so dark – and he turns to the wall behind him.

“I didn’t know you were fond of traditional pureblood ways of life. Hitting your omega –”

Potter hisses like he’s so frustrated he can’t help but let something out. Draco wonders if this is how he treated his wife; whom he apparently beats.

"Just like Hogwarts, you couldn’t keep your hands to yourself, you couldn’t let anybody else be the center –”

Potter turns around and flops against his bed, banging the back of his head against the wall in a gesture of giving up completely. “It’s not domestic violence. Merlin.”

Draco pulls his legs onto the bed and sits “crisscross applesauce.” Pansy taught him that term from watching muggle TV. He puts his elbows on his knees and leans over to stare at Potter, who won’t meet his eyes.

“Am I hot or cold?”
“You know that one?” Potter asks, rolling his head over to the side while leaning against the concrete blocks behind him. It’s a poor attempt for a diversion, but it does throw Draco a little bit. Before he launches further into his interrogation, he realizes that he’s enjoying himself.

“So... violence?” Draco asks. Potter groans and rolls the back of his head against the concrete. “Did you kill somebody?”

“I’m about to kill somebody.”

That’s not surprising. Draco’s hormones are soaking the cell so much that he can feel it himself. If Potter said one spell it would be magnified by a thousand, a dangerous issue for Draco, but he can’t stop it. Knowing that Potter is in trouble for something – that’s sweeter than candy. It makes his head spin.

“Can you turn it down a notch?” Potter asks, laying on his back now. “I feel like I’m about to suffocate.”

“Tell me what you’re here for.” This is the most enticing thing to happen to Draco in ages. Yes, he is a criminal and a murderer and he has been since he was sixteen. But the Boy who Lived is not, as far as Draco knows, a criminal nor a murderer.

Potter stands up and walks over to the bed that Draco’s sitting on, and he knows he’s fucked up. He’d only been trying to make Harry Potter a little crazy, that’s not illegal, and he quickly tries to rein in the magic he’s been letting fill all over the room.

“How did you know that story?” Potter asks, menacingly.

What story. Draco tries to wrack his brain for what’s even happening. He asked Potter questions about why he was here. He filled the room with magic, which theoretically should make Potter want to spill his guts. He was sitting on the bed crisscross applesauce.

But he’s not sitting on the bed. He’s... sitting on the floor? Potter squats and grabs the back of Draco’s hair and pulls his face up, so that they are staring in each other’s eyes. “How did you know that story?”

It’s happening again. Draco doesn’t know what he’s said or what he knows. Potter can rejoice – Draco is stunned into submission, just like Potter wants.

“Fine,” Potter says, letting go of Draco’s hair. Draco can feel it sticking up in the back from where it was clutched in Potter’s fist.

When he flops across his cot and turns his back to Draco, something inside himself snaps. Things move so quickly. It’s like Draco is watching from outside of his body. Draco stands, Waltzes over to Potter like he’s sleepwalking, and pushes his shoulder back to face him.

Potter looks more annoyed than surprised. However, it’s impossible that he could prepare for the stinging slap that Draco gifts him across the face, which Draco didn’t expect himself.

Once, maybe two years ago, Draco had gotten off one of those planes somewhere in the Balkans and followed a shadowy man into a secluded wood. The muggle police had apparently discovered a stash of Dolohov’s horrible drugs and the only solution was to burn a lab. As soon as the torch touched that gasoline, the fire quickly followed the path of black liquid from right next to Draco’s feet the whole way into the little shack. It started slow and then exploded, all at once. There was an anticipation to that, a kind of drama that Draco wasn’t used to. He dreams about it sometimes.
Draco’s magic is not as forgiving nor as beautiful as muggle gasoline. Potter’s anger detonates in a split second, consuming the cell with blue fire.

“Did you set the ministry holding cell on fire?” Granger is asking.

Draco rolls his eyes. Apparently, standard procedure for welcoming inmates to Azkaban involves a trip to the principal’s office. “I can’t set anything on fire by myself.”

She leans back in her chair and stares at him, hard. She’s been lurking around him since the incident. Draco isn’t hurt at all, the only wound he has is the old cut down his face from muggle prison, but he’s been watched closely since.

“You know,” she leans forward now. It’s always back and forth with Granger. She puts her elbows on the desk as if she is confiding in him. “This isn’t going to be the same Azkaban that your father is in.”

The only thing Draco mistrusts more than Azkaban is an Azkaban run by Granger.

“What does this have to do with me?”

Granger makes a face. “We would like to start you in the new wing. It would be a trial basis and we can send you to your father’s side of the prison at any time. That is where violent offenders go.”

Somehow, murdering Dolohov is considered a non-violent offense when an omega does it.

“However,” She trails off. She leans back in her chair like clockwork. “If people should know about the issue we’ve discussed, it may be more difficult to allow you to stay here.”

Draco rolls his eyes. “What about Saint Potter, huh? Nobody cares that an omega can’t produce that amount of power?” Granger is looking at him with her eyebrows raised. Draco takes his hands and crosses his heart, “I could never produce power like that. I am merely the spark, the flint—”

She holds up her hand in a gesture to stop him talking. For some reason, he does. “Harry has reported that your power is stifling.”

Draco quickly recovers from the heart palpitation this news gives him, and grins. “Not only a cold-blooded murderer but an extremely powerful one!” He puts his hands across his forehead to appear as if he’s swooning.

“Draco.” This is the second time she’s used his first-name in the proceedings. It’s odd. “Harry is very powerful but not powerful enough to make a cell explode but with nobody hurt or maimed on the premises. It’s a health condition on your part.”

Draco crosses his arms across his chest, sulky. “Oh, so I suppose I meant to do it then? It was all my cunning plan to get thrown into terrifying Azkaban instead of the new cushy one—”

She cuts him off again with the same hand gesture. She looks nothing like Narcissa, but they are wearing an identical facial expression. “I am trying to tell you that we have programs for omegas like you at this prison. It will be nothing like you are probably expecting.”

Draco listens to her prattle on about how he’ll be staying with omegas, how he can expect a psychiatrist, how he’ll have a “job” to do every day. Only one part of this is interesting.
“Which omegas?”

The door slams shut so loud that the sound reverberates in the cell. For a second, Draco just stands there, clutching the scratchy linen that Granger assured him was a step up from regular Azkaban. It’s a four-person room with barely enough space to breathe, but his cellmates do seem to be immersed in something.

Typically, just when Draco expects to be the center of attention, nobody pays him any mind. Even though they’re not looking at him, Draco would recognize Blaise Zabini’s coffee colored skin anywhere. But it’s not him Draco is anxious about. The two girls that are playing some kind of game with dirt on the floor are much more nerve-wracking. Their mother died in his house a year before the war really started. Draco hasn’t spoken to Astrid nor Maleka Yaxley since.

Despite how scintillating pushing dirt around the floor and staring at a blank wall is, Draco does expect one of these people to look up and say something to him.

However, it appears Draco has overestimated how interesting he is. After a few seconds, he attempts to find which bunk is his without saying a word to anybody. In the process of throwing all of the bedding onto the top bunk, he manages to break Blaise’s concentration enough for him to turn around.

“We’re trying to build a runes circle,” he says.

In Draco’s inexpert opinion, that seems slightly unnecessary. Runes circles are used to boost magic and Draco imagines that this room has excess magic in spades. Additionally, runes circles need the sound of a metal gong to begin.

“The door?” he asks, surmising what the metal sound is going to be.

“Honestly, Draco.” Finally, Astrid Yaxley has spoken. “You never were too bright.”

Draco feels the hot burn of annoyance sting down his back. “Oh, really dim of me to realize in three seconds flat instead of inherently knowing about this stupid idea before even walking in.”

Astrid looks up slowly, for shock value. Draco is only a little bit appalled by her black eyes. They are a signature in the Yaxley family, and they are as upsetting as the legend. He doesn’t flinch at her disgusting gaze, as he’d be much more alarmed if she’d had her mother’s face.

“The runes circle can boost our magic to allow us to do something about being cooped up in here.”

Draco had been under the impression that all of these people had been raised wizarding. “Couldn’t we just pull our magic?”

Maleka finally looks up, her twin black stare only a little bit unsettling now. She tilts her head to the side.

Astrid scoffs, “I’m sorry, I forgot, we could just pull our magic together – three omegas without any control – and break the magically cemented walls.”

If Astrid weren’t an insufferable person, he may have told her that he could feel the foundations down to where they were bolted into the ground. He could almost tell the exact dimensions of every room North and South of himself. If he concentrated enough, he was sure he could sense his father, pacing up and down his cell and mumbling to himself.
Draco doesn’t have anywhere to go, if he broke out of prison. Since Maleka, Blaise, and Astrid are three of the most tragically inept people perhaps on this Earth, Draco doesn’t feel they deserve to break out of prison either.

Blaise is suffering in prison.

“Did you have a girlfriend or something?” Draco asks one morning, while he’s trying to wash his face in the stupid little basin. Granger’s fancy prisons have these little bathrooms attached to the side, but she’s managed to overlook that Draco would trade the bathroom at Malfoy Manor for one second without Blaise and the Yaxley sisters.

Blaise doesn’t respond. Draco usually exhibits this kind of behavior, but he’s been having much more interaction (granted – with omegas) in these few days than he has in several months. The Yaxleys have been primed by their parents to go through withdrawal on purpose because it makes them more powerful, so they don’t appear to be reacting the same way.

“He talks about her in his sleep,” Maleka says. Compared to Astrid, Maleka is chronically creepy. “Or – he used to.”

How the hell long have these people been in a cell together?

“She doesn’t visit you?” Draco asks, suddenly feeling heartsore for poor Blaise even though he’s still entertaining the stupid runes circle idea.

Blaise looks at him oddly, “of course she visits me.”

“She sucks up his magic!” Astrid says scratching her grossly overlong fingernails across the paint to make the necessary symbols. “He’s completely useless after she comes! How are we supposed to break out if one of us has no extra magic!”

Draco has lost the plot here. “She visits and uses your magic but you’re still in withdrawal?”

Astrid is looking at him like he is the dumbest person in the world, and perhaps he is. “He’s not in withdrawal! He’s just all sad and mopey because he saw her and now: she’s gone.”

Maleka is nodding next to her. “I miss my mother and father.” She sighs, somehow still unsettling, staring into space. “It’s so important to keep my magic, but there’s no reason for an omega not to visit.” Celeste Yaxley has been dead for seven years, so Draco is starting to seriously wonder about Maleka’s sanity when she says: “of course, that’s rarely possible from the grave.”

Draco’s about to go back to his bed and start mourning that he is the only detruit in this room when Astrid’s big mouth finally says something interesting.

“And Parkinson’s pregnant now so we’ll never be able to get you to stop touching her and keep your magic—”

“You’re the one dating Pansy?” Draco asks quickly. He can’t stop himself. Even as it comes out of his mouth, he knows he’s going to pay for it brutally. Pansy has been his only real alpha in five years and if his body and magic realize she’s fully with Blaise, a person Draco is forced to live with now, he can kiss his remaining sanity goodbye. He can already feel his magic rising in his throat and threatening to choke him.

“Oh, yes, I forgot you were friends still,” Blaise finally says but he’s too self-absorbed to see
Draco’s own body betraying him. “I feel so guilty I can’t be with her; she’ll need my magic for the baby.”

“The child is more likely to be a beta without an omega influence,” Maleka says, as if this would be a negative thing.

“What a load of shite!” Astrid is saying somewhere in the background and Draco tries to let her screechy voice carry him away. “Who told you that? Mama? I’ve always said she went completely detruit in the end!”

She was detruit. How could that possibly be up for debate? Celeste has been the only person whom Draco has seen crack open brick and concrete because of her pain. Right before his sixth year, when she had died in the Manor, there were fissures all in the wood in her floors. It was like she was trying to sink through to the dungeon.

Draco had always assumed her husband’s affair had finally sent her into madness. Now Draco thinks she ended it because she had managed to give birth to pretentious and annoying children.

“Has she bonded you?” Draco asks Blaise, ignoring the others. His voice has started to crack, just a little, with the new information. Astrid is yelling to her sister about Celeste’s various crazy murmurings near the end.

“Not yet,” Blaise says. “She wants to do it before we get introduced to the whole prison population though, apparently somebody told her that bondings may stop alphas from attacking me, did you know that?”

Celeste Yaxley had told Draco that right before she slit her wrists with her letter opener, which Draco had informed Pansy when he’d left for this place. And she’d... agreed to bond Blaise Zabini.

In the background, Astrid is telling the story about Celeste’s habit of flooding her suite with magic before turning it into water, as if she was trying to drown the room. “As if she could produce enough water to actually kill herself!”

Draco could. This room is small enough that he’d be able to use that same idea to fill the whole thing with freezing water. When they’d discovered Celeste, she’d had the water up to the bed skirt. Draco knows – he knows – he could do the same.

“Draco, my God, you’d think our mother was yours. Every time we’ve mentioned her you’re all tense.”

In Draco’s mind he can almost imagine Astrid’s ugly face is Celeste’s. He can almost see her reading her mail and taking that letter opener across her wrists, leaving the whole room smelling like copper. He can see the magic pouring out of her in spades minutes before her death. After she passed, the magic had changed into a foul black water that stained the floorboards after it'd been vanished.

“Are you okay?” That’s Blaise. He’s been day-dreaming about Pansy through the whole Celeste conversation.

“Oh my god.” That voice is Astrid. “Draco! Why didn’t you tell me you were detruit! Tap into the runes!”

When Celeste died, she had rambled for ages about the source. She had said it would be possible to find the source without an alpha. She could feel it within herself. Sometimes – she used to tell Draco that it burned in her neck.
Astrid screams at the top of her lungs for about half an hour, even when the guard comes to give them lunch. When Draco looks down at his tray, he sees that they’ve given him a knife, which they only do at dinner.

Has Astrid really been screaming about his being detruit for five hours?

Draco doesn’t care. Unlike Celeste, he doesn’t need a source to crush his enemies. The guard quickly feels the sickening amount of magic in the air and calls for Granger, slamming the door behind him.

The sound reverberates through the cell, and Astrid looks at him with anticipation. Draco’s magic activates the runes circle, just as Astrid Yaxley so wanted, but Draco has no plans to break out of this prison. He quickly changes the magic permeating throughout the entire cell to freezing, foul black water. It rises quickly in a smaller room, much quicker than it ever did in Celeste’s suite in Malfoy Manor.

“Crack the walls, Draco!” He’d originally been angry at Blaise, but maybe the water could get to Astrid too. She’s climbing onto Maleka’s top bunk as Draco’s water rises.

Draco jumps down from the top bunk into the water with a loud splash, grabbing Blaise’s collar, holding him down as the water rises. “Is the bite worth it now?” He asks quickly. Even to his own ears, he sounds absolutely batshit. “It’s only going to protect you from alphas.”

The door opens and the water floods outside, leaving Draco wet from his waist down. Blaise, having been held under the current, is sputtering.

For a minute, Draco is sad to see Granger look so disappointed.

When he comes to, he’s in a field. It reminds him of the section of the Manor that his mother always tended, back before the war. The path that he’s walking leads down a hill, into smaller areas that are blocked off by moss. The lavender is out, so it must be early summer, despite the high sun.

“Malfoy,” he turns and sees...Harry Potter? “What did you do to end up here?”

His subconscious is playing tricks on him. “I asked you that...”

Potter laughs, deep and low. It sounds so good in his voice. It reminds Draco of singing. “I still don’t want to tell you, but you already know.”

“What did I do to end up here?” Draco asks sitting in the grass that doesn’t feel like grass. It feels scratchier, cheaper. It feels like he’s in a cheap imitation of his mother’s garden.

“Hey,” Potter reaches out and cups his cheek in his hand. He traces the side of his cheek, right where that stupid cut from muggle prison should be. For some reason, Draco isn’t surprised to feel that it isn’t there. “Focus. Don’t go there.”

“What is it?” He asks Potter, as if any of this makes any sense at all.

“You’re still trying too hard.” He moves his hand from the sharp point of Draco’s chin to his jaw, running his knuckles around the edge and back. It feels like everywhere he touches is like that slow muggle fire, right when it hit the gasoline.
Draco lies back in the grass. Now, it feels gloriously like he remembers, if not better. Potter pulls his hand away, and Draco eyes snap back at him, certain that he’s done something wrong. The scene shifts, as if he's looking at a copy of the garden he remembers.

“No, no, no, no, no.” Potter sounds a little bit desperate, and quickly gathers Draco’s upper body against his chest. “Focus on where we are. Focus on the trees and the sounds of the birds.”

Draco can’t focus when he’s confused. He’s shaking like a leaf against Potter’s chest, which makes the hold incredibly awkward. Draco cringes a little when Potter presses his nose against the juncture of Draco’s jaw and inhales deeply. It’s so contradictory to the night in the holding cell, that Draco feels like he’s having a panic attack.

“Wait – Stay here!” Potter hisses. “Just—don’t think about the logistics of it. You don’t want to go back there either.”

None of this makes any sense to Draco, but Potter seems to be genuine. He hadn’t even noticed that the garden had gone extremely dark in the couple of minutes when Draco was being too uncooperative. As he settles back against Potter, the sun seems to peek from behind the trees again.

“Sorry.” Potter whispers, his breath tickling the sides of Draco’s ear. “I’m – I’m sorry about everything.”

It’s too much. It’s already too much but when Potter’s hands come to cross across Draco’s torso, he twists like a feral cat to break free. The garden goes black, like he’s crossed from summer into the dead of winter.

“Malfoy,” Potter says, grabbing for his hand. “Don’t – when you wake up. Come find me.”
Draco feels adrenaline thrashing in every bone of his body. In a moment where Draco should wake up spluttering and shaking, he emerges feeling victorious. He is still alive.

It feels like decades before he can gather himself, wipe his eyes to notice that he’s positioned in an all-white room, crouched over his own knees, holding himself in a squatted fetal position. He’s soaking wet.

“Merlin Draco, I’ve been doing this for an hour.”

It’s Barnaby. Draco doesn’t bother to look up or say anything. He falls to the floor and lies supine across the concrete.

“Sonorous.” Barnaby holds the wand up to his mouth like a muggle microphone, which is unnecessary for this spell. It’s would be a delightfully idiotic movement from a muggleborn, but Draco is sure Barnaby has never seen a muggle microphone. “Is there a Healer that can tell me if he’s done yet?”

No answer.

“Are you capable—” Barnaby reacts violently at his own voice because his sonorous is still active. The echoes of his voice pound through the white room. He puts his wand in his back pocket and looks at Draco again. “Can you be normal now?”

Draco is still spread-eagle across the floor. “Is this normal?”

Barnaby strides over and grabs one of his wrists, feeling the tsunami bubbling underneath his skin. “Merlin and Morgana both. It’s like a fucking forest fire.”

He throws Draco’s wrist back against his chest and grabs the back of his hair, throwing his face towards the ceiling. He waves his wand again, a complicated motion that Draco recognizes from caring for Celeste. Draco spares a moment to be surprised that Barnaby is capable of the flush.

It forces omega magic out through the skin, in basically whatever form that takes. For Draco, it’s a fucking ocean of freezing water bubbling in the air above him and crashing onto Draco’s face like a tidal wave.

The mere force of the water is not the genius of the flush. Draco’s own magic submerges him, holds him down, and waits for Draco’s body to panic. It’s the intensity that causes his magic to quickly fight for survival, a response to imminent death.

This has happened to him several times since childhood, and Draco is eerily familiar with the feeling of bitter terror that takes hold. He tries to calm himself as the water keeps plunging down, knowing that his own magic won’t kill him, but the body’s natural response is too well developed.
After a few seconds Draco starts to thrash until his eyes white-out along the edges.

And then, just like Draco knows it will, his magic pushes out from his skin to deflect the water. This amount of magical energy should be impossible, which is probably why the world rejects omegas in the first place.

In his fantasy, he’s cold.

“Harry?” he asks a completely empty room with very little furniture. It’s a risk, for certain. This looks sort of like a vacant area of The Manor. Classroom? Unused bedroom?

“Dueling space,” Harry Potter answers from behind him, walking into a door that Draco hadn’t seen before. “You don’t recognize it becau—”

“The practice room for Dumbledore’s Army.” Draco supplies, easily. Potter raises his eyebrows. “I saw it once.” He doesn’t remind Harry that it was with Umbridge, but he can see that he knows already.

Instead of the easy fight Draco is expecting, Potter’ face breaks into a wide smile and he laughs. “Of course.” He shakes his head. “I forgot that you remember everything.”

“Do you?” Draco asks and Harry looks momentarily confused. “…remember everything?”

“What event specifically are you referring to?” Harry asks him, still from across the room. Draco remembers the garden. He remembers his touch.

Draco wraps his arms around himself, still freezing, but shocked to find that he’s not wet. He’s even more surprised to find himself wearing Slytherin robes, especially because Harry is wearing a muggle suit.

“Do you know where we are?” Harry asks again, broken record.

He’s blacking out again, surely. It’s like a record skip – they just talked about this –

“Don’t spiral. Listen to me.” Harry takes 3 strides and it suddenly right in front of Draco. He’s taller than him. Harry isn’t really taller than him. “What are you seeing right now?”

“You.” Draco says in breathlessly. Breathlessly, goddamn it. “I see you.”

His face softens around the edges, like Draco has said something impossibly sweet. He raises his hands, altogether more enticing because of the imagined height difference, and he runs the palms over Draco’s cheeks. It feels like coming home.

“You do.” Harry says. “Sort of.”

Draco nods, learning into Potter’s hands. “You’re a dream.”

He laughs at this. “No. Not quite.”

He pulls away and Draco’s eyes snap open, not bothering to hide how upset he is. He knows that this isn’t real.
“Draco, I can’t tell you this, you need to think about this.” He whispers this. “I can’t tell you.”

“I don’t care!” Draco says desperately. “I don’t need to know!”

Harry looks incredibly alarmed at this, moreso than anything else, and takes two large steps back. Rooted to the spot, Draco reaches for him.

"This isn’t a place for you to stay."

Draco feels so angry all of a sudden, he can feel himself exploding latent magic all over the room. Seemingly despite himself, Harry smiles, which makes Draco even angrier. “You told me you wanted me to stay in the garden! You told me not to go! Well, now I don’t want to. I’ll stay here forever.”

“You are blinded by your nature.” Harry says and then winces at the look of hurt that inevitably flashes across Draco’s face. “I was too.”

“Fine—I’ll go. You don’t need to entertain my stupid omega fantasies or mind games anymore, I’ll just go back—”

Harry is smiling. “I forgot you like this.” He shrugs. “You used to be so defensive about everything.” Draco rolls his shoulders back, ready to throw out an insult of his own, but Harry holds his hand. “I want you here. But not yet.”

He exits the room. Draco wakes up.

Barnaby is slapping him.

“Oh mon dieu.” He leans back on his feet, which should be impossible at his weight. “I thought I’d killed you.”

“It’s not illegal,” Draco mutters, while spluttering water from his lungs. It’s so cold, it numbs him. He doesn’t even really feel lit.

“You went completely still. Like you were dead.”

“Didn’t that happen before too?”

“No.” Barnaby holds his gut while he stands up. “You were fighting the whole time, before. I knew those damn Azkaban healers were trying to just kill you. They don’t have the money for whatever Granger is cooking up, I promise you that!”

In the middle of Barnaby’s rant, Draco thinks of something. “Do you think I was dead?”

“—Just now?” Barnaby shakes his head. “You had a pulse.” Barnaby leans down, apparently incapable of kneeling again. “Are you suicidal?”

No. Is wanting to believe his fantasy exists when he’s legally dead suicidal? He shakes his head.

“Good. There’s a lot of paperwork involved with that now.” He buttons the jacket on his cloak. “They used to just throw you to the dementors if you wanted! Now you need to jump through hoops.”
Draco has had a repeated dream about Harry Potter for a long time. Before he saw him in the holding cell. Before he started hallucinating him. Draco has imagined him.

It’s not even a sex fantasy (which would somehow be better). In the fantasy, he is physically beaten. On his face is a large black eye that stretches to his temple and an open gash that cuts from his neck down to his left nipple. Even though the story behind the wound is vague, those specific injuries are always present.

The white muggle shirt he’s wearing is open because it’s been split from the collar to the armpit, presumably by Draco himself, as he’s trying to staunch the flow of blood with a Wizard’s travelling cloak. Sometimes, he’s pressed in an alley behind the Leaky Cauldron. Other times, he’s imagined himself in Knockturn alley. Either way, it’s twilight. The entire scene is bathed in blue light.

When he appears before Draco it’s almost like he doesn’t recognize him. He doesn’t bother with formalities whatsoever. He drops to his knees in front of him and helps Draco hold his cloak to his chest.

When they lock eyes for the first time, something gives in his expression. He allows Draco to crawl into his arms, and even though he’s in immense pain, Draco welcomes the alpha’s embrace against his back.

In school, they teach all alphas this embrace. It’s supposed to be casual, appropriate for any person and not just one’s mate. It is to be used in stressful situations when an omega’s magic is going out of control, but it is used often. It’s a well-known embrace that Draco recognizes immediately.

It feels incredible though. Draco has never experienced it, except in class when it was taught, but he always feels calmed when he just imagines this hold. In this situation, if Draco had just been physically beaten, a touch like this would soothe his shattered nerves until they could sew themselves back up.

Draco is cruel in his fantasies. He can’t stop there. He can’t let it end there.

His mind continues. For some reason, this imaginary Harry starts to move the hand around his waist up and down, far beyond the limits of what is considered appropriate for non-mates. He brings Draco’s head down to his shoulder and strokes his hair, slowly, reverently, and shushes him, murmuring softly into Draco’s ear until he sobs.

When Draco feels particularly hopeless, he imagines the words Harry would say to him. How it’s not his fault. How people are unnecessarily cruel. How he’ll find who’s responsible.

Leaning against the tiny Azkaban holding cell, in the blue light of evening, Draco can almost imagine the scene is about to happen for real.

Sometimes Draco thinks about this as if it’s banal, just something for him to daydream about. Sometimes it’s so powerful it feels like he’ll die if it doesn’t happen. Sometimes he thinks it would change his life.

Draco sighs, reminding himself again what he has known for over a decade. Nobody is coming to reassure him it isn’t his fault. It is his fault.

The mind is so desperate.
Barnaby is flushing his magic again. They have done this once a day for the last week, apparently under some Ministry politician’s orders.

After a while, the magic starts to burn when it’s forced from him and the tsunami becomes weaker. It doesn’t pound over him in a block but falls like a heavy rain. It doesn’t suffocate anymore, it just pours.

Draco has a semblance of control when it’s this light. He hates seeing Barnaby standing with his wand out, wearing that fucking formal robe ensemble and smirking, watching Draco stand in the rain.

Draco pushes a little, watches the rain expand to fill the entire room. He watches it soak Barnaby and laughs at his face of utter betrayal. His magic, at this level, is playful. Barnaby may not agree, but a little bit of madness is wholesome.

It turns out that Draco has been prescribed the blood let (read: the magic flush) so that he can go to court. Unlike what Draco had thought, it was not a recommendation of a faceless doctor. It was the recommendation of Narcissa, although a welcome suggestion to the Azkaban staff.

“Don’t you feel better, darling?”

Draco isn’t an idiot, and he knows Narcissa isn’t either. Magic is generated by an omega’s core. When it’s exerted and sent to an alpha, the magic repopulates and regenerates. That’s supposed to be the feeling of ultimate completion for an omega, not that Draco would know.

However, the spells that force Draco to exert magic just push him until he has none left. Instead of being an omega with lots of magic, he’ll become an omega with no magic. His magical core will go dormant.

This would make him a very calm prisoner, but a piss poor wizard. And– it breaks Draco’s heart to know that this is what he immediately thinks– a horrible omega. It’s like taking his birthright and throwing it back in his face.

“Draco, please, you don’t need all of that –”

“I wanted it!” He bursts out, tears stinging his eyes. “It was mine!”

“Draco, magic doesn’t belong to anybody.”

He stands, shell-shocked, in the middle of his cell. He can’t be far away from Lucius, who would throw an absolute fit over this turn of events, and maybe if he screams loud enough –

“The dementors won’t bother you.” Narcissa spits. “You can sit here in peace. You won’t be forced into anything else now that you don’t have enough magic.”

She is looking at him like he’s stupid for not realizing it. Rationally, Draco knows this is true. Without magic they wouldn’t have to cook up an insane punishment for him. Now, Barnaby can go
to appeals and argue that Draco is no longer a threat to the prison population. He’s not even a threat to himself.

He’s not an asset to anybody either.

Barnaby, by some miracle, has left him with some magic. He can still light sparks in his cell and play tic-tac-toe using his hand to draw the etches in the walls. Sometimes, the flint doesn’t seem to be required anymore and then it comes back all at once, as if he’s been recharged.

Theoretically, this shouldn’t be happening, but Draco is perhaps the only detruit in history who has been wiped clean of his magic. Normally, the universe just lets nature run its course. Now, Draco will live on indefinitely.

As the month trudges on in Azkaban, the mental effects of solitary confinement have become more drastic. Nobody has ever been kind to Draco, per se, but people in the real world always touch omegas, even ones as tetchy as he is. He is embarrassed to realize how much he’s been touched, even by strangers. He used to think he was shunned. Absurdly, he misses Pansy, even though she always lied to him. He misses the twins when they lived in Malfoy Manor. He misses Celeste.

Draco especially mourns the loss of the man he expected to become as a child. He misses the dream omega life he had imagined for himself when he presented.

Once, Draco witnessed a couple on the street near Diagon Alley. This was before the war, so it had to be over fifteen years ago. As they were walking, an acquaintance stopped them and gave the omega a hug, followed by the placement of their hands on the omega’s cheeks. This is the most common initiation for the passing of magic. It happened so easily, so casually, that Draco had always assumed that would happen to him one day.

The part of this interaction that kills Draco the most, even to this day, is what happened afterwards. The man grabbed that omega woman by the waist after she had said goodbye to the stranger on the street and, laughing at the abruptness, she leaned in to kiss him right in the center of London. He whispered something to her, and they walked off, never having stopped touching the whole time.

“This is a pretty sad fantasy,” Harry says, his voice so casual and honey-sweet, it doesn’t startle Draco. Of course, Harry’s been here the whole time. Instead of merely dreaming of this moment (again) in his cell, Draco is literally rewatching it somewhere, as if in a pensieve.

"How is it sad?" he inquires, turning around. It’s as if he and Harry are standing in the middle of this street, exactly as it was fifteen years ago.

“Anybody could do that,” Harry says, cocking his head to one side. “Isn’t a fantasy supposed to be something extraordinary?”

Draco bites his lip, tries to fight the animal that tells him to be smaller to submit faster, to avert his eyes. He’s never had a problem with alphas before, but this is somehow different. He doesn’t have anything to offer now except submissiveness.

Somehow, Dream Harry knows that. “Hey,” he whispers taking his hand below Draco’s pointed chin and lifting up, forcing them to eye contact. “This is just a bad time for you. It won’t always be like this.”

To Draco’s utter embarrassment, he feels the stupid tears threaten for what feels like the hundredth time recently. When he drops his eyes, he feels the first few start to fall, and he tries start talking, to
make excuses for this, but his breath hitches. “Baby,” Harry says bringing his hands up to brush his
tears away, the same classic alpha/omega transfer Draco was just lusting after. But Harry takes it
once step further- he leans in and breathes in the scent just behind Draco’s ear, at his pulse, and
kisses him a few times there, before whispering in his ear. “My baby-- don’t cry. Shhhhh. Don’t
cry.”

Even Draco’s fantasies and dreams a cruel to him. It makes the tears come faster, knowing that it’s
not real.

Harry keeps shushing him, but every time Draco starts to settle he remembers that this is a horrible
trick his mind decided to play in his insanity and it becomes impossible to listen to the praise that
Dream Harry keeps whispering, to the point where it feels like he’s having a panic attack. It feels
like he’s back in the white room, watching from the outside as his magic suffocates him.

“Draco, please,” Dream Harry begs. He gets down on his knees before Draco, takes his hands. It’s
incredibly overwhelming, even though it isn’t real. Draco is doubled over and tries to pull his
hands away to steady himself, but Harry objects. “Draco. Listen.”

He stands up straight, not able to stop himself from silently crying. He can’t meet Harry’s eyes.
“Draco, baby. This is a real place. But time—it isn’t the same here.”

Through his tears, Draco rolls his eyes. He’s pouting. “I don’t care!” it sounds so petulant, so
childish. “Every time I’m here we fight.” He finally looks down and makes eye contact, and Harry
also looks shattered, as broken as Draco feels. “I don’t want to fight.”

“Baby, I haven’t even convinced you this is a real place.” He sounds so upset about it.

Draco shrugs. He can feel his face scrunching up, making for more tears. Even in dreamland, he
can feel his magic crying out for Harry, begging him to be closer. “Call me that again.”

He looks resigned, but also weirdly like he loves to humor Draco. Like he knew this might happen.
He stands and for a moment they just look at each other.

“Come here, baby,” Harry says and holds his arms open. When Draco scurries over to him and
buries his hand into Dream Harry’s neck it feels real.

Day 3 of solitary conferment waiting for his trial is the first that feels like torture. He is starting to
believe that his magic is sentient and feels so bad for him that it creates Harry. If most of it hadn’t
been flushed out through his pores, he would have definitely convinced himself of this. As it is,
Dream Harry seems weaker and weaker. The thought of never seeing him again makes Draco feel
like he’s going to throw up.

To add to that feeling, Hermione Granger has arranged (as a kindness) a meeting with Lucius
before Draco’s court date.

In the first stony silenced minute Lucius reaches out and slaps him across the face. “You’re letting
them get to you.”

Rage—hot and petulant – steams inside of Draco’s throat until it overflows. “I have no magic! I am
alone 24 hours a day!
Lucius tuts. “Marcus Barnaby stole the one thing that belongs to you—”

“After Mother told him to do so!” Draco says, throwing his hands in the air. “Because she didn’t want me ending up like you!”

They both stare at each other for a long moment. Lucius grits his teeth. “You are an ungrateful child. Everything I did was to show you a higher order.”

It is possible that Lucius is demented. While it is harrowing to finally see his father lose it, it is also a comfort to know he is not the only detruit in these walls—

“You aren’t really listening to me.” Lucius says, which is apparently all anybody can say to Draco these days. “I had hoped the more that they beat you the more you would fight back.”

“Everybody here wants to only speak in cryptic riddles.” Draco roll his eyes. “What on earth is that rubbish supposed to mean?” Lucius’s eyes flash. No matter how hard he tries, when he starts yelling, he has a bit of a west country accent. When he speaks again, he struggles to maintain his breathing and sound as posh as possible.

Lucius looks uncomfortable. “When I first got here there were…people from the Department of Mysteries. They were studying – us.”

Lucius is telling him about the experiments that they will start on him. Draco is sure of it. There have always been rumors about Azkaban-

Lucius must see the blood start to drain from his face. “They were trying to help me. They wanted me to show them how to access… another world.”

Draco is starting to get impatient. “Yes, Father, I know, the everlasting omega power, I’ve heard this before.”

“No.” Lucius snaps. “No. They said this was a place. A physical place somewhere between the fabric of the present and the future. Somewhere else entirely.”

Draco stops and stares at him, comprehension coming slowly. Soft waves on the beach.

“They use it as…. A training ground. Somewhere that wizards can access all throughout their lives.”

“What does it have to do with omegas?”

Lucius hates to speculate. “I think that we can open the portal.” He says, with the authority of a man who has lost sleep over this. “I think we can access it easiest.”

Draco feels sick. It feels like he’s eaten a lot of candy or smelled something putrid.

“Draco.” Lucius says, to get his attention. “Mention this at your hearing.”

Draco cocks his head to the side, looks at his father. He tries to understand if he seems desperate or not.

“I’ve seen you do it.”

Draco nods, “do what?”

“I’ve seen you go to this place.”
Draco furrows his eyebrows. “What do you mean?”

Lucius is getting angry, but Draco hates to be spoken to like he’s a child. “Tell Harry Potter – when he inevitably asks about the limits of your power – that you can go into the vellum that he so desperately wants to get into!”

Suddenly, Draco feels like he might faint. “Harry Potter?”

“He’s the researcher that’s constantly asking me these questions. Tell him what you can do.”

“Times up, Malfoy Junior, let’s go” the guard says, grabbing Draco’s arm.

“I can’t do anything!” Draco says, hoarsely, posh accent forgotten.

Lucius looks pained. “Tell him the truth.”

End Notes

Thanks for reading! Welcome to my twisted mind lol

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