The war is over, and everyone seems to have found happiness. Everyone, that is, except one Severus Snape. Until, one day, the opportunity to gain what he needs to be happy arises, and who ever said Severus Snape didn't take risks?
Headmaster Severus Snape sat at his desk, eyeing the stacks of paperwork. Why had he decided to be Headmaster again? He sighed and looked out the window. The professors were having one of their romantic Saturday picnics again. Severus bent his head, rubbing his thumb and forefinger across his forehead. It was his own fault, really. What had he been thinking? Somehow he had ended up hiring everyone and their significant other, and more than enough of his former students. After the war, the professors at Hogwarts had all slowly begun to retire, ready to leave the site of the war. Minerva was the first to leave, unable to stay at Hogwarts without Albus for any longer. Then Filius, Pomona, and all the others until Severus had been left with the task of replacing all of his teachers. And as last-minute decisions always end up, Severus had not realized the consequences of his actions until it was far too late.

Professors Lucius and Narcissa Malfoy had taken over Potions and Charms respectively. Professor Draco Malfoy Ancient Runes whose wife Ginny Weasley-Malfoy shared Quidditch duties with her brother and fellow Quidditch player Ron Weasley. His wife, Professor Hermione Granger-Weasley, taught History of Magic (a wasted talent if you asked Severus).

Severus had even hired Neville Longbottom for Herbology, and his eccentric wife, Luna, for Divination, which she shared with Firenze.

Thank goodness Hagrid had stayed to be Gamekeeper and teach Care of Magical Creatures, where would Severus have found a teacher for that?

Poppy had wanted an assistant, so Healer Pansy Parkinson Zabini had joined staff, her husband Blaise teaching Arithmacy.

What a wonderful mélange of teachers. Now all Severus had left was Astronomy. Oh, he’d forgotten the last pair. Professors Harry Potter and Remus Lupin, of Defense Against the Dark Arts and Transfiguration respectively. A couple. One that caused Severus far too much pain. How was he supposed to handle watching the man he loved with someone else? You should have thought of that sooner Severus.

Harry laughed, as he watched Remus lick his fingers, dirty from a bowl of chocolate covered strawberries.

"Remus, you and your chocolate…” Harry smiled as Remus winked at him. Harry's gaze slowly shifted to the castle that he had always considered home and he frowned.

"What is it Harry?” Remus asked, glancing up at the castle as well.

Harry sighed and nodded towards the Astronomy Tower. Visible just barely, standing in the open tower gazing out at the Hogwarts grounds, clad in all black, his robes slowly dancing around his legs, stood the Headmaster of Hogwarts, Potions Master Severus Snape.

"I just wish we could do something. He never comes down to the picnics with us, we only really see him at meals in the Great Hall or if we go to his office. What does he do inside all day?” Harry
sighed again, looking back at the grass. Severus and he had become friends during his training his sixth and seventh year. Now, he couldn't help but worry about the man's solitary existence.

"I agree. Severus spends far too much of his time in that office," Lucius added from where he sat with his wife, a little distance away. "However, there is not much we can do. You know Severus, he will never listen to anything anyone says, not anymore. He is his own master now. It is a freedom he enjoys, albeit a bit too much sometimes."

It had been revealed that Lucius had been a spy for the Light, turning after seeing Draco tortured during his fifth year and finally seeing Voldemort's descent into insanity. Severus had brought him over to the Light side, interrogated him, and Lucius and the rest of the Malfoys had slowly become integral to the Order's mission and Harry's own destiny.

Harry nodded, but couldn't help but feel like there was something wrong. Severus had been….well off, lately. He wasn't sure how to put it…

"Harry, we'll talk to him later. Besides, he is the Headmaster, he has quite a bit of work to do," Remus soothed rubbing a hand gently on Harry's thigh. Harry took Remus's hand in his own and squeezed it lightly, leaning against his lover's cardigan covered chest.

"I know. I just worry. I mean, he loves potions, I still don't understand why he took the job."

"Harry. You know exactly why. Because Albus asked him, you know that. Albus and Severus were like father and son, Severus couldn't deny him."

"I know, I know."

Suddenly, a house elf appeared on the grounds, wringing her hand gently, she turned towards Lucius, "Professor Malfoy sir. The Headmaster is asking Mippy to tell him that he be leaving for the Ministry and that you is in charge until he returns." Here, Mippy turned a bit red, "And…and he is saying sir, that you…you is not to be ruining his school while he is being gone."

Mippy blushed even more, quickly popping away.

Lucius raised an eyebrow at where the elf had been and then looked up at the now empty Astronomy Tower curiously, "Why would Severus be going to the Ministry? In the middle of July?"

Severus Snape stalked through the Ministry of Magic, his characteristic black robes billowing behind him. Damn Ministry, can't do anything. The second something wrong happens they come running to the Headmaster of Hogwarts. Damn you Albus, you never mentioned that this was part of the job description.

"Headmaster Severus Snape here to see Head Auror Kingsley Shacklebolt." Severus glided in, frowning.

"Severus! You made it." Kingsley smiled and shook Severus's hand. Severus scowled when he saw the golden ring glinting off of Kingsley's finger. How Nymphadora Tonks had snatched the Head Auror was beyond him.

"Of course Shacklebolt, now what is the problem?"

Kingsley sighed and gestured towards his office. Closing the door behind them, Kingsley put up a number of wards. Severus's eyebrows rose at the number of privacy wards he had included. This was a very serious matter apparently.
"Something has gone terribly wrong at the Department of Mysteries Severus."

"I see."

"Something that is going to affect a number of people."

"…"

"Something—"

"Just get on with it Shacklebolt. Are you trying to be the next Minister? Whatever has happened? Another Unspeakable experiment gone wrong? Or did they discover how to bring the dead back"

Kingsley winced, "The last one…"

"…pardon me?"

"Well, not just any dead…Severus, the Veil spat people out. 25 wizards and witches have come out of it this morning. Apparently all innocent."

"Kingsley…you mean to say…"

"Yes. Sirius Black is alive."
Chapter 2

Severus just looked at Kingsley for a few seconds and then closed his eyes, "Shit."

"Exactly."

"What exactly do you want me to do?"

Kingsley looked a bit uncomfortable, sighed, glancing up at Severus, "I was hoping you would take responsibility of Sirius."

Severus raised an eyebrow. "Take responsibility?"

Kingsley shifted again, "Remus and Harry being what they are...I could hardly contact them, could I? And, yes you and Sirius have bad history, but then again, so did you and Remus. I was hoping you could explain everything to him."

"Because I am the only one that can explain everything to him without him punching me and running off to find Remus and Harry unprepared?"

Kingsley smiled, a little sheepishly, "Yes, Severus."

Severus rolled his eyes and sighed, "Where is he?"

"We've got him here, down in the Department of Mysteries. He, uh, went a little insane when he came out and the Unspeakables didn't know what to do so they stunned him."

Bloody Unspeakables, thought Severus. "Show me to his room."

They walked to the Department of Mysteries and Severus followed the Auror to a room near where the Veil was kept.

"You won't hex him will you Severus?"

Severus rolled his eyes, again, "No, Shacklebolt. As of right now I am Black's only hope. Otherwise he is going to be in for a nasty surprise and then my whole staff will be a mess."

Severus pushed the door he was standing in front of open slowly and walked in. The room was pretty empty, save for a desk, a chair, and a bed, where Black was laying. Sighing, Severus sat down, pulled out his wand and cast an Enervate.

Black's eyes popped open and even Severus could see the slight wildness that they possessed. "Snape. Harry. The kids. They need help. There were Death Eaters. And Malfoy. And Bella. And —"

"Black—"

"Snape you have to listen to me"

"Black calm down—"

"No! Harry he needs my help," Black's brain obviously had just sprung into action as he started towards the door.

"Sirius!"
Sirius froze and turned around. Severus had never used his first name before.

"The kids are fine. Remus is fine. Harry is fine. Everyone is fine. You need to sit down right now."

"I don't know what you're playing at, Snivellus, but everyone is not fine! They were fighting dark wizards—"

"Six years ago."

Sirius started at Severus's interruption and then looked at Snape. He frowned as he noticed some odd things. For one, Snape's hair wasn't greasy.

"What?"

Severus sighed and motioned for Sirius to sit down, which he finally did. "Black, you fell into the Veil."

"What? But I'm alive," Sirius's eyes widened.

"Obviously. For reasons unknown the Veil decided to spit you and 24 others back out. All apparently innocent of crimes they had supposedly committed, or those accidentally pushed in, like you. You fell in 6 years ago when Bella pushed you in. Things have changed." Severus shrugged his robe off slowly and then unbuttoned the cuff of his left sleeve, sliding it up to show Sirius the faded outline of the Dark Mark on his arm. "Voldemort is dead. Your godson killed him. Most people are alive, some are not."

Sirius was obviously having a hard time soaking in this information. "They said the Headmaster of Hogwarts was coming…I remember…Where's Albus?"

Severus tensed, "Black. Albus…Albus is one of the ones no longer here."

"Then…oh Merlin. You're the Headmaster."

"Yes."

And Black promptly fainted.

Severus smirked. What wonderful material to bait Black with later. Severus Enervated the man again. "Are you quite finished with the dramatics, Black?"

Sirius scowled at Snape. Fuck, did he really had to faint in front of Snape. Good going, Sirius.

"Shut up Snape. Can I leave now? I want to see Harry, and Remus, and—"

Severus tensed again and Sirius looked at him oddly and slightly panicked. "Wait, you said they were fine. Did you lie to me? Play with the trusting Gryffindor? Tell me—"

"Oh do shut up Black. I did not lie. However, there are some conditions…well changes that I must inform you of."

Sirius looked at Severus oddly. He looked very uncomfortable. What in the world had happened that made Snape so uncomfortable. It wasn't like Harry and Remus had grown extra heads and limbs, was it?
"I know that you were Remus's mate. That is true, is it not?"

Sirius glared at Snape, "Yes. And if you have a problem with it—"

"That is neither here nor there. Black…Black after you died, Remus was inconsolable. He became very withdrawn…but eventually, he found a reason to continue existing. And I believe either he latched on to another person because he convinced himself that this man was his mate, or could replace his mate, or he truly feels a mated connection with him."

Sirius stilled and swallowed, "Remus has mated with another man?"

"No, I do not believe that they have completed the actual ritual. However, they are…dating."

Severus's tone implied how offensive and disgusting he really thought that word was.

Sirius looked at Snape, a feeling of foreboding filling him, "Who?"

Severus sighed and looked at Black, "Harry Potter. Your godson."

And Black promptly fainted again.

This time Severus actually snickered. This was just getting better and better. Enervating the man, again, Severus looked down at Black with a neutral expression.

"Fuck, Snape. Fuck."

"There's no reason to get vulgar Black. I simply thought it important that you were informed of the current status quo per se before you ventured out into the world."

"Have any poison on you, Snape?"

Severus started in shock, "What?"


"Whatever for Black? Suicide?"

"Yes."

"Black, have you lost your mind? What the bloody hell are you thinking?" Severus's shock overtook his normal vocabulary. Black had obviously lost all sense of reason in his six year vacation to the Underworld.

"Obviously my lover and my godson are together. Happy together. I am supposedly dead. My will has probably been read and executed. Was Wormtail ever found or am I still a fugitive? There really is no point in me living, Snape."

Severus just stared at Black for a moment before resorting to physical methods of expressing his disbelief and smacking Black upside the head. This man had gotten a second chance at life, and he wanted to squander it because he believed that two people were happier without him?

"You are being completely ridiculous Black. For one, we can hardly know if the two of them are happy together. I for one believe that Remus loves only you and is deluding himself with Harry. But, of course, that is my opinion. Two, what happens when they find out that you had been alive and then died because you did not want to ruin their happiness? And mark my words, they will discover it. Then what? They will be angry at you, at each other, at themselves for everything.
They will grow angry and bitter and push each other away and become miserable. Is that what you want?"

Black's eyes grew bigger before he turned around and stalked over to the desk. Leaning against it, his knuckles turning white, Sirius turned and said, "So what should I do Snape? Since it seems you have all the answers. What should I do? My godson, who has run from Voldemort all his life, who probably has never had the chance to be truly happy, is with my lover. Should I, selfishly, ruin his happiness?"

Severus shook his head. Black's reasons were ridiculous. "Black you are obviously not thinking straight…"

That was when the wildness in Black's eyes became even more pronounced. Pulling a knife out from his sleeve Black brought it to his wrist.

"Black!" Severus quickly summoned the knife and stared at Black in horror. What the hell was the man thinking? I have officially gone insane, Severus mused, closing his eyes in aggravation. Instead of encouraging my childhood enemy to die, I am encouraging him to live. Merlin save me from bloody self-sacrificing Gryffindors.

"Okay, Black. You do not want to reveal yourself to Harry and Remus?" Black nodded. "I am in need of an Astronomy professor. You did fairly well on you NEWTs in that did you not? Albus left me a house. You could reside there and we can give you a different identity, disguise you, and you can teach and be near Harry and Remus. After you have been there for a while…you can decide what you want to do."

Sirius stared at Snape in astonishment. "Snape. You hate me. I hate you. Why the fuck are you doing this? You should be happy that I want to die. Hell, you should be trying to kill me. Slytherin revenge and all."

Severus sighed and looked at the wall for a moment. "I'm quite done with having enemies Black. And I am quite sick of death. You were not here for the war, you did not see the bloodshed. Do you know that I can count the number of our surviving classmates on my hands? You can hate me all I want, I no longer care. Yes, baiting you and fighting with you is a source of amusement, but after your death I came to terms with what you did to me. I simply do not care anymore Black."

Sirius looked at Snape in surprise. "You know Snape, I thought we'd hate each other even after we died."

Severus looked at Sirius, a smirk playing at his lips, "As did I Black."

Sirius looked at Snape contemplatively. Yes, he had hated Snape because he was a sniveling Slytherin for most of his life. Yet the same man, who he had, accidentally, tried to kill, was trying to convince him to live. "You've changed Snape."

Severus looked at Black, a neutral mask on his face. "Perhaps."

Sirius looked away and then awkwardly looked back at Snape. "I suppose I don't hate you anymore. That much."

Severus smirked, "Frankly Black, I am your only option. Besides, if in a few months you decide you still want to die, I will be happy to provide you with poison that will melt your insides, and then your skin, and then of course I could use your eyeballs…"

Sirius glared, "Bastard."
Severus smirk got even bigger, "I never said I had changed that much."
Chapter 3

Severus Flooed back to Hogwarts after settling Black into the Dumbledore House. Collapsing into his armchair in his chambers, he poured himself a glass of cognac. He had officially lost his mind. Inviting Black to Hogwarts? As a professor? Not telling Harry or Remus? Calling a truce? What had gotten into him?

*You know exactly what's gotten into you.*

Fuck. His conscience.

*You know why. You know that if Black reveals himself, Remus will take him back and then Harry will be free. That is what's gotten into you Severus.*

Severus sighed and closed his eyes. He had told himself that he was not going to say anything to Harry. That he would never reveal his feelings. But when the opportunity came…

"Severus!"

Severus looked up at the mirror by his door that revealed who was in front of his office door. Seeing that it was Harry, Severus took a fortifying breath, downed his glass of cognac, and descended down the stairs, waving the door open.

"Harry. What can I help you with tonight? It is fairly late…"

"Where were you? We came up and you were gone and you weren't at breakfast or dinner, did you even eat lunch? And—"

Severus raised his eyebrow, a small fond smile on his face, as Harry rambled on. He knew that Harry was like this with all his friends, but that didn't stop the warmth that bloomed in his stomach. "Harry. I simply had to take care of some things at the Ministry. It is all solved and yes, I ate."

"Oh. Well. Okay."

Severus smiled and waved Harry into seat, sitting himself at his desk. "I am glad you are here actually. I need to go somewhere for the next three days and will not be here. Thus, as I have not chosen a deputy, I would like you, Lucius and Remus to simply be in charge in case anything comes up. I will of course be reachable, but I have some things that need to be taken care of."

Harry looked at Severus in surprise. He rarely left the school, especially since he had become Headmaster. Suddenly, Harry's heart constricted sharply. During training and the war Harry and Severus had become close, knowing almost everything about each other. Severus had become one of his best friends. But after Voldemort's death, and after graduation, Harry hadn't visited often and then only to see Remus. He had no idea what was going on in Severus's life anymore. This distance that had formed between them began to hurt now that he had realized it existed.

"Harry? Is everything okay?" Severus looked at Harry, a shadow of concern in his eyes.

"Oh, yes. Yes, everything's fine. When will you back?"

"I should return before Thursday."

"Okay. Well, I'll see you then."
"Goodnight, Harry."

"Goodnight, Severus." Harry walked out of the Headmaster's office slowly, his mind contemplating the sharp ache that had pierced through him at having a stilted conversation with Severus. Sure he had spent time with Severus occasionally since the war ended, but he hadn't spent as much as he could have. Being at Hogwarts afforded him the opportunity to see Severus more often. But what kind of friend was he if he didn't know what was going on Severus's life at all?

"Harry. Are you alright?" Remus was standing in the sitting room frowning at Harry. He walked over and brushed his hand against Harry's cheek and leaned in for a kiss. When Harry barely responded, he pulled back to look into his lover's green eyes. "Is something wrong?"

"No. No, I just—I've got stuff on my mind, that's all. I think I'm going to sleep."

"Okay, goodnight Harry. I'll be along in a few."

"Goodnight, Remus."

Remus watched his lover go to bed with a frown. What was bother Harry that was bad enough that even kisses couldn't distract him?

Severus glided out of the Floo into the Dumbledore house early Sunday morning. It was quiet, which meant he had the delightful opportunity to wake Black up. Silently creeping up the stairs, he pushed Black's door open to find the dark haired man sprawled across the bed, the sheets wrapped around him in a tangled mess. Black slept on his stomach, head turned sideways, arm flung out. Bed hog.

Severus smirked and cast an Aguamenti above Black's head.

"WHAT THE HELL?" Black jumped out of bed. "Snape. What the?"

"Good morning, Black. Sleep well?"

"Fuck you, Snape. I was having a good dream!"

Severus's smirk got even more smug, if possible. "Well it is time to get out of bed. We are going to Australia. The time zones are different." With that, Severus glided out the door, calling behind him, "Breakfast will be ready in 15 minutes. We are leaving in 45."

Gah. That man. Sometimes I just want to strangle him.

Severus glanced at the robes that Sirius was wearing, the same as yesterday, and wrinkled his nose, "we must find ways to disguise you. You cannot wear a glamour, or at least not a full body one, because someone at Hogwarts would definitely recognize..."

"Australia is sufficiently far from Britain that no one will recognize you. Hopefully. And besides needing more clothes," Severus glanced at the robes that Sirius was wearing, the same as yesterday, and wrinkled his nose, "we must find ways to disguise you. You cannot wear a glamour, or at least not a full body one, because someone at Hogwarts would definitely recognize..."
Sirius looked at Severus in surprise. "Oh. Well that's true I guess. A haircut…can I get a piercing?" Black was grinning like a loon in Severus's opinion, but oh well.

"If it aids your disguise I suppose so. If you want to create holes in your body it is hardly my decision." Now Black was definitely grinning like a loon. Sigh. Why me?

Six hours later Sirius had a new wand, a haircut, a pair of glasses, colored wizarding contacts, an ear-piercing, and a whole wardrobe full of clothes.

Unfortunately for Severus, Sirius had somehow charmed the store clerk into thinking that he too was in need of a new wardrobe but was reluctant to buy one. So the clerk somehow manhandled him, stripped him of his clothes and stuffed him in a dressing room full of clothes. And so, since Severus could hardly leave Black in the middle of Australia by himself without a wand, Severus too ended up with a new wardrobe. And not enough black. Severus shook his head, you're going soft Snape old boy.

Suddenly, Black grabbed Severus's arm "Snape! I want to get a tat."

"A tattoo? Black really. You are going to permanently change your body with ink?"

Sirius hadn't thought about how getting a tattoo would look like to Snape. Snape who had gotten a tattoo that had ruined his life. One mistake.

"Shit, Snape. I didn't think—"

"Black. This is not about my Dark Mark. It is simply a decision that should not be taken lightly. That is all."

"I know. I've wanted one since I was 16." Black had that silly grin on his face again as they entered the tattoo parlor.

"Welcome gentlemen. What can I do for you today?" The receptionist flashed a flirty smile at Black and of course, the ever-present gay ladies man, Black turned on the charm and smiled back.

"Well darling, I would like to get myself a tattoo."

"Of course, sir. Do you have a design chosen?"

"Yes."

Severus looked at Black in surprise.

"I've had the same design in mind since I was 16, Snape."

A look of understanding passed over Severus's face. The tattoo was a symbol of Black's love for Remus.

It was actually quite a beautiful tattoo. It was on Black's right shoulder blade and was done in silver and black. A full moon with a wolf howling but done in abstract with swirls and swipes that unless you really looked it simply looked like a pretty design. Ingenious way to hide a very telling symbol.
"Like it?" Black's smile was as wide as his face.

"Hmph. It is a tattoo Black." With that Severus spun around, his black robes billowing. Sirius just shook his head, happy with his new disguise.

On Wednesday, Severus and Sirius decided it was time for Sirius's new persona to make an appearance at Hogwarts.

"Black! What did you do with my robes?"

"What are you talking about Snape? Me? Why would I do anything to your beloved black robes?"

"They're all gone Black. And since I know Loppy wouldn't touch my robes, and you're the only other person here, obviously the crime is on your hands."

"Merlin, Snape you bought a ridiculous amount of robes in Australia. And they're all nearly black. Wear them."

"I don't want to."

"Go naked then."

"Black!"

"I've always wondered—"

"I dare you to finish that sentence."

Sirius just rolled his eyes, muttering about insane Headmasters.

"Just remember Black, your name is Orion Grey, do not respond to anything else. Do not shift, you as a mutt is the most obvious revelation of your identity. Did you cast the charms that will disguise your scent from Remus? You studied in the States—"

"Snape. Chill. No one is going to figure it out."

"Hmph. I am simply reminding you of necessary details. Your pea sized brain may not be able to remember after all."

Previously, such a comment would have made Sirius angry and require a severe comeback, but after spending two days with the man, it just made him smile. It was funny how you got used to Snape's humor once you understood not to take what he said at face value.

They Flooed into Severus's office at Hogwarts and Sirius put his resized trunk in Severus's guest room. It was then that there was a knock on the door.

Severus looked up and wasn't surprised to see Remus, Lucius, and Harry at his door. The two men walked down the steps, settling into the two chairs in front of the chessboard before Severus waved his hand to open the door.

"Severus, you have returned." Lucius was the first to glide in, his normal cool, collected manner taking in the other man and quickly adjusting.

"Severus. How was your trip?" Remus asked, stopping short to stare at Sirius.

Sirius's long black hair had been cropped short, with a slight spike to it. Colored contacts made his
grey eyes blue with flecks of grey hidden behind square black frames. The platinum earring, if seen closely, was of a wolf's head, and it glittered as the sun rays entered from Severus's office window. Wearing fitted indigo open robes with silver detailing at the hems with black trousers and a crisp white button up shirt, he looked nothing like Sirius Black ever had. This was Orion Grey, Auror and Astronomy aficionado.

"Ah. Gentlemen, this is Orion Grey, a friend of mine, who has graciously accepted the post as Hogwarts's Astronomy Professor."

Harry turned to ask Severus more questions and that is when the three men stopped to stare at Severus Snape, Potions Master, Headmaster of Hogwarts, and now, a very Sexy Slytherin.

Severus had, unfortunately, been forced to don non-black clothing today and was instead in fitted midnight blue open robes, a white shirt and charcoal trousers. The open robes revealed more of Severus's trim physique than any of his other clothes ever did. His hair wasn't greasy, but black and luscious, and was clipped back.

"Orion these are Professors Lucius Malfoy, Harry Potter, and Remus Lupin."

The three men nodded, still in shock after seeing Severus Snape in color.

"It's a pleasure."

It was then that Sirius noticed his godson giving Snape an odd look and the very light blush that crept up Snape's cheeks. His eyes widening as he suddenly realized what was happening. *Snape had a crush on Harry.*

Had the universe dropped him into the wrong dimension?
Two days later Severus stood atop the Astronomy tower once again.

"Were you going to mention it eventually?"

Severus turned around to meet the blue eyes of Orion Grey.

"Mention what?"

"That you're in love with Harry."

Severus's eyes widened and he spun around. "You are being ridiculous. Me, in love? With your godson? Please, I am old enough to be his father."

"I notice you don't mention that he's young enough to be your son."

Severus closed his eyes and his shoulders hunched a little. That was enough for Sirius. "I'm not angry Snape. If I had known a week ago? I probably would've hexed you into next week. But, quite obviously, you're in love with him and he has no idea." Sirius placed his hand on Severus's shoulder. "It only took me two days to figure that out. I always knew my godson was slow. But, why didn't you encourage me to reveal myself to Remus? That would most likely make Harry available…"

Severus shook his head and looked out at the lake as the sun's rays reflected lightly off the surface of the water. "This emotion has made me maudlin, Grey. Instead of doing the proper Slytherin thing and encouraging you, I could not stand the idea of hurting Harry." Severus's black eyes turned to look at Sirius, "It is pathetic, I know. Loving a man young enough to be my son, a man who hated me for almost six years, who barely tolerates me now, who is dating another man, who—"

"For one, your age obviously doesn't matter, he's dating Remus for Merlin's sake, who's the same age as you. And two, he doesn't simply tolerate you, he obviously cares about you. He's been giving me calculating, disdainful looks all week."

"That is because you are an unfamiliar face. He does not trust you."

"No, he doesn't. But not only because I'm new, but because I am apparently your friend…and Harry doesn't believe I'm just any friend."

Severus raised an eyebrow and turned back around.

Sirius rolled his eyes, "He thinks we're lovers, Snape."

Severus spun around, an incredulous look on his face, "What?"

Sirius grinned and then suddenly wrapped Severus up in a hug.

"What the fuck are you doing, Grey?" Severus said as he began to push Sirius away.

"Shush. Pretend to enjoy it. Harry's glaring at me from down on the grass." Sirius laughed and pressed his nose against Severus's temple making it seem like he was whispering soft, romantic things into Severus's ear.
"You have gone mental Grey."

"Gone? My dear Snape, I do believe you thought I was born mental."

Harry stalked into his quarters banging the portrait door close.

"Harry? What's wrong?" Remus rushed out the study room to see Harry pacing in front of the fire.

"Severus is sleeping with that...that...that...man!"

Remus raised his eyebrows. "Who?"

"Grey. Severus is sleeping with Grey!"

"Harry. I've never seen Severus with anyone. I don't even know if he's homosexual. Hell, sometimes I think the man's asexual. You can't really tell with Severus."

"I saw them embracing at the Astronomy tower. They're lovers! I know it. He's sleeping with a complete stranger!"

"I doubt their strangers. It's obvious they know each other. Besides, if Severus is happy then we should be happy for him. For Merlin's sake, the man convinced Severus to wear color! It must be love."

Harry glared at Remus. He didn't understand why, but the idea that Severus was sleeping with that man irked him.

"I don't know. There's something off about him."

Remus frowned. This wasn't just Harry being suspicious, "Oh? Why do you say that?"

"I don't know. But every time he's around warning bells go off in my head."

Remus looked at Harry in concern. This was really bothering his lover. "Okay love, I'll watch him tomorrow and see okay?" With that Remus smiled and kissed Harry, "But, right now, there are more...interesting...things we could be doing, aren't there?" Remus drawled, a wolfish grin on his face. Harry smiled back, and let Remus distract him with better uses of time, his thoughts on Grey and Severus filed away into the back of his mind.

Remus walked into the staff room with a purpose the next morning: to discover as much as he could about this Orion Grey. Making himself a cup of coffee, the first thing he noticed was that Grey entered from Severus's personal door. Which came straight from the Headmaster's quarters. Next, he made himself two cups of coffee. One half milk, half coffee, and two spoons of coffee, and another that was simply black, obviously for Severus. Remus's heart constricted. Half milk, half coffee, two sugars. That had been Sirius's preferred way of drinking coffee.

"Good morning, Professor Grey."

Grey turned and smiled at Remus, "Please, call me Orion."

"In that case, please call me Remus. Forgive me, but I don't remember you from Hogwarts. Where did you go to school?"

Ah, thought Sirius, so begin the twenty questions. "I studied in the States but did my Masters in
Defense from the University. Must've picked up the accent then.” Sirius winked at Remus. One half of him wanted to sweep Remus up in his arms and devour his lips, but the other was having fun pretending to be someone else. Perhaps he had an undiscovered kink for roleplay? Besides, his new goal was to find a way to bring Harry and Severus together. The fact that Remus would be single again after that was totally a side effect. Not the main goal of course.

"Ah. And how did you meet Severus?"

"Oh, mutual friends. I needed a bit of help and they introduced him to me. As they say, the start of a beautiful friendship." Sirius was really just tweaking the truth. Severus's lessons on answering questions like a Slytherin were actually paying off. Sirius was not a Slytherin. Not at all. But Orion Grey? He could be a Slytherin. Sirius had no problem with that. Severus had rolled his eyes and muttered something about inane Gryffindor semantics when Sirius had said that.

"Remus, are you interrogating my Astronomy professor?" Severus glided in wearing his customary black robes but with grey trousers and a green shirt. He raised an eyebrow at Remus as he leaned over Sirius's shoulder to pick up his cup of coffee.

"Of course not, Severus. It's called getting to know each other," Remus replied, his keen eyes taking in the way Grey brushed his hand over Severus's arms as he sat down.

Harry walked in next, sliding into his seat next to Remus and pecking him lightly on the mouth. "Good morning!"

Severus felt Sirius tense up next to him, "Good morning, Harry." Severus stepped on Sirius foot to get his attention.

"Good morning, Professor Potter," Sirius said, glaring a bit at Severus.

"Oh, Severus, I wanted to talk to you about the Dueling Club," Harry mentioned as he made himself tea.

"Ah, yes. I will be busy the rest of the day however. Perhaps right now? We can go to my office," Severus said putting his mug down and getting up.

"Sure," Harry said getting up as well. He watched with a frown as Grey rose as well, pressing a hand against Severus's arms and whispering in his ear. Severus smirked at whatever Grey said and Grey smiled back.

Sirius looked over at his godson and couldn't help the feeling of satisfaction that swept over him at Harry's frustrated face. He loved his godson, but he was slowly realizing that this pretending to be another person was not going to work forever. At this point, he would do anything to get Remus back, and besides, Severus was obviously totally infatuated with his godson, and frankly, he was starting to think that deep down, Harry was unknowingly just as infatuated with Severus. Ah, to play matchmaker. Sirius grinned.

"Shall we, Mr. Potter?" Severus was speaking to Harry again, who jerked and followed Severus out the door.

Halfway to the Headmaster's office Harry turned to Severus and asked, "Are you sleeping with him?"

"Excuse me?" Severus looked at Harry in shock.

"Grey. Are you sleeping with Grey?"
"Who I am and am not sleeping with is none of your business, Potter," Severus sneered, his eyes turning slightly cold as they narrowed.

Harry flinched, Severus hadn't called him by his last name in years.

"There is something off with that man. And if you're sleeping with him, you should know."

"There's nothing off about him. I know him well. We are friends. Do not insult my friends Potter. I've known him longer than I've known you."

Harry tensed up and looked at Severus, "I see. So that's it is it? You choose him over me?"

Severus stopped and looked at Harry, "What is this, Harry? You barely know the man. I am not choosing one of you over the other. I am saying that I know everything there is to know about this man and there's nothing off about him."

"So you don't believe me. Well, fine," and forgetting all about the Dueling Club, Harry stormed off.

Well that could've gone better, thought Severus. He was tempted to call the whole farce off and tell Harry there was nothing between Grey and him, but a little part of him kept telling him that if Harry didn't like that he might be sleeping with Grey, than perhaps Harry might have feelings for him. And maybe, just maybe, this time Black wasn't playing a vindictive prank on him, but actually helping him. It seemed that Severus's weakness when it came to Harry was quite immense. _Severus old boy, you really are going soft._ Severus shut his eyes and prayed that this wouldn't end with him getting hurt.
Chapter 5

Harry stormed off towards Ron and Hermione's quarters. Severus was sleeping with a man who nobody knew, nobody knew anything about, who none of them had ever met. He hadn't even been part of the war! How was he supposed to understand Severus? Severus's role was so important, so complex. Only someone who had been in the thick of things would be able to understand. Or maybe they were just fuck-buddies? Harry wrinkled his nose. No, Severus wasn't one to be in a casual relationship.

"Umfph!"

Harry ran smack dab into someone with platinum blonde hair. Looking up, he realized it was Malfoy the Younger. At least it wasn't Lucius. He would've go on and on about proper "hallway" etiquette and how I ruined his robes, even though they'd look just the same. That man just likes to hear his own voice.

"Malfoy."

"Watch where you're going Potter," Draco growled at Harry.

"You should too," Harry shot back. The two men glared at each other before bursting out in laughter.

"What's wrong Potter? You looked like you were going to murder someone," Draco said after he'd calmed himself down.

Harry tried to gather his wits, "Your godfather is crazy."

Draco smirked. Deep down he'd always thought that Harry had a thing for Severus. "Severus? What did he do now?"

Harry's anger began to return to him, "He's sleeping with Grey! I bet that's why that man is teaching here."

Draco's eyebrows rose. "No," he said in disbelief. Severus would never give his lover a job, simply because they were lovers, and besides, nobody had ever heard of this Orion Grey. Was Severus really sleeping with some random man?

Harry nodded, passionately spewing "I saw them embracing, and then there's those little touches they always exchange, and when I told Severus I thought something was off about him, Severus didn't believe me! He was choosing him over me!"

Draco's face relaxed as he raised an eyebrow at Harry. Leaning forward slightly, Draco whispered, "You know Potter, you sound more like a jealous lover than a concerned friend."

Harry's eyes grew wide.

"Just thought I'd mention it," Draco smirked and walked around Harry towards the staff room.

Harry's brain had frozen at Draco's words. What? Jealous lover? What…Did he mean…Huh?

Severus stalked up the stair to the Astronomy Tower once again. I am going barmy. Albus, I understand now. You were not born insane, this job made you insane. Severus scowled as he

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Severus stalked up the stair to the Astronomy Tower once again. I am going barmy. Albus, I understand now. You were not born insane, this job made you insane. Severus scowled as he
entered the open tower and, gazing out at the lake, said, "Lucius, what are you doing up here?"

Lucius Malfoy stepped out from the shadows, his hands folded behind him, looking at his friend speculatively. "Waiting for you."

"Am I becoming predictable now?"

Lucius smirked and came to stand next to Severus, "What has gotten into you recently?"

Severus turned to look at Lucius, "Excuse me?"

Lucius looked at Severus with a raised eyebrow, "You have been flirting with your Astronomy professor, you are wearing color, you disappear randomly, it's all positively...Gryffindor."

Severus sniffed, "There is no need to be insulting."

Lucius chuckled and continued, "You know, I really should have known."

Severus raised his eyebrow, "Known what?"

"Who Orion Grey was."

Severus just looked at Lucius blankly.

Lucius turned to look out at the grounds, "I was reading a Potions journal four days ago."

"Congratulations."

Lucius glared at Severus, "As I was saying, I was reading the journal four days ago and they were discussing the use of Potions in rituals. that's when it came to me. You know, during war it is hard to think about mundane things."

Severus sighed and rolled his eyes, Malfoys just had to make long, detailed, explanations for things, riddled with useless comments. Severus replied dryly, "Of course."

Lucius glared at him again, "It occurred to me that the ritual that Hogwarts's resident werewolf partook in with his lover, to bond them, should have ended one of two ways when Black flew into the Veil. Either Lupin should have died, or he should have been free of the bond."

Severus just looked at Lucius who looked right back at him. "Severus, Lupin is still pining away for Black." Lucius cocked his head slightly, a contemplative look on his face, "Poor Potter. Do you think it's an attempt to console one another?" Lucius looked at Severus questioningly. When Severus just went on looking at him, Lucius continued, "Since neither of those things occurred that led me to one simple realization. Sirius Black is still alive." Lucius's face looked quite triumphant.

Severus rolled his eyes, "Yes, wonderful, now all we have to do is kindly ask the Veil to release Sirius Black because his poor werewolf is pining away for him and we know he is alive in there. What are you going to do Lucius, stand in front of the Veil, clap your hands and say 'Here doggy. Here doggy'?"

Lucius glared at Severus, his face taking on a sudden serious expression, "Severus, you are lying to me."

Severus eyes hardened as he looked at Lucius, "Really? About what?"

"You are my best friend Severus, practically my brother. Only for you would I spend four days
researching this Orion Grey. He, frankly, does not exist. Suspiciously, the Ministry recently had a number of documents appear, seemingly out of nowhere, into its records. Including the name of one Orion Grey as an Auror, his supposed Mastery, his record of residence. However, there are no missions naming him anywhere, and no Auror remembers him."

Severus looked at Lucius and said, "Few remember me as part of the Light."

Lucius scowled, "Do shut up, Severus. You disappeared to the Ministry last week, proceeded to disappear for three more days, then this Orion Grey shows up, and you are suddenly Gryffindorily flirting with him. Orion was Black's middle name, Grey and Black, related colors, and he is teaching Astronomy? The Black family is known to be one of the best in the field."

Severus was about to open his mouth to reply when another voice entered the conversation. "You always were a nosy prick, Malfoy."

Lucius spun around to come face to face with Orion Grey, who casually walked over to where the other men were standing. "And you always were a troublemaker, Black."

Sirius smirked.

Severus glared, "Wonderful, Black. After all my work to disguise you, you reveal yourself to the first person who decides he does not believe you. This is ridiculous and you are a completely brainless imbecile."

Sirius rolled his eyes at Snape, "Chill, Snape. I figured that if anybody else could keep this secret it would be your Slytherin partner-in-crime. Besides, I'm starting to think that we didn't think this through."

Severus glared at Sirius, "That's because Black, we did not. You were threatening to commit suicide and I suggested the first thing that came to mind. And now the universe is collapsing."

Suddenly Lucius chuckled, making Severus and Sirius turn their heads and look at him. "Dear me, Severus, you have become positively melodramatic lately. Where has your pragmatism gone?"

Severus scowled, "It all disappeared when Albus decided that I would make a good Headmaster."

Lucius laughed, "Ah, yes, I do believe everyone forgot that the old man had gone insane while in the position."

Severus's scowl grew deeper, "It is a conspiracy. Everyone is out to commit me to a mental institute."
Harry wandered down to the grounds, shock adorning his face, as he contemplated what Draco had just said.

*A jealous lover? What was that supposed to mean? That he was…attracted…to Severus?*

"Harry?"

Harry took a step back quickly and looked up to see Remus standing in front of him.

"Remus," Harry said, attempting to smile nonchalantly. Harry stood silently for a moment, taking in the vision of his current lover while trying to wrestle with the idea that maybe he had a thing for Severus Snape.

Remus frowned. Harry's smile wasn't reaching his eyes, and he looked nervous and uncomfortable.

"I thought you were going to speak with Severus about the Dueling Club?" Remus said, stepping closer to Harry and wrapping his arms around him. Harry looked over Remus's shoulder nodding, his mind not quite in the present.

Remus furrowed his eyebrows, "Harry? The club?"

Harry's attention snapped back to Remus, "Oh. Yea, the club. I…uh…Severus had something to do."

Remus raised one eyebrow. Either he could continue badgering Harry until he told him what was bothering him, a method that rarely worked with Harry, or he could wait until Harry decided to tell him.

"Do you want to know what I think about Grey?"

Harry's attention suddenly focused completely on Remus. He nodded vigorously, looking into the werewolf’s amber eyes.

Remus smiled down at Harry and pecked him on the cheek. "You're right, there's something weird about him. Not necessarily bad, of course, but there's something odd about him. I couldn't smell him for one thing. And…his mannerisms…they seemed restrained." Remus shook his head, "There's something odd about him. I just can't put my finger on it."

Harry took on a triumphant look, "See? I was right."

Remus looked down at Harry fondly, "Harry, it could be nothing. You realize that, don't you? He could simply be very paranoid and controlled. He was an Auror, might be the Moody effect. Constant vigilance and all."

Harry scrunched up his nose. "I doubt it," he said defiantly. Stepping out of Remus's arms, Harry's eyes again began to get that far away look again as he said "I need to speak with Hermione. I'll see you later." Harry's mind began to wander again to what Draco had said and he walked away from Remus, a distracted look on his face.

Remus frowned as his lover walked away. *Now there's something off with Harry. What is going on around here?*
Hermione calmly watched Harry pace the length of her sitting room and wring his hands distractedly.

"Harry. Out with it."

Glancing at Hermione for a moment, Harry sat down in the armchair opposite hers and sighed, "Everything seems to have gone to rot. Severus and Grey, and then Remus, and then Draco, and —"


Harry rubbed his face with his hands before looking up at his best friend. "Draco says that I sound like a jealous lover."

Hermione raised her eyebrows, "What did Remus do?"

Harry's face turned bright pink and he looked away from Hermione and towards the fire.

"Harry?"

"It wasn't about Remus."

Hermione's eyebrows drew together, "Then who?"

"Severus." Hermione's eyes widened slightly before a neutral expression slipped over her face.

Harry began to rant, almost forgetting entirely that Hermione was even there. "Severus is sleeping with Grey! I know it. Grey touches his arm just so. And then Severus smiles just so. And then they were embracing atop the Astronomy tower like a couple of hormonal teenagers!" Harry huffed and looked over at Hermione.

"Mate, is this about Snape again?" Hermione and Harry looked up to see Ron, obviously just out of bed, as he yawned and collapsed on to the sofa, his gangly arms spread out, sleepily looking at his wife and his best mate.

"Again?" Harry tilted his head as he looked at Ron.

"Oh, we haven't gotten there yet?" said Ron, yawning again.

Harry looked at Hermione and narrowed his eyes questioningly. Hermione sighed and turned to Harry, "Harry. Seventh year…during training? When Lucius kept showing up? You got… angsty."

"Well yea! I didn't know why he kept showing up, and Severus's private quarters too, and a house elf always summoned Severus, and I was confused!"

Hermione and Ron just looked at Harry. Ron sat up and folded his hands between his knees. "Mate. We all know I'm the thickest bloke out there. And even I got this."

Harry just looked at Ron in confusion.

Ron sighed and ran his hand through his hair. "Harry, hear yourself. You're upset because Lucius Malfoy showed up to Snape's private quarters, that he was familiar enough with Snape to send a house elf and that Snape responded so quickly. Now you're bothered because you supposedly saw Snape and Grey embracing and that sometimes they exchange a touch or a smile? Mate, people
would've said me and you were married if that was all it took."

Harry blinked at Ron for a second. "No. No…I'm with Remus!"

Ron and Hermione exchanged a look, one that Harry suddenly remembered seeing many times before.

"What?"

Hermione sighed again. "Harry. Ron and I, well Ron and I and a few of the others, we've been thinking…we think maybe…you and Remus? You've been…comforting…each other."

Harry looked at Hermione blankly again. For such a smart and powerful wizard he was absurdly clueless about his emotions.

Ron took pity on his friend. "Remus's last lover was Sirius. Your last relationship was…well a number of one night stands. You couldn't find what you'd been looking for, Remus was still upset about Sirius, and the two of you felt comfortable around each other."

Hermione could see that Harry was still on the fence about his attraction to Severus. Deciding to employ a different method Hermione turned to Harry and asked, "Harry, when you look for a lover, even at the club, what are the man's main qualities that attract you to him? Regardless of the fact that you're currently dating Remus, think back to the clubs and the bars."

Harry closed his eyes and rested his head against the back of the armchair as he let his mind wander to a year ago and his numerous one night stands. "Someone tall, dark, handsome, funny, intelligent, conversational, passionate, slightly possessive is nice, you can usually tell by how they dance. Slightly dominant maybe, but not too much so. Open, understanding, because I didn't always look like myself and sometimes they could tell I was wearing a glamour. Likes to cuddle?"

Harry opened his eyes and looked at Hermione, who was scribbling on a piece of parchment. "Are you writing this down?!"

Hermione finished with a flourish and looked up, "Shush, Harry. Now describe Remus to me."

"What's the point of this?"

Ron nodded, "Mione, what are you doing?"

Hermione glared at her husband and best friend, "Shush. Just do it, Harry."

Harry sighed, "Okay. Remus is kind, handsome, supportive, helpful, and sweet. We obviously get along, we both like to fly. I don't feel as short with him, always a plus. He's funny and likes to tease me, and we're good in bed. Though I guess I top more—"

"Okay! Enough! Don't need any more information!" Ron shouted in alarm, his cheeks beginning to turn a vicious shade of scarlet.

Hermione passed the parchment to Harry. "Harry, look at your list. Really look at it."

Harry read what Hermione had written and froze. "Remus…Remus doesn't really match does he?"

Hermione shook her head.

Harry huffed, "So what? What we want isn't always what we need."
Ron sighed and decided he was going to have to play the hardest card of all. "Harry, if Sirius were alive today, if he showed up at your door, who would Remus pick?"

Harry's eyes grew wide as he looked at his two friends, his hands clenching. Suddenly, the tension seemed to bleed out of his body, and he buried his face in his hands. "I'm so confused."

Hermione stood and sat on the arm of Harry's chair, hugging him. "We're so sorry Harry. We wanted to tell you what we thought but you were so happy…"

Harry shook his head as he buried it in Hermione's shoulder. "S'alright. Better late than never."

Ron sighed and scrubbed his face with his hand. "Harry we could be wrong." Harry turned his head to look at his oldest friend. "Yeah, I know Ron." Harry leaned back and looked at Hermione. "Hermione, how is that Ron, who has the emotional range of a teaspoon, is getting this and I haven't?"

Ron grinned again, "Well mate, when your wife, or in your case your husband, rants about the same thing for months you start to pick up on it."

Hermione glared at her husband, "Ronald Bilius Weasley I have not been ranting about it for months. I do not rant."

Ron smiled, "Of course dear. The books on psychology and relationships just happened to appear in the past few months by pure coincidence." Hermione sniffed and glared at Ron while Ron smiled indulgently. Harry laughed and relaxed, shoving thoughts about Severus, Remus and lovers into the back of his mind, content with spending just a little while with his best friends.
Lucius sipped his tea as he sat in Severus's office, listening to the story of the resurrection of Sirius Black.

Putting his cup down, he looked at Black and Severus, trying to wrap his head around what the two wizards had done.

"Have the two of you gone mad? You have not told the two people who would like to see Black alive the most that he is living?" Only Lucius's Malfoy pride and training prevented him from gaping at the two men. "Do you propose to wait until they've broken up to reveal the fact that you're not who you say you are? You realize that could possibly never happen?"

Sirius flushed and looked down at his feet. "This really is my fault. I wasn't thinking clearly when I popped out of the Veil."

Severus glared at Black, "Indeed."

Sirius shot a glare back at Severus. "Well, sorry. I just spend six years dead. Next time that happens to you, we'll talk about your state of mind."

Severus rolled his eyes muttering about "dramatic Gryffindors."

"Regardless, you have to decide what you're going to do now," Lucius said before rising. "If you will excuse me gentlemen, I need to find my wife. I haven't seen her all day, and an angry Narcissa is not pretty." Lucius shuddered. As he reached the door, Lucius paused for just a moment to say, "But you must think quickly. Too long, and the consequences will grow more and more severe." And he swept out the door.

Sirius turned to Severus and said, "Ideas?"

Severus placed his face in his hands, letting his palms rub gently over his face, before leaning back in his chair and staring at his cluttered desk. "Right now Black, I am fresh out of ideas. Harry is not speaking with me, Lucius knows about you, and the Board of Governors has a list of changes they want me to implement while completely ignoring the many things I need funding for. I also still need to choose a Deputy." Severus's tired eyes looked into Sirius's, "Term begins soon Black. If this continues...the students's education will suffer." Severus stood up and looked out his window, "I am Headmaster of this school. I cannot let my personal problems affect the education of the children."

Sirius looked at Severus, surprised by the concern that was welling up within him for the raven haired Slytherin. "What does that mean, Severus?"

Severus closed his eyes tiredly. "It means, Black, that I am dissolving 'the plan.' Our goal now is simply to find a way to reveal your identity without having the wrath of all my staff members turned on us and making sure everyone remains focused on the most important thing here at Hogwarts. Education."

Sirius widened his eyes, "But Snape! The end of 'the plan'...you're not going to even try to get Harry even slightly interested?"

Severus turned to look at Sirius, a sad smile on his face, "Sacrifices have become intrinsic to my life, Sirius. Perhaps this happiness was never written in my fate."
Dinner was awkward that night. Harry sat in between Ron and Hermione while Remus continuously stole confused glanced at the Golden Trio. Draco was smirking, even while primly eating his potatoes. Narcissa was looking on, almost gaping, as her husband and Grey carried on a perfectly normal conversation, and Severus remained entirely silent, focusing completely on his dinner. The tension in the Great Hall was thick, and those that did not know what was happening amongst the staff, awkwardly shifted, their minds racing as they tried to piece together any sort of explanation.

Harry paused as he raised a forkful of carrots to his mouth, glancing over at Severus. The Headmaster looked preoccupied. Severus stood up abruptly and silently bowed to the rest of the staff, before calmly stepping out of the Great Hall. Grey looked at Severus retreating back, barely hidden concern etched on his face, and Harry watched in amazement as a sudden sadness seemed to seep into his blue-grey eyes. The man turned his eyes back to his own plate before pushing back his chair and murmuring, "Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen."

Harry turned his head to lock eyes with Remus, the amber orbs holding a plethora of questions in them. Harry smiled slightly and returned to eating, missing the look of deep confusion that swept over the werewolf's face.

Remus didn't know what had happened between Severus and Harry, but Harry was in a snit and wouldn't talk to anyone. He would glare at Grey every time they passed by him, frowned at Severus every time he'd see him with Grey, and wouldn't tell Remus what was going on. It had been a week and it was as if time had ceased to flow within Hogwarts. Severus had not attended any meal and Grey was often seen wandering around Hogwarts, a contemplative look on his face, but making little conversation with anyone besides Lucius. Remus, incidentally, had run into Grey while the man had been taking a swim in the lake, and had seen a glimpse of a beautiful tattoo that graced the man's shoulder. Oddly, Grey had jumped out of the lake and re-robed quickly when he had seen Remus approaching. Remus had wanted to share the information with his lover but, while the rest of the staff prepared for the imminent arrival of the students, Harry had locked himself up in his office, returning only to mutter to himself before proceeding to get into bed and fall directly asleep. Now at the end of the week, Remus had had enough with his distant lover. The full moon was tonight and Moony was at the surface, restless, more so than usual, fueled by the strong emotions swirling within him.

"Harry, what is going on with you?" Remus asked tightly, finally confronting his lover in their rooms.

"What do you mean, Remus?" Harry said, still a little distracted, as he set a stack of parchments down on the table.

"You're following Grey around, and every time you see him with Severus you throw a fit. One would think you were in love with Severus or something," Remus spat out.

"What? Remus, I'm with you," Harry said his eyebrows furrowing. Had Remus picked up on something? I'm still not completely sure myself what is going on with my feelings!

"Oh really? We haven't had sex in a week Harry. You just snark about Grey and Severus all day and then fall asleep in a snit. You don't even talk to me."

"Oh? This is coming from the man who refuses to have sex with me two days before and after the full moon because the only person who can touch him is supposed to be his mate, my godfather, Sirius, who's DEAD," Harry's green eyes were ablaze with anger. He was already confused enough by what was going on in his life; he did not need his lover spouting insults at him as well.
Remus's amber eyes widened, "I can't believe you're using that against me."

"Do you really think I hadn't noticed? You keep a picture of him on your nightstand, your Patronus is still a dog, sometimes...sometimes you call his name out at night. Or when we're having sex...you whisper it at the end. You think I hadn't noticed?" Harry was crying now, tears trickling down his cheeks, his voice cracking, spinning around so that his hands gripped the mantel. "I miss him too. But, Remus, it's been six years. Six years. Sometimes I wonder if you'll ever get over him. We've been together for a year now Remus. And you still think of him at night? While we have sex? I tried to ignore it, tried to convince myself it didn't matter to me, but..."

"What do you expect Harry? He's my MATE!" Remus roared, shutting his eyes tight, the emotions from Moony mixing with his own and overtaking his rationality. "My mate. My life partner. He was supposed to be my only forever."

"I see," Harry said, wiping his tears and letting his emotionless mask fall over his face. "I think, Remus, that I should leave."

"Harry..." Remus said, calming down slightly, a pained look on his face.

"No Remus. Neither of us is getting anything from this relationship right now but a couple of fucks. Even that has tapered off. And I want, no, need more. Dobby will get my things," with that Harry walked towards the portrait door.

Remus's voice stopped him at the door however. "I didn't mean to hurt you Harry."

"I know Remus. But I'll never be Sirius. And I deserve someone who loves me completely for me, not because I'm the closest thing to the man he loves." Harry left and Remus collapsed into an armchair, burying his head in his hands, tears running down his cheeks.
Harry stopped five portraits away from his quarters and slid down the wall, collapsing against the stone wall in the dim corridor. A year's worth of pain and anguish burst from the door he had shoved it behind, letting it silently fester, and he quietly let tears streak his face. Drawing his knees up, Harry cried silently like he was 12 and not 22. He had tried. Tried to ignore the obvious signs that Remus still completely loved Sirius. He wouldn't have minded if Remus had tried to give him the same love. But Harry had always felt like he was in a competition with a dead man. Clenching his fists in his robes, Harry leaned his head back against the wall, his heart aching with the idea that maybe he would be the only one he knew to never experience true love in this lifetime.

"Harry?"

Harry looked up to meet concerned blue-grey eyes.

"Professor Grey," Harry said, a little coldly. *Of course, the one night I don't want to run into anyone and it's Grey of all people that finds me.*

Sirius winced and the formal tone and held out a handkerchief, "Are you alright?"

"I am perfectly alright, if you will excuse me Professor…" Harry stood up, wiping his eyes on his sleeve and turning away from Sirius.

Sirius frowned and touched Harry's sleeve lightly. "Professor Potter, are you sure? At least take the handkerchief." He wiggled his eyebrows, "I promise it won't turn your nose green. And it's perfectly clean." Sirius looked at the handkerchief as if contemplating the thought. "At least, the house elves assure me it is. You know how they get about these things."

Harry took the handkerchief and smiled faintly. Damnit, he didn't want to like the man. He wanted to hate him! He wanted to distrust him! But his emotional state right now made any joke seem nice and the handkerchief was a nice touch. The smile twisting into a slight scowl, Harry turned to Grey, "Thank you Professor. Please don't tell anyone about finding me…"

"Shedding tears in the corridor? Of course not! Lover's quarrel?" Sirius said, sympathetically, mind racing at the possibilities.

Harry looked away, "Of a sort." People would know eventually anyway. No point in not telling Grey. Harry tried to ignore the twinge of jealousy he felt at the knowing look that Grey had when he said 'Lover's quarrel.' No doubt from experience with Severus. Harry viciously squashed the jealousy down. He refused to think about what the jealousy meant for a while. He was just not emotionally prepared for that right now.

Sirius stomach clenched, even as he said lightly, "I'm sure it'll blow over soon enough." Part of him wanted to go hunt Remus down and torture him for causing his godson this much pain. The other part of him wanted to do a victory dance, and didn't that make him feel like a bastard.

Harry smiled bitterly, "We'll see. If you'll excuse me Professor…"

The godfather within Sirius was aching to wrap Harry up in his arms and promise to fix everything and he blamed that for his next sentence. "Professor Potter, it's midnight. Severus and I are probably the only ones still awake. Why don't you come and stay with Severus and me in the
Headmaster's quarters?"

Harry jerked his back towards Grey so fast that he was surprised he didn't get whiplash. "Really?" Harry didn't want to intrude on their personal time...

Sirius smiled and nodded, offering his arm, "Did you know how big Severus's quarters are? I swear, it's as if people expect the Headmaster to have at least fifteen guests at the same time. And, well, Severus can hardly fill all those rooms. The man isn't exactly what I would call social."

Sirius gave Harry a knowing look.

Harry chuckled softly and took Grey's arm gently. What the hell. Might as well, right?

Sirius smiled down at his godson before taking off for Severus's rooms. "So, Professor Potter, if you don't mind me asking, have I done something terrible that you seem to dislike me so?"

Harry blushed lightly as he looked up at the other man. "Please, call me Harry. Forgive me for being so cold towards you. I'm a little paranoid of strangers."

Sirius smiled, "Please, call me Orion then. As for the paranoia, it must be Severus's influence."

Harry chuckled, "It might be." Oh, what the hell, Grey didn't seem too bad. Harry glanced up as they approached the gargoyle, "Are you sure Severus won't mind?"

Sirius grinned, "Not at all." Sirius whispered the password, Moonstone, and led Harry up the stairs and into Severus's quarters.

"Snape. Come out, come out, wherever you are."

Severus walked out of his study, dressed again his all black attire, growling, "Bla—"He paused when he noticed Harry standing in his sitting room, eyes still puffy and red from crying. Blinking, in what seemed to be shock, he said, "Harry?" Harry shifted slightly, obviously uncomfortable with his current appearance and the questions it would undoubtedly bring, so Severus smirked and said, "Is Grey bothering you? Would you like to file a harassment claim? Grey seems to be taking advantage of your emotional state..."

Harry blinked before gaping slightly. He opened his mouth to say something when Grey said, "Oi! I didn't do anything, Snape. Blasted man always thinks it's my fault." Grey glared at Severus.

Harry's mouth twitched with an attempt to restrain his impending grin.

Severus folded his arms across his chest, his smirk growing smug. "That is because, Grey, it usually is. How they let you become an Auror is beyond me. The amount of paperwork you must have created."

Grey, to Harry's surprise, stuck his tongue out at the Slytherin. "You're just jealous that I'm that much more awesome than you."

Severus stuck his nose in the air slightly, drawing up a haughtily, "Yes, yes. Because apprehending criminals is so much more dashing than being a spy, a Potions Master, and the Headmaster of Hogwarts." Severus walked over and patted Sirius's shoulder in mock comfort, "There there, Grey. I shall magnanimously let you delude yourself. Wouldn't want you to end up in the Hospital Wing from shock, now would I? Then I would be out another Professor again." Harry couldn't restrain his amusement anymore and he burst out laughing. He missed, therefore, the soft, fond looks both Sirius and Severus gave him.

Sirius sniffed, "Well thanks a lot, Snape. Ruining my image in front of my guest."
Severus raised an eyebrow, "Your guest?"

Sirius drew himself up with obviously faked arrogance, "For you information, Harry needs somewhere to stay. I'm giving him the room next to mine."

Severus raised his eyebrows, "Of course Grey, go ahead and treat my rooms as yours."

Sirius smirked, "Of course. This way, Harry." Harry followed Grey, looking over his shoulder to see Severus roll his eyes in amusement and shake his head before gifting Harry a slight smile and returning to the study. Harry and Grey past the first door, on the right side of the study, which Grey mentioned was Severus's. To the left of the study was Grey's room, and the next one was the one Grey opened for Harry. Unsurprisingly, Harry's things had already been moved into the room. Grey smiled, "Ah, house elves. What would we do without them." Harry smiled and turned to Grey, "Thank you, Orion."

Grey smiled, "No problem. Really. They're Severus's rooms. I just like to abuse his possessions."

Harry grinned, "Thanks anyway."

Grey squeezed Harry's arm gently, "Goodnight."

Harry nodded and Grey walked out the door. Harry sat down heavily on the bed and looked out the window. Severus and Grey didn't share a room. They were friends though, obviously by their silly banter. Harry's heart clenched a little. It was like a toned down version of what Severus and Sirius had always shared. Harry sighed and got ready for bed, shoving Grey's handkerchief into the pocket of his jeans, failing to see a tiny, one centimeter sized, monogram, SOB, in red and gold in the corner of the white fabric.

Sirius stood at the window in his room, looking out at the full moon shining over Hogwarts grounds.

"Black?" Sirius turned to see Severus standing in the doorway, a stack of papers in his hands, obviously just passing by the other man's rooms towards the study. "Harry settled in?"

Sirius nodded and looked back out the window, whispering, "It's a full moon tonight."

Severus frowned and set the papers down on the table in the corridor. Joining Sirius by the window, he said, "Yes. Lupin has his Wolfsbane."

From outside came the lone cry of a werewolf, pain and sadness ringing in each note. Sirius clenched his fists, as his heart tugged in response to his mate's call.

"Black? Is that Remus outside?"

Sirius nodded. "He's sad tonight. I assume he normally doesn't go outside?"

Severus nodded, "Not since Harry's fifth year."

Sirius closed his eyes and leaned against the windowsill. The wolf's cries continued to ring through the dark night. "I suppose Harry and Remus's fight was pretty bad."

Severus looked up in surprise, "Fight?"

Sirius nodded. "Found Harry in the corridor." Sirius gave Severus a look, letting him figure the rest out on his own. A dark look passed over Severus face and he pursed his lips into a thin line.
Sirius turned back to the window. "The full moon seems to be the worst. Padfoot and Moony are bonded, they can sense that they are near each other. I hope that spell will dampen my signature enough to keep Remus from figuring it out."

Severus looked out the window into the night. "I think tonight, Black, Lupin has other things on his mind." As if on cue, Moony let out another soulful, sad howl and Sirius let out a shuddering sigh.

Harry wandered out into the sitting room the next day to find Severus sitting at what seemed to be a dining table in front of a kitchenette, in his black silk dressing gown, sipping a cup of tea and reading the Daily Prophet. He looked up when Harry walked in, and gestured for him to sit at the table. Pouring Harry a cup of tea, he added a splash of milk and a spoon of sugar before setting it in front of Harry.

"Thanks," Harry murmured, taking a sip of the warm tea and sitting back to look at Severus. Severus was hardly conventionally handsome, but the end of the war seemed to have softened him a bit. He was still all sharp angles and hard looks, but there seemed to be less worry lines permanently etched on his face. Yes, his nose was slightly hooked, and his teeth a little crooked, but his skin was not sallow anymore, and since he brewed a lot less his hair wasn't greasy. And when he wore color, Merlin did he look sexy.

Severus folded up the newspaper and looked at Harry. "A particular reason you are staring at me?"

Harry blushed a little. "No, I just wanted to say…I’m sorry."

Severus raised an eyebrow. "Indeed."

Harry blushed a little harder, "I’ve been acting childishly."

Severus sipped his tea, "I will not disagree with that."

Harry looked at Severus over his teacup, "You aren’t sleeping with Grey?"

Severus sighed, "Would it really matter that much Harry, if I was?"

Harry shook his head, "No. It was wrong of me to ask you that."

Severus’s eyes softened, "Harry, I suppose I was angrier with your phrasing of the inquiry than the inquiry itself. It is true that I count you amongst my few friends, but really Harry, you should be more tactful with questions like that."

Harry stared at Severus. "Pot meet kettle?"

Severus glared and drew himself up haughtily, "I'm Severus Snape, Ex-Bat of the Dungeons, Ex-Death Eater, Ex-Evil Potions Master. I am supposed to be a bastard and tactless."

Harry rolled his eyes. "Indeed," he said, only a slightly mockingly.

Severus smirked, before turning the conversation to more serious matters. "If I may inquire what was your argument with Remus yesterday?" Severus paused. "Should I be arranging new quarters for you?"

Harry smiled slightly, "I thought you weren't supposed to be polite." Severus just gave him a look. Harry sighed, "It's a long story."
Severus waved his hand, "Well, Grey will wake up for another," Severus checked the grandfather clock across the room, "forty-five minutes. Lazy bastard. Go on."

Harry looked into Severus's warm black eyes and saw his friend from his seventh year, not his employer or the distant Headmaster he had been interacting with for the past few months. And after everything that had happened, he needed to tell Severus. To have the Potions Master give him his frank opinion. Opening his mouth, it all tumbled out. Save for his possible attraction to the man, and Remus's accusation of Harry possibly loving Severus, Harry told Severus everything. How Remus and he had drifted apart, and Remus's rules about sex around the full moon, and Sirius's ever present hold on Remus's life.

Severus listened quietly before laying his fingers gently over the back of Harry's hand. "Harry. I do not wish to intrude on what is obviously your personal problem, but you realize, do you not, that your romantic relationship with Remus is not healthy?"

Harry nodded.

"It is quite obvious that Lupin is using you to fill a gap in his life that, most likely, can never be filled by anyone other than your dogfather."

Harry gave Severus a half-hearted glare before sighing, "I just didn't want to believe it." Harry smirked at Severus, "When did you become the foremost authority on relationships?"

Severus groaned, "When my staff became a bunch of squabbling adults that happen to all be married to each other. You would think I was running a marriage counseling service half the time. Just the other day, you will not believe what Lucius asked me…” Severus continued to ramble on as Harry chuckled happily.

Sirius stood in the shadows of his doorway, watching his godson and the man who had, surprisingly, become his friend, interact. If only they could see how perfect they were for each other. Sirius looked upwards. *Great, what am I? An angel sent from above to unite my godson with his true love? Who happens to be Snape?* Sirius groaned. James was going to kill him for this.

Chapter End Notes

I realized that Sirius's initials say sob. And that they're also the acronym for son of a bitch. Funny isn't it? Lady Black's portrait screams a lot, they think she's a bitch... :)

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Chapter 9

Remus slowly opened his eyes, sticky and sore from crying, the pain in his joints belying the pain in his heart. Trembling with the power of the oncoming sob, Remus squeezed his hands into fists and curled up tightly in the bed sheets. Bed sheets that still smelled like Harry. Who had left him.

Slowly rising from the bed, a wolf's growl rose up out of his chest, as Moony pushed his human wanting out. Harry was the only one man left on earth who he could love, and he wasn't about to give him up without a fight. Harry would be his.

Harry slipped into the seat next to Hermione before Ron could snag it, needing the reassurance of his best friend's presence as he prepared himself to see Remus for the first time after their fight.

Hermione turned to her best friend questioningly, "Harry?"

Harry looked around the Great Hall, and rubbing his face with one hand, whispered "Remus and I had a row last night. I left."

Hermione's eyes widened, "Permanently?"

"It feels that way."

Just then Remus entered the Great Hall walking toward his normal seat. Unfortunately, Ron hadn't come in yet, and Remus strode past his chair to slip in next to Harry.

"Good morning Harry."

Harry's hand clenched his fork, as he said, attempting to be cordial, "Good morning Remus."

Remus leaned over to touch Harry's hand lightly, "I was hoping we could speak later."

Harry gently removed his hand, "I think we said all we needed to say yesterday. I would like some space please, before we can interact again. We do have to teach together, but I need some time."

Remus frowned, "Harry tonight is the full moon. I wasn't exactly entirely coherent last night during our discussion. I'd like to talk about it now, when my mind is clearer. We can work this out."

Harry's appetite vanished, and he rose from his chair, "Remus. Please leave me alone for a few days."

Harry left the hallway, not looking back, and therefore failed to see Remus following him.

"Harry!"

Harry turned around and jerked back as Remus pushed him against the wall. Remus's eyes were a deep amber, glittering dangerously as the wolf neared the surface. "Remus, you're hurting me! What—"

Remus growled as he pressed closer, his werewolf strength coming into play as he placed a
bruising grip on Harry's hands. "You're mine Harry Potter. Whether or not you're my mate, you're mine! I won't let anyone else have you. No one else on this earth can be mine, since Sirius is gone. You. Will. Be. Mine! Only mine!"

Remus pushed Harry's head roughly to the side and leaned down to bite Harry's neck when he was suddenly forcefully pushed away from the young man's body. Grey was appeared, wrapping Harry up in his arms. Harry, too frightened by the wolf's sudden appearance, in ways he had never witnessed, clung to the older man, unconsciously knowing that he was safe with Grey. Severus had pushed Remus up against the opposing wall, rage rolling off of him in waves, intimidating in his all-black attire once again.

"Remus Lupin. You touch Harry one more time when he clearly tells you to desist and I will remove you from this school forever. Try me and I may remove you from this world," Severus snarled, his wand pressed against Remus's neck. But Remus was too far gone, the wolf howling from emotional pain and the strange weak connection he could still feel to Padfoot, and he growled, clawing at Severus. Severus suddenly drew back and slapped Remus with power that Harry could hear in the resulting *thwack* that rung in the stone corridor.

Remus jerked back and looked at Severus in surprise. "Severus? Severus, what—"

Severus drew back slightly, his body positioned defensively in front of Harry, who still clung to Grey. "You will return to your quarters and remain there for the next two days. Calm the wolf and rein him in. If you cannot do so, I will fire you. Do not tempt me."

Remus blinked, pain swirling in his eyes, before he slumped against the wall. "I am so sorry. I don't know what's wrong with Moony." Shaking his head slightly, he walked away, shoulders slumped in defeat and an air of misery wrapped tightly around him. Sirius's heart clenched and he looked at Severus, who was watching Remus leave with calculating eyes.

"Severus…"

Severus nodded. "Soon we'll need to lay all the cards on the table Grey."
Chapter 10

It was only later that night that Harry recalled Severus's words. Cards? What was Severus talking about?

Harry got comfortable on his new couch in his new quarters and actively began to use Occulemency for the first time in a long while to remove himself from the situation. Cards. Muggle expression. Severus and Grey were hiding something. Something that they apparently would have to reveal soon. Closing his eyes, Harry recalled everything that had happened in the last few days. Severus had gone to the ministry. He'd come back and then strangely disappeared again. The next time Harry saw him, Severus had brought Grey with him.

Harry paused and opened his eyes. The first time I saw Grey. There had been something there, something that had made his subconscious twitch, but then he'd gotten distracted by Severus resplendent in color. Furrowing his eyebrows, Harry walked into his bedroom and removed his Pensieve from the closet. Placing the grey stone bowl inscribed with delicate runes on the desk, Harry took a deep breath, withdrew his wand and placed the memory into the bowl. Harry took a step back and then carefully entered the memory, subconsciously bracing himself.

Stumbling in the memory, Harry righted himself and watched Lucius, Remus, and himself walk in. Hmm…Grey's posture changed when the three men entered. He'd stood up straighter. His eyes flew first to Remus and then to Harry. They didn't touch Lucius. Harry paused; Grey had stared at him for a bit, eyes wide, almost assessing and...a sort of sadness had entered his eyes. Eyes hidden behind those frames. Harry's eyes widened. Grey was wearing a weak glamour! So light and gentle that one didn't even notice its effects, for it simply shifted your features subtly, as if to blur the edges. And his earrings…they were wolves!

Harry jumped out of the Pensieve, breathing hard, hands pressed against the wood of the desk, bent over the bowl. Grey was someone else. Someone who knew Remus and him. He wasn't who he said he was. But Severus knew who he was. That's why he had said…

"I've known him longer than I've known you… I am saying that I know everything there is to know about this man...."

Harry squeezed his eyes shut. The only person he knew who would fit everything he knew about Grey…was…was Sirius. Traitorous tears slipped out of his eyes. Was Grey actually Sirius? Thousands of questions welled up in his mind as Harry's temper rose at his godfather's apparent betrayal and Harry quickly put the memory back in his mind and shoved the Pensieve away. Harry gathered his robes and stalked out of his quarters. He needed answers and he needed them now.

Sirius walked out of the shower, deep in thought. He didn't know what to do. Should he tell Remus and Harry? And if he did, how was he supposed to do that? Sirius gripped the drawer handle in frustration before sighing. Pulling on a pair of trousers, he rummaged about in the wardrobe for clothes, when he suddenly heard a gasp behind him. Whipping around he came face to face with a gaping Harry who stood in the doorway.

Sensing that something wasn't right, Sirius said, slightly cautiously, "Harry? Is something the matter?"

Harry's face turned red as the anger simmering in his chest erupted. "You bloody bastard! I know it's you!"
Sirius's eyes widened. Scrambling to cover for some apparent mistake, Sirius said, "Harry, of course it's me kiddo. Professor Orion Grey—"

Harry's expression and emotions suddenly warped into a mixture of rage, sadness, relief and happiness. Tears began to stream down his face even as he grasped at his anger. Moving swiftly towards Sirius, he poked the man in the chest. "I know it's you! You have a wolf tattooed on you back! And you're wearing wolf earrings! And you're always baiting Severus, and you're wearing a glamour, and you called me kiddo, and—" At this point Harry was crying too hard to say much else. He collapsed against the man he could feel in his heart was his godfather, and sobbed, clutching onto the man as if it was all a dream and he would disappear again. Sirius looked up, stricken, only to make eye contact with Severus who was standing in the doorway with a slightly alarmed look on his face. After a few seconds Severus shook his head in what seemed to be defeat and whispered, "Finite Incantem."

Sirius wrapped his arms around his godson even as he felt the slight tingle of the Slytherin's magic spread over him, sharpening his features and changing his eye color.

Harry drew back just enough to see his godfather's bright, tear-glistening blue eyes and smiling face. Another sob ripped out of him as he burrowed his head in Sirius chest and wrapped his arms tightly around the older man. Sirius squeezed his eyes shut, tears escaping and slipping into Harry's wild nest of raven hair as Sirius buried his nose in it.

Severus closed his eyes and walked away. He didn't know how Harry had figured it out, but damn if he wasn't happy that he had.

In all the chaos and happiness, nobody remembered that the Finite had removed the spell masking Padfoot's scent from Moony.
Remus leaned against the table in the hall of his and Harry’s—

No, he squeezed his eyes shut, his room. Only his. Just him. One of Remus's hands clutched the golden goblet of Wolfsbane that Severus had left in his office, the other clutched the edge of the table. Why was it that everyone important in his life left him? Driven away by the wolf within him.

Remus tipped his head back as he stared up at the ceiling. What was going on with Moony? Lately, he'd been too close to the surface. It wasn't normal.

Suddenly a wave of heat passed over Remus. He gasped and pressed the cool curve of the goblet against his cheek. What was that?

Then the wave came again. And Remus was aware of the tickle in the back of his mind growing, moving forward. Remus's eyes grew wide. Moony! Moony was trying to take over his human form…This had never happened before.

Remus struggled, shutting his eyes tightly, mentally trying to shove Moony to the back again.

But Moony had felt his mate, picked up his scent, the feeling of completeness just over the horizon. And he wasn't going down without a fight.

The golden goblet fell to the floor, forgotten, as Moony leaped out of the room and stalked towards the Headmaster's rooms.

Two and half hours until moonrise.

Severus sat at his desk, frowning at the paper in front of him. In reality he wasn't even thinking about the budget for Muggle Studies or whether or not a computer would function within Hogwarts. He was thinking about how Harry knew about Sirius. Severus placed his elbows on the table and rubbed his face. Albus, I was not cut out to succeed as a Headmaster. I am doing something no Slytherin has ever done. I am contemplating quitting. I cannot do this anymore.

Bells began to ring in Severus's office, cutting off his train of thought, and he looked up quickly. Standing up and turning his head, Severus was just in time to see the distorted face of Remus Lupin outside his door reflecting in the hidden mirror before the wooden door was wrenched from the doorkframe and thrown behind the werewolf as he stalked into the room. Severus couldn't help but step back a bit in shock before he opened his mouth, "Lupin! What the hell—"

But Lupin ignored him, instead ripping the door to his quarters out as well and speeding up the stairs.

Severus's eyes grew wide, Fuck. Harry and Sirius are up there. In Sirius's room. Embracing...

Severus took the stairs two at time, hoping to reach them before Moony did some serious damage.

Harry stepped back from the circle of his godfather's arm and wiped his eyes with his robe. He looked up into the sad blue eyes before slapping his godfather. "Harry!" The Animagus gaped at his godson, pressing the palm of his hand to his cheek.
Harry folded his arms over his chest, not caring if he looked like a petulant child. "That's for not telling me you were alive!"

Sirius sighed. "I had my reasons Harry."

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Oh, really?"

Sirius scowled at Harry. "You've been spending far too much time with Severus."

Harry rolled his eyes, "You're the one that's been acting like you were shagging the man!"

The two of them glared at each other for a few more seconds before bursting out in laughter. Harry smiled up at his godfather before gingerly touching his arm. "It's really you?"

Sirius nodded before brushing his hand through Harry's unruly hair. "And you're all grown up."

Harry smiled ruefully. He had just opened his mouth again when he heard a growl from behind him. Spinning around, Harry came face to face with an obviously angry and deranged werewolf.

"Remus?"

But Remus wasn't listening to Harry. He was staring at Sirius. Then those overly golden eyes traced Sirius's arm from his shoulder to where it rested around Harry. Sirius's eyes grew wide as he realized what was going on, recognizing the canine essence in Remus's amber eyes. Quickly, he stepped in front of his godson as Moony growled again.

"Harry! This isn't Remus. It's Moony. You have to get out of here now!"

Harry frowned; his Gryffindor stubbornness deciding now was a good time to show up.

"What the hell? I'm not leaving you here with him when he's like this!"

Sirius shook his head, his eyes still locked with Moony. "He won't hurt me. He can't."

Harry opened his mouth to argue again when a pale Severus appeared behind Moony. Severus eyes became impossibly larger as he took in the offensive stance that was clear in the werewolf's body language. He raised one fine, alabaster hand to softly gesture at Harry. *Come.*

Harry's eyebrows furrowed and he opened his mouth again, to refuse. This time Severus scowled and waved his hand, wandlessly silencing Harry. Giving Harry a glare, Severus gestured one more time. *Now!*

Sirius walked towards Moony, keeping Harry close behind him. Then, in one swift move, Sirius grabbed Moony and pinned him against the wall, ignoring the werewolf's growls as he smelt Harry on his mate, and Severus grabbed Harry before hauling him out of the room and quickly shutting and heavily warding the door. Dragging Harry to the opposite side of his rooms, Severus wrapped his arms around Harry as his racing heart slowed. *Harry was safe.*

*Two hours until moonrise.*
Sirius stayed perfectly still as Moony paused and took an account of all the scents in the room. He knew the second Moony processed Harry's scent, for, suddenly, Sirius was flipped hard against the wall as Moony growled at him. Sirius's arms were pressed tightly against the wall, effectively trapping him under Moony's werewolf strength, as the wolf descended on the Animagus's neck with a vengeance. Sirius let out an involuntary moan at the combination of pain and pleasure that overwhelmed him as Moony gave into a need to reaffirm their bond. Pressed chest to chest, hip to hip with his partner, Sirius groaned at the feelings rushing through his body, heat and passion flooding him. Moony bit the skin under his mouth hard, drawing blood from Sirius's neck, as he rocked against him, faster and faster, until both reached their climax and collapsed against the wall, sliding slowly down the rough stone, Sirius supporting Remus.

Sirius pulled back to look down at Remus as the feral look in his amber eyes receded a bit. Remus and Sirius locked gazes for a minute until a sob erupted from Remus and he buried his face in Sirius's neck.

"Ssh Remus, sssh love. I'm here now. I'm so sorry love, so sorry."

Remus was shaking in Sirius arms and Sirius tightened his grip as he leaned his head back against the wall, tears streaming down his face. Sirius squeezed his eyes shut as Remus began to press desperate kisses to any and every part of Sirius he could reach, his neck, his jaw, his cheeks, his eyes, his lips. Sirius caught Remus's lips with his own and gentled their passion, willing the desperate edge away. Abruptly, Remus ripped his mouth away, breathing heavily and moved away from Sirius. Sirius blinked blankly for a second, confused at the sudden movement, before saying cautiously, "Remy?"

Remus had his back to Sirius as he clenched his fists against his sides. "Sirius."

"Love?"

Remus spun around, "How could you? How could you not tell me you were alive?"

Sirius winced as his normally amiable lover's anger became apparent. "Remus, it's complicated."

"Complicated? You're alive. Not dead. Yes, that's complicated. But you didn't fucking tell me! We pledged our whole lives to each other Sirius! I've been half dead for six years. Missing the other half of my soul. And you come back from the dead and don't tell me?" Remus looked like he was caught between anger and misery, not knowing if he should shout or cry.

"Remus…"

"You made me into a monster Sirius! I attacked Harry! I couldn't control the wolf, Moony was that affected by the little trickle of you scent I could pick up. I thought I was going crazy." Remus collapsed onto the bed, burying his face in his hands. "You made me become the one thing I never wanted to become. A monster. I let the wolf out Sirius. I never wanted to attack anyone, in any form. You know that. And look what I almost did! Who knows what I would have done to Harry? And even after that, knowing what was happening, you still didn't tell me."

Sirius sat next to Remus and placed a hand gently on the other man's knee. "Remus. I was disoriented when I fell out of the Veil. I had lost six years of my life. Last thing I remembered was Harry and his friends in the Department of Mysteries, and Bella and Malfoy showing up. All I knew…all I knew was that the war was over, Severus was Headmaster, and you…you were
Remus whipped his head up, "You knew before?"

Sirius nodded. "Severus thought it prudent to tell me. So I didn't freak out probably."

Remus's eyes narrowed, "And then you decided not to tell us you were alive? Were you planning on ever telling us?"

Sirius shifted awkwardly for a moment before sighing and rubbing his face with a hand. "Actually, at first, I suggested Severus...uh...dispose of me."

Remus's eyes widened before he turned and gripped Sirius shoulders. "You suggested he kill you! What were you thinking?" Remus said, shaking Sirius.

Sirius raised his hands to gently remove Remus's. "I wasn't obviously. Severus suggested I disguise myself for a while. It was a...good idea actually. It gave me time to adjust."

Remus glared at Sirius. "You're an idiot."

Sirius grinned, "I know. Severus tells me that every day."

Remus's eyes narrowed. "Severus is it?"

Sirius raised an eyebrow.

Remus's narrowed farther, "And now you're raising your eyebrow."

Sirius rolled his eyes, "Remus, you've been sleeping with my godson. And you're questioning me about Snape?"

Remus scowled. "Whatever."

Sirius laughed and wrapped his arms around Remus. Remus nuzzled the Animagus's neck, "I missed you."

Sirius tightened his arms around the werewolf, "I've missed you too."

Remus sniffed. "I'm still mad at you."

Sirius chuckled, the tightness in his chest easing a little. He had no doubt, though, that once the shock and euphoria wore off, Remus would be angry with him again.

"Severus?"

Severus came back to himself, lost in the moment of having Harry in his arms, and hastily removed himself from around Harry. Coughing slightly to cover up his embarrassment, Severus spun around quickly and walked towards his study.

"Severus! What was that all about?" Harry called out after Severus in frustration when the man suddenly dashed away from him.

Severus continued to the study and began combing through his vast collection of books until Harry planted himself between Severus and the bookshelves, hands crossed over his chest, eyebrow raised, a dark, questioning look in his eyes. Severus sighed. He was going soft. "I believe it may be a side effect of the bond that your godfather and Lupin used when they bound
themselves. It binds them in the most intimate of ways, and when Lupin caught Black's scent, the wolf reared forward and took over Lupin's body. But, to make sure, I must find the damned book on their bond.

Harry's eyes widened as he watched the older man pull out books from his shelves. "Is that even possible?"

Severus paused his perusal of the books to glance at Harry. "Apparently."

Harry gulped, "Is that... what happened in the corridor outside the Great Hall?"

Severus continued to read, saying only, "Possibly."

Harry scowled at Severus's distracted single-word answers, and sat down in the armchair across from Severus, twisting his fingers together.

Severus looked up after the motion began to irritate him. "What?"

Harry looked at Severus, "Is Sirius going to be alright?"

Severus chuckled as he turned the page of the book in his lap, "Perfectly. Werewolves cannot attack their mates." Under his breath Severus murmured, "Unfortunately."

Harry glared at the Slytherin.

Ten minutes later, after Harry's hands had turned a bright red from all the fidgeting he had done, Severus said, in smug satisfaction, "Ah ha."

Harry leaned forward, "What?"

Severus read out loud.

Werewolves bound to wizards using the Semper Simul Vincti bond will find themselves with an increased capability to scent out their mate, even over large distances. It has been recorded that one werewolf knew where his mate was in every moment over several miles away. Animagus wizards are even more tightly bound to werewolves as the wolf identifies with the animal form and claims it as his or her mate as well. In essence, instead of the two sides of the werewolf being bound to the wizard, the two halves are bound to the two halves of the wizard. This bond is supported by the Ministry because it has been claimed to allow the submission of the werewolf into the power of the wizard. However, it should be noted that in a few instances it has been recorded that, in moments of intense emotion in relation to their mate, this bond allows the wolf to take over the human body. Farkas Lunmae (a werewolf in Hungary who was observed after he undertook this bond with his mate Lua) often displayed moments of wolfish actions when in the throes of erotic pleasure.

Harry wrinkled his nose. "Do you think the author observed that too?"

Severus threw his head back and let out a warm, dark chocolate laugh, and Harry soon joined in with honey tenor, both men momentarily forgetting the werewolf and his mate next door.

Remus drew back from Sirius's embrace to wipe his face when his eye caught the scene outside and he let out a gasp.

"Remus?" Sirius looked out the window to see what his lover had gasped a concerned look erupting on his face. Sirius took Remus shaking hands in his and turned the other man towards
Remus eyes were wild again, not feral but wild with panic.

"Remus!"

"Sirius!" Remus breathed shallowly, close to hyperventilating, "Sirius, I dropped the Wolfsbane when I caught your scent. And then Moony took over and barged up here. It's almost moonrise and I haven't taken my Wolfsbane!"

Sirius's eyes widened. Then he dragged Remus up by the arm and pulled him out the door.

"Snape!"

The laughter from the study stopped suddenly and then Severus stepped cautiously out of the doorway. "Black." Severus spoke to Sirius but his eyes remained glued on Remus, as if to make sure he didn't suddenly turn into a wolf in front of his eyes.

"Snape, Remus and I have to get out of the castle. Now!"

Severus's eyebrows furrowed, "What's going on Black?"

Sirius swallowed. He knew that Severus was going to be angry. "Remus hasn't taken his Wolfsbane."

Severus's eyes widened before they glittered in anger. "Lupin…"

Remus winced. "I was just about to drink it when Moony took over and I spilled it…"

Severus took a deep breath, trying to calm his rage, and glanced over at the clock. "You have about forty minutes. The moon will begin to rise then. You must get as far into the forest as possible. Do you know how you'll react to not having the Wolfsbane after having it for long, Lupin?"

Remus shook his head, "Having Padfoot might help or it might hinder the situation. I don't know. There aren't any records of a werewolf's mate returning from the dead. Moony has been a bit impulsive and violent lately."


Harry had approached the group, though he still stayed back, his eyes displaying a fear of Remus hidden from his face. Remus's face contorted in pain at the sight. Severus exchanged a glance with Sirius before flinging the door open and letting Sirius drag Remus away, all other problems and arguments disregarded for the moment.
Chapter 13

Severus strode off towards the far staircase in the darkened hallway, Harry at his heels.

"Where are we going?"

Severus paused for half a second before continuing onward. "The Astronomy Tower."

"You have your own personal staircase?"

Severus smirked, "Yes."

Harry rolled his eyes. No wonder Severus was always up there. Unable to stop himself, Harry asked, "Why are we going there?"

"To strengthen the wards."

"Why?"

Severus scowled and turned towards Harry, "Harry! Now is not the time for questions." Annoying questions.

Harry wrinkled his nose. "Severus, if I'm going to be helping you strengthen these wards, I want to know why. Yes, Remus is a werewolf, but we already have the only wards that could possibly hold him back."

Severus sighed, ignoring how cute Harry looked with his nose like that (they were in the middle of a crisis for Merlin's sake! Now was not a time to be thinking about how adorable Harry looked!), and spoke as he resolutely climbed up the stairs, "Yes, true, but we can strengthen those wards and add temporary wards that will alert us if he was to try anything."

Harry frowned as he followed Severus up the dark staircase, "Why would he?"

Severus sighed again. Should he be rethinking his decision to make Harry the Defense teacher?

"Werewolves are Dark creatures. They operate on Dark magic, no matter what type of human they might be. The bond between werewolves and their mates is thus a Dark magic bond. Regardless of how 'Light' the two humans are, the bond between the werewolf and its mate is Dark. There has never been a record of the bond between the werewolf and mate being broken by death and then revived. Werewolves rarely survive the deaths of their mates, and if they do, not for long. The fact that Lupin survived six years has been novel in the werewolf community. It was attributed to the long time exposure to the Wolfsbane. Obviously, we now know that is not true."

Severus's long legs carried him up the stairs quickly and they soon arrived in the open Tower, stars sparkling and the moon rising.

Harry cocked his head as Severus stepped into the round Astronomy tower. "So, the re-creation of the bond between Remus and Sirius could cause his werewolf to…"

Severus turned to Harry, "The wolf took over Remus's human body, Harry. That in itself is worrying. Possession of another's body is a form of Dark magic. Tonight the Dark bond between Remus and Black will refortify itself. Who knows what the side effects may be? Perhaps the werewolf will call for the spillage of human blood?"

Harry's eyes widened. "OH!"
The older man nodded, smiling grimly. Turning to look out over the grounds, Severus swallowed a huff of annoyance as Harry asked yet another question. "Why here?"

Severus canted an eyebrow questioningly as he drew his wand and began to draw intricate patterns in the air.

"Why are we strengthening the wards from here?"

Severus turned back, wand still waving, "We are close enough to the wards here to alter them. Probably the reason the Headmaster has a special staircase. So they can alter them from within the castle. And we are far enough that if Lupin does go…insane…we will have time to act."

Harry nodded, "What do you want me to do?"

Severus held out his hand, "Give me your hand."

It was Harry's turn to raise an eyebrow, a shadow of pink in his cheeks.

Thin lips curved into a mild smirk as Severus said, "Harry, you have an unmatched reserve of powerful magic. I need you to use me as a channel to pour the magic into the wards and strengthen them as only you can."

Harry's eyes widened, he'd heard of the side effects one could suffer as a conduit of another's magic. If their magic wasn't compatible, Severus's magic would begin to fight it and as a consequence could end up attacking Severus's own body. "Couldn't that…"

Severus rolled his eyes, "I have been through worse. It will be fine. Now come, we do not have much time."

Harry frowned but nodded, knowing that there was no other way. Not without waking the entire castle and trying to explain why they needed to reinforce the wards. As he placed his smaller hand into Severus larger, elegant one, however, he wasn't ready for the shock of awareness that would slither down his spine at having Severus warm fingers wrap around his. It felt so right.

Pushing that thought into the back of his mind for later analysis, Harry closed his eyes, searching within himself for the tight ball of throbbing magic. Drawing thin silver threads out, he began to pour them into Severus, who would channel them into the wards.

Harry's eyes were closed as he concentrated completely on monitoring the magic flowing out of him. Therefore, he missed the soft gold glow that began to encompass the two of them. Severus, however, had his eyes wide open. At the display of what could only mean one thing, compatible magic, Severus almost faltered in his casting. But Severus hadn't been the Light's best spy for nothing. *Quick casting in dire situations. Story. Of. My. Life.*

Their magic was compatible. *They* were compatible. Didn't that just put the cherry on top of everything?

Fifteen minutes later, Harry could feel himself breathing heavily and Severus leaning more and more of his weight against the Gryffindor.

"Severus?"

Severus squeezed Harry's hand, "Just a bit more."

Harry frowned. "Severus, you're going to hurt yourself!"
Severus squeezed harder, "No. We are almost there."

Harry continued to flow magic through his fingers when suddenly Severus gasped and collapsed fully against Harry.

"Severus!

Severus had fainted.

_Bloody Slytherins. And they say WE'RE the stubborn ones._

Severus opened his eyes gradually, the simple movement of his flickering eyelids causing sparks of pain. As awareness began to creep into his mind, Severus took account of his surroundings. Bright sunlight poured into the room, there was something warm on his left side, and, judging by the silkiness of the sheets under him, he was in his bed at Hogwarts. Blinking slowly, the world eventually came into focus. Severus turned to see what the warm thing next to him was, and to his surprise, came into contact with a mop of messy jet-black hair. _Harry?_

Severus shifted a bit and almost jumped when Harry sat straight up suddenly. Green eyes filled with concern and Harry began to quickly rake his eyes over the older man. "Severus? Are you okay? What hurts? Should I get you potions? I didn't call Pansy. I should have, even though I wouldn't have known what to say—"

Severus opened his mouth and began to cough. Anything to shut the boy up. _Rambling Gryffindors. Merlin save us._

Harry jumped off the bed, missing Severus's wince as the sudden movement rocked the bed, and grabbed a glass of water from the vanity to place onto the side table. Turning back to the bed, he gently helped Severus sit up and lean back against a mound of pillows against the headboard. Once Harry had settled himself next to Severus, he refused to give Severus the glass of water, preferring, instead, to hold it to Severus's lips himself.

Severus sipped the cool water, his dark eyes rising to lock with Harry's jade ones.

Harry's eyes shifted first from the glass to Severus's Adam's apple as it rose and fell with every swallow. Gulpimg, himself, at the sight, Harry let his eyes rise slowly to meet Severus's as he felt the other man's stare and was caught by the emotions blazing in the onyx eyes.

Unable to tear his eyes from Harry's, Severus sipped the water slowly, letting the liquid slide slowly down his throat. When Severus had finished the water, Harry lowered the glass, but his eyes remained locked with Severus's. Both could feel the magnetic attraction charging the air around them as their bodies were involuntarily drawn towards each other.

And then there was a knock on the door.
Chapter 14

Harry jumped back and spun around to face the door. After a few quick breaths to calm his racing heart, he called out, "Come in!"

His back to Severus, Harry failed to see the cold pain that filled the Potions Master's coal black eyes as he stiffened in bed. Turning away slightly, Severus closed his eyes, willing away the desire and pain warring within him. What had he been thinking?

Harry swallowed, his eyes glued to the bedroom door. He wanted to kiss Severus. But…

Ugh.

He wanted nothing more than to collapse in a chair and tear his hair out. He didn't know what he was feeling anymore. Sirius was alive and Remus was crazy. Severus was romantically appealing and everyone seemed to know and expect it.

Could the world get any more difficult to deal with?

In that moment, Sirius walked into the room, smirking at the sight of his blushing godson and Severus's averted face. Just as he opened his mouth to make a teasing comment about the fact that his godson had been caught in Severus' room, he became aware of the Slytherin's blank face.

Crap.

Something had happened between Harry and Severus and he'd probably interrupted it. Now Harry was avoiding Severus's eyes and Severus looked like he was facing Voldemort, face and emotions both carefully blanked. Severus was never going to forgive him. Ever.

Prepare for the dungeons, Padfoot.

"Hi."

Harry frowned, "Is everything okay?"

Sirius sighed and rubbed his face. "Remus is in the Hospital Wing. He transformed back and fell unconscious."

Severus sat up straight and began removing himself from the bed.

"Severus! You shouldn't be up!"

Severus's blank face turned towards Harry. "I am Headmaster of this school and one of my professors is in the Hospital Wing, partially due to my actions." With that, Severus slammed the bathroom door behind him, robes in hand.

Looking thoughtfully at the Slytherin's retreating back, Sirius turned to give Harry an odd look.

"What?" Harry snapped at his godfather. He was happy that the other man was alive and all, but really, could the man get more irritating? He was having a life crisis here!

Sirius raised an eyebrow, "What was that?"

Harry pursed his lips, "What was what?"
Folding his arms over his chest, Sirius just gave Harry *that* look.

Annoyed beyond belief, his heart suddenly aflutter with panic, Harry couldn't help his runaway mouth. "THAT was a mistake caused by the fact I was in another man's bed, incredibly close to him, and I just broke up with my boyfriend because he was still in love with my godfather. That's it! I would never even consider Severus like that!" Harry snapped, brushing past Sirius to leave the room.

Sirius looked up in shock from where Harry had been standing to where Severus was standing in the doorway of the bathroom. Seeing the pain etched on the other man's face, his hands clutching the black towel so tightly that his knuckles were like paper against the black backdrop, Sirius wished he hadn't asked Harry anything at all.

"Severus…"

Severus cleared his throat and the blank mask fell again onto his face.

"Shall we?" Severus said, passing Sirius and walking out the door.

Closing his eyes in frustration and pain, Sirius barely resisted the desire to bang his head against the nearest wall.

*Bloody idiots. Why me?*

Sirius walked into the Hospital Wing right behind Severus, who paused to stand calmly at the end of Remus's bed. Sirius walked around him to sit at the edge, seeing Harry hover near the hospital curtains from the corner of his eye. Just as he was about to say something, however, Remus stirred and his focus reverted onto the werewolf.

Amber eyes opened slowly, a sense of calm filling him and the wolf securely behind the wall where he kept him. Quickly taking stock of his surroundings, a habit borne from the second war, Remus let his eyes roam over Sirius. "You're alive."

Sirius smiled and held his hand, "Yes, love, yes I am."

Remus pursed his lips. "What I did yesterday is kind of fuzzy. But I seem to remember attacking you."

Sirius shrugged, "Well…"

Remus narrowed his eyes, "You deserved it."

Sirius winced.

"You have been alive for a month and didn't say a thing!"

Sirius sighed. "Remus…"

"I would like some time to myself please Sirius."

Sirius's face fell as he reluctantly stood up. "If…if that's what you want Remus."

Sirius turned around and locked eyes with Severus. Lowering his gaze, Sirius muttered the basic illusion spells to hide his identity.

"Still hiding I see."
Sirius grimaced at the bitter and angry tone in his mate's voice, but walked out nonetheless.

Severus inwardly laughed bitterly. The irony. Two old men pining after two men who seemed devoted to rejecting them.

"Severus."

Severus turned back to look at Lupin. "Professor Lupin. You are doing better? I had Pansy bring you an extra rejuvenation potion."

Remus nodded then looked at Severus, his eyes ablaze with scrutiny. "You knew."

Severus raised an eyebrow. "Yes."

"And you didn't tell us."

"No."

"Severus! Why…" 

Severus interrupted, his voice suddenly hard and cold, "I wanted to prevent a man, recently brought back from the dead, whose last memory was of fighting Death Eaters to save his godson's life, from having a mental breakdown when he found out his life mate was dating said godson."

Remus grimaced.

"For the record, I informed him of the status quo immediately. When he… refused to see reason, I suggested he adjust to life in this world as we know it before he revealed himself."

"But why?"

Severus's eyes turned hard as glass. "I am afraid, Professor Lupin, that you seem to have forgotten the type of man your life mate is. He cares for his godson and you more than he cares about anyone or anything else. Including his life. If he thought you were happy, he was more than glad to … remove himself from the situation."

Remus's eyes grew wide as he took in the implication, his mind racing as he pieced together the conversation he had had with Sirius last night.

Leaning in, Severus dropped his voice into a deeper register, his most dangerous tone. "I would suggest putting yourself in his shoes for a moment and understand from where he was coming from."

Swirling around, Severus strode towards the door, before pausing for but a moment, "Even with the gift of life he had just been given, he thought only of your happiness. Sirius Black may be many things to me, but, regardless, he is a devoted and loyal man. Do not punish him long for being so. It is his nature. As a dog and as a Gryffindor."

And then there was nothing but trailing black robes in the doorway.

Remus blinked in surprise at the impassioned speech that the Headmaster had delivered.

"Severus does have a way with words, doesn't he?"

Remus turned his head to make eye contact with Harry, "Yes, he always has."
Harry nodded and took a seat in the chair near the bed. "How are you?"

Shrugging, Remus smiled, "Alright. The pain isn't all that bad. Especially with Moony so… enthusiastic about Padfoot's return."

Harry nodded, "Last night?"

Remus grimaced, "He went a bit ballistic and ran around like a crazy wolf. Thankfully the wards kept me away from Hogwarts and I just sort of bounced off them and ran in the other direction. Moony's mind wasn't all that…focused."

Harry nodded before looking out the window.

"Harry…"

Harry turned back to look at Remus. "Hmm?"

"I'm sorry." There was such sorrow in those amber eyes, and yet also, awareness that Harry hadn't seen in years.

Smiling sadly, Harry nodded. "I know. I just wish…"

Remus nodded. "I know."

Harry sighed and rose, "I hope you feel better."

Remus watched Harry walk away for a moment, before calling you, "Harry. I never wished to hurt you. I…I hope we can still be friends? We do, after all, work together."

Harry turned around and smiled, "Yeah. Just…give me a little time?"

Remus nodded, "Of course."

Harry turned back around and left, his mind already tackling the next obstacle in his agenda.

What the fuck was he supposed to do about this...thing...with Severus?

Two weeks later, Harry was still at a loss about what to do. With all the knowing looks being passed around, Harry was fairly sure he was the last to recognize the possibility of there being something between him and Severus. But Harry didn't know if he loved Severus. He cared for him, certainly, but he cared for all his friends. There was no hole he was trying to fill, like with Remus, and no instant, blazing, passion that he'd always assumed would light within him when he fell in love.

On the other hand, Harry was afraid that Severus had heard what he had said two weeks ago. Severus had taken to not speaking with him, only being present when necessary, and spending lots of time locked up in his office.

"Severus?" Harry caught Severus's sleeve as the man tried to slip out of the staff room.

"Yes, Professor Potter?" Severus said, his voice achingly polite and distant. Harry's heart sank.

"I… I wanted to apologize…for…"

Severus gently shook off Harry's arm, and said curtly, "The incident at the full moon? I have
forgotten it Potter, and so should you." Severus nodded once, muttering "Good day," and swept away, not even giving Harry the chance to respond. Green eyes miserably watched the retreating black robes.

In that moment Harry knew how he felt. There was an aching throb of pain in Harry's heart as Harry recognized the loss of the warmth that had always been in Severus's onyx eyes when they had settled on Harry, the soft understanding in the man's words, the witty, sarcastic humor that had rolled off that sharp tongue, and that the comfort that had always been there in the Slytherin's presence had taken on a cold quality. The things he had always taken for granted were gone, and in their wake, a sharp, choking pain in Harry's chest. He wanted nothing more than for those ebony eyes to dance and glitter as they spoke to him, for that scathing, dark, chocolaty voice to reprimand him, for that graceful eyebrow to rise in question, making him bend over in laughter or blush in embarrassment.

*Was this…love?*

*And, if it was, what was he supposed to do to fix this?*
Chapter 15

Lucius was a die-hard socialite, although he would never admit it. He thrived on drama. It made his step lighter, his day brighter, and his life all-around better.

So when he could see the obvious discontent between Lupin and Black, Lucius knew.

After two weeks, however, this drama was getting old. He needed some new juicy stuff. So, it was time to do a little meddling.

Clearing his throat, he stood behind Black in the Astronomy Tower.

Sirius spun around to see Lucius standing there and glared. "Malfoy. What do you want?"

Lucius smirked and twirled his cane lazily, "I was wondering, Mr. Black, if you wished to employ my services?"

Sirius choked and stared at Lucius in shock, who proceeded to roll his eyes and glare at him. "Not like that Black. Get your brain out of the gutter. You may lose it there, what with its miniscule size and all. I meant in terms of returning into Lupin's good graces."

Sirius raised an eyebrow, "Oh? And you would know how to do that."

Lucius smirked, his lifting his nose into the air a bit. "Yes, in fact, I do."

Sirius stared at Lucius for a moment before sighing, "It's worth a try. What do you think I should do?"

Lucius looked up, looking every bit as arrogant as the Malfoy clan was known to be, and said "It is very simple, is it not?"

Sirius stared blankly at Lucius, indicating he had no idea what the Slytherin was talking about.

Lucius, still gazing at the stars, said, "You have been going about this all wrong. You have done the Slytherin thing to do, the Ravenclaw version, even, I must sadly admit, gone down the Hufflepuff route. But you haven't done what you ought to do."

Lucius smiled slowly and looked at Sirius, "Lupin's a Gryffindor. He thinks like a Gryffindor. Feels like a Gryffindor. And you are a Gryffindor. Therefore, Black, you must be a Gryffindor. Reveal yourself. Prove yourself."

Sirius's eyes widened.

Severus arrived first for their weekly staff meeting, as he always did. His agenda in hand, Severus was determined to make this meeting last no longer than an hour. After which he would proceed to return to hiding in his rooms.

No not hiding. Return to the important work that he had waiting for him in his office. That was right. Important work. That would hopefully never get finished.

It wasn't that he was avoiding Harry. It just happened that he didn't have time to see him, and it conveniently helped the crushing pain in his chest every time he saw the green eyed wizard.
Well, that's what he was telling himself at least.

What he was not expecting was for Black to walk into the room last, minus all the glamour charms.

There were gasps all around. There was no mistaking the Black blue eyes, or the curve of the aristocratic cheekbones. Narcissa's hand was plastered over her mouth, Hermione's eyes were twice the size they normally were, Ron's eyes had rolled back and he'd fainted. Remus had frozen, his eyes wide as saucers as he watched Sirius calmly walk in and stand by his seat, at Severus's right hand.

"Hello, everyone."

Narcissa gingerly moved her hand away from her mouth and whispered, "Sirius?"

Sirius flashed his trademark playboy grin at her, "Cissa."

And, in proper Malfoy fashion, Narcissa proceeded to faint.

Lucius glared slightly at Sirius as he rose to aid his wife. Sirius shrugged. Your idea, Malfoy. Your fault.

Meanwhile, all the females had arisen and proceeded to smother Sirius in hugs and kisses. Neville was blinking owlishly at Sirius, and Draco was shaking his head in amusement. Once everyone had settled down again, Hermione asked, "You're alive? How?" her eyes flashing between the nervous Animagus and the still frozen werewolf.

Sirius nodded and sighed. "The Veil, for some unknown reason, released 25 innocent people from its confines, and I was one of them. I was, frankly, extremely unsettled by the time jump and the events that had occurred in the meanwhile. Severus," here Sirius motioned to the Headmaster, "suggested that I take some time to adjust. I was unsure of how…capable I would be of handling everything if I were to return as myself immediately."

"But now?" prodded Hermione.

Sirius smiled, a small smile, but a smile nonetheless. "I feel it's unfair to everyone else if I stay behind my mask of Professor Grey and lead you all to believe I am still deceased. I did not wish to make it seem like I was hiding." Sirius gave Remus a significant look. "Now that I feel adjusted I decided to come clean about my identity."

With a quick glance around, pausing for but a moment on Remus, Sirius took his seat.

Severus sniffed, "If we are all finished with today's melodramatics, I would like to continue this meeting."

There were slight chuckles all around, but Severus didn't doubt that the information would register with some of the staff later in the day.

Remus swallowed hard as he stood in front of the portrait guarding Sirius's rooms.

"Are you the werewolf that the professor is pining over?" Remus glanced up to see a young girl, of perhaps ten years in age, a grey dog at her side, peering curiously at him.

"Perhaps." Remus replied enigmatically.
The girl smiled, "Oh! I hope so! The professor's been right miserable. Put him out of his misery soon, please!"

Remus smiled, "Perhaps. Would you let me in?"

The girl sighed, "I'd love to but I need the password."

Remus frowned, "Is it…I solemnly swear I'm up to no good?"

The girl shook her head.

Remus contemplated, "How about…Harry?"

The girl shook her head, then bit her lip. Leaning closer, well as close as a person in a painting can lean, she whispered conspiratorially, "It has something to do with what you are."

Remus's eyebrows rose, "Oh. Moony?"

The girl grinned happily and clapped, "Yes!" And the portrait door swung open.

Remus stepped into the rooms, looking about for a moment. The rooms were quite nice, furnished beautifully in reds and golds, typical Gryffindor quarters. But empty. There were no personal touches, nothing to make it seem like these were Sirius's rooms.

Standing in the shadows for a moment longer, Remus took in the sight of his mate. Sirius sat on the couch, his robes thrown over the edge, shirt sleeves rolled up, the first few button undone. Leaning his head back against the soft fabric, Sirius's arms lay limp at his sides. Either he was sleeping or thinking very hard.

"Sirius?"

Sirius's eyes slammed open as they flew from side to side looking for the voice that had called his name. When his eyes landed on Remus, Sirius jumped up from where he had been sitting, nervously smoothing down his wrinkled shirt and trousers.

"Remus." Sirius gulped, a nervous twitch developing in his hands. *Merlin, Sirius, you are not a lovesick teenager. This is not a repeat of sixth year. Calm down!* Clasping them together, he said, "Come in. Was there something…you…uh…"

Remus nodded and took a seat in the armchair across from the sofa, watching silently as Sirius slowly lowered himself back into the seat he'd been in before, his eyes never leaving Remus.

Remus cleared his throat awkwardly. Now that he was here he didn't know what he wanted to say. "Sirius, I…"

Remus looked down at his hands, "I've been thinking about us. And..well everything we've been through."

Sirius nodded tightly, his knuckles turning white from the force he was putting into clasping his hands together.

"The Shrieking Shack incident, suspicions about loyalties, the death of our best friends, your imprisonment in Azkaban, then Wormtail, and then your death through the Veil…"

Sirius nodded again.
Remus sighed, "Our bond is permanent."

Sirius's heart flew up into his throat and he caught his breath. Remus's words seemed so ominous. Was he saying…that he didn't….

"Remus?" Sirius choked out, all sense of decorum, pride, and promise vanishing.

Remus looked up in alarm at the distress in Sirius's voice and quickly rose to sit next to Sirius. Gripping the other man's hand tightly, he said, "No! Sirius, what I meant is, that…Bloody hell. Screw it. Sirius. I love you. What you did, yes it was stupid, but you're alive and I want to cherish that, be grateful for that, and forget everything else. For once we can calmly, happily, live life. Live it together. And I want that. It's all I've ever wanted."

Sirius searched Remus's amber eyes for a moment before crushing his mouth against the werewolf's. Remus moaned and laced his fingers in Sirius cropped hair, his fingers threading through the shortened ends. Smiling into the passionate kiss, Sirius pushed the wolf down flat onto the sofa, his mind having but one goal: *To ravish his Remus.*
Chapter 16

Harry hid behind a suit of armor as Remus passed by him towards Sirius's new rooms. Grinning, Harry sighed happily, at least his godfather would (hopefully) be getting a happy ending.

Turning the other way, Harry wandered around the corridors for a period of time, thinking about everything that had happened.

"Harry?" Harry looked up to see Hermione standing in front of him, her eyes filled with concern.

"Hermione." Harry sighed, wrapping his best friend in his embrace, drawing strength from her. Hermione blinked in surprise, before hugging Harry back, giving her husband a worried look over the brunette's shoulder. Ron nodded grimly before wrapping his arms around his wife and his best friend. Harry began to shake, the warmth and love seeping through him breaking and shattering whatever resolve he had built up.

Afraid of wandering (and rule-breaking) students that could potentially see them, Ron and Hermione led Harry to their quarters, keeping him secure between them.

Once settled on the couch, Hermione asked, "Harry, what happened? What is going on? You haven't been yourself in weeks. Is this about Sirius?"

Harry took a deep breath, not moving from where he was warm and comfortable, sandwiched between his best friends. Shaking his head, he said "No…I knew it was Sirius. He told me a few weeks ago. No, it's just that…I did something stupid."

Ron and Hermione exchanged his glance before Hermione prodded gently, "What happened, Harry?"

Sniffing Harry looked up, "I said something really, really stupid."

Ron frowned, "Mate, what happened?"

Taking another deep breath, Harry recounted the events of the full moon just two weeks ago.

Hermione gave a shuddering sigh, "Oh, Harry…"

Harry clenched his eyes shut. Ron gave Hermione a glance, flicking his eyes towards the bedroom door, indicating that he needed to speak to Harry alone. Frowning but knowing it was time for some "guy talk" Hermione kissed the top of Harry's head before moving towards the bedroom, eyeing her husband and her best friend worriedly.

"Okay, mate, Hermione's gone."

Harry nodded before removing his head from his hands and leaning back against the sofa. "I am such an idiot, Ron. How could I not know?"

Ron folded his hands together, giving Harry a questioning look, "Know what?"

Harry threw his hands in the air, "That I was in love with Severus!"

Ron gave Harry a blank look before bursting out in laughter. Harry pouted and glared at Ron, "It is not funny, Ron!"
Ron pursed his lips, fighting off laughter. After a moment, once he'd collected himself, Ron shook his head, "Only you, mate. Only you would be in love and not know it."

Harry glared at Ron and then sighed and began to inspect his fingers, "I just...I didn't know that this was what love felt like."

Ron looked down at Harry's bent head, "What did you think it would feel like?"

Harry shrugged, rubbing his fingers together, "Passionate. Like a raging inferno that couldn't be quelled. Something fierce, all encompassing, engulfing, overwhelming."

"And what does it feel like?"

Harry choked, "That if Severus never talk to me again I might die. It's this squeezing feeling him my chest, like I'm always short of breath."

"That's cause you're on the low side of love right now, mate," Ron said, rubbing his hand gently on Harry's shoulder. Harry glanced up and tilted his head in question. Ron shrugged, "Before your fight, what did it feel like when you were with Snape?"

Harry frowned and thought back, "Safe. Comfortable. Warm."

Ron nodded, "Mate, what you thought love is? It is overwhelming, sure. But, it isn't always like that. It happens, sometimes, sometimes for a long time, but some of the day you're just happy, just comfortable, just...content. Like a feeling that's been there so long that if it was gone you'd be broken, but as long as it's there, happiness is normal."

Harry looked up in surprise, "When'd you get all philosophical?"

Ron grinned and stuck his nose in the air, "Hmph, I can read too, I will have you know."

Harry chuckled and smiled, "So...I'm in love with Severus?"

Ron threw his arms in the air, "It only took you seven years!"

Hermione flew out of the bedroom door, an Extendable Ear in her hand, and threw her arms around Harry and Ron. They laughed and hugged her back, even as Ron muttered, "And you know if we'd been listening to her conversation she'd be hexing us into next week. Bloody girls, I'll never figure them out!"

Harry laughed into a face full of bushy brown hair, "Good thing for me that Severus is a boy then isn't it?"

Ron just glared at Harry, still holding his sobbing wife, "That, is not fair."

Harry flew around the Quidditch pitch deep in thought. Talking with Ron had cleared up his feeling, but now what was he supposed to do? What should he do to get Severus to realize that Harry wanted to be with him? That he'd been an arse and hadn't meant all that stupid stuff he'd said to Sirius?

Harry knew now what love was. Maybe he'd always loved Severus, he'd just never realized that what he felt for the older man had been love.

Suddenly a streak of blonde hair passed by his eyes, followed by a flash of gold. Eyes widening and sharpening, Harry found himself in a chase for the Snitch, neck and neck with Draco Malfoy.
The two Seekers chased the Snitch for an hour before Harry triumphantly caught the elusive golden ball and flew higher, grinning happily.

Draco shook his head as he calmly rose to the same height, "Better, Potter?"

Harry grinned, "Thanks, Malfoy."

Draco nodded before sitting calmly on his broom and looking out at the castle. "You know, I married the fieriest woman I know."

Harry glanced at Draco before smiling and nodding his head, "I don't envy you, mate."

Draco chuckled and looked over at Harry, "Oh, and I don't envy you Potter. You've decided to fall in love with the most stubborn man in the universe."

Harry blinked before chuckling ruefully, "That is so true."

Draco nodded before glancing at the castle, "I'll never understand Gryffindors. I'm married to one and I still put my foot in my mouth all the time, and then she's off angry at me like only a Weasley woman can be."

Harry laughed, throwing his head back and nodding. Draco scowled, before saying, "But in the end I grovel a bit and she eventually gives in. The point is, I think, that she wants me to acknowledge I did something wrong and apologize. Doesn't really matter what I did, as long as I know I did it and apologize." Harry nodded, wondering where Draco was going with this. Draco glanced at Harry, "It's the Gryffindor in her." Harry nodded again. Draco turned to fully face Harry before saying, "Severus is a Slytherin Potter. He runs on Slytherin rules. You've obviously done something ridiculously stupid," Harry glanced away as Draco said this, "and now he won't make the first move. Ever. It has to be you."

Harry blinked blankly at Draco, "Huh?"

Pocketing the snitch, Draco rolled his eyes and wrapped his hands around the neck of the broom before glancing up as Harry again, "Potter, you're a Gryffindor. Take a risk. That's the only way."

With that Draco descended to the ground, leaving a gaping Harry behind him.

*Bloody Slytherins, they always know exactly the WRONG time to leave!*

"He's right you know."

Harry jumped and gripped his broom as he almost fell off it. "Bloody hell! Don't do that! I could've died!" Harry snapped, turning to find a laughing Sirius floating on his broom behind him.

Sirius chuckled and gave his godson a fond look, "The irony is that his father gave me the exact same advice."

Harry looked up and raised an eyebrow, "Lucius Malfoy gave you advice about getting Remus?"

Sirius chuckled, "I know, surreal isn't it?"

Harry nodded, brain slightly blanked.

Sirius's smile returned to its expression of fond amusement. "Severus won't make the first move. Especially not after what you said."
Harry's eyes widened, "He heard that? Oh god," Harry buried his head in his hands. "I don’t know what I said that. It was stupid. I don’t even believe what I said."

Sirius's expression softened, "I know. But Severus doesn't."

Harry looked up sadly at his godfather, "Sirius. What do I do? I want to fix this. Him not talking to me…it hurts." Harry gave his godfather a miserable look.

Sirius sighed and flew closer to his godson, "Harry, do you…I mean…what is it…"

Harry looked up grinning mischievously, "Cat got you tongue?"

Sirius scowled at Harry, "What is that you want from Severus?"

Harry sobered looking out to the night sky, "Everything, Sirius. I want everything."
Chapter 17

Harry watched his godfather land gently onto the grass as he pondered his words from the sky. Taking a moment to observe Hogwarts at night, Harry sighed. He had one chance. One chance to somehow prove himself to Severus, to tell him that he loved him, that he hadn't meant all those awful things he'd said, that he was an idiot not to see the signs before, that he wanted…no needed a chance with Severus, or life wouldn't be worth…

Harry's eyes widened as they focused in on a dark, robed figure standing in the Astronomy Tower.

Severus

Severus sighed as he leaned over the railing in the Astronomy Tower and gazed out at Hogwarts at night. Dropping his head, Severus closed his eyes, the cold wind matching the sharp, icy pain in his chest. He had not spoken to Harry in almost three weeks and he itched to open his mouth and say something to the brunette. Those green eyes constantly turned to him in confusion and sadness, and Severus wasn't sure how much longer his heart could handle being cruel to the man he loved. Severus loved Harry, how could he ever want the other man to suffer? Severus may never have him in his arms, but as long as Harry was happy, Severus should be happy.

And yet this loss threatened to bring Severus to his knees like no other defeat had.

Looking up, sadness spiraling in his eyes, Severus gaped at the sight before him.

Harry Potter. On a broom. In the middle of the night. Heading straight for the Astronomy Tower.

Harry's eyes narrowed as he focused in on his target. He was going to get his man and he was going to get him tonight. Smirking as he saw Severus stiffen as he realized what was happening, Harry watched as the Headmaster of Hogwarts straightened suddenly and spun around, as if to escape down the stairs away from Harry.

Oh no you don't.

Harry flew faster, landing in front of the doorway, blocking Severus's exit.

"Excuse me, Professor Potter, I would like to exit," Severus said icily, his eyes resting not on Harry's face but on the doorway behind him.

"No, Headmaster Snape. I'm afraid I can't let you do that."

Severus glared at Harry, "Excuse me? What exactly does that mean?"

Harry huffed and strode up to Severus. Poking Severus's chest with his right forefinger, Harry gave Severus a petulant glare, "You, Mr. Snape, have been avoiding me."

Severus raised an eyebrow, "Oh, have I now?"

Harry nodded, his finger resting against Severus's chest, "You haven't really spoken to me in almost three weeks, Severus."

Severus frowned and stepped back one step, "I apologize if you feel…neglected. However, I do
have a school to run, you know."

Harry stepped right back up, closer to Severus. "Obviously. That doesn't mean you have to stop being friends with me."

Severus's mouth thinned, "I think, Mr. Potter, it is better if we do not remain friends any longer."

Harry stepped back in shock, "What? No! How can you even suggest that?"

Severus pursed his lips, "Mr. Potter, my presence or lack thereof will hardly make a large impact on your life. If you wish to…label me as a friend you may do so…but why should we both carry on with this farce?"

Harry blinked at Severus, brain frozen at the idea of Severus suggesting they no longer be friends…no longer be anything to each other.

Swallowing, Harry asked, timidly, "Severus…do you wish to no longer be friends with me?"

Severus glanced away, gazing up at the moon, "What I wish is hardly relevant…"

"The hell it is!"

Severus blinked at the angry expression on Harry's face. Confusion was running through his mind. Yes, they had been very close friends, and yes prior to the…incident, they had been close once again, but Harry had many friends, why would the loss of one be so…undesired?

Harry clenched his jaw, "Why are you bothering to even say we shouldn't be friends? Why?"

Severus shrugged and turned around so that he wouldn't have to look into Harry's eyes. "It will be easier for you to not be my friend so that you do not feel…hurt by my inaction to interact with you on-"

"I LOVE YOU, YOU GIT!"

Severus froze, his muscles like ice. Was that…?

Sniffing, Harry seemed to crumple post-confession, and started to rant, "You haven't said anything to me in three weeks because of that stupid almost-kiss and then my stupid response. Not because you don't know how to be friends with someone, or some other shite like that. And now…now you don't want to be my friend!" Harry was pouting angrily

Harry reined back the desire to sob, anger and misery warring within him. "But isn't this the story of my life? I just can't have what I love, can I? I finally, FINALLY, figure out what it feels like to be in love, and you're pushing me away."

Severus turned slowly. Steeling his heart, Severus let his eyes rest on the slender form of the insane man he loved.

But Harry wasn't looking at him. Rather his eyes were glazed with anger as he ranted, "And this is all my stupid godfather's fault. If he hadn't asked me those stupid questions, then I wouldn't have said that stupid, stupid, false, ridiculous thing, and then you wouldn't have been mad at me! And apparently everyone knew I was in love with you before I did, but I didn't know what love was, and then you stopped talking to me and it hurt so bad and I was so confus—mmph!"

Severus strode to where Harry stood and took the brat's adorable face in his hands and passionately claimed his lips. Harry froze in surprise before melting into the older man, hands
rising to clench the Headmaster's robes, crawling as close as he could to the older man's lean figure, salty tears mixing in their kiss of passion, love, relief and disbelief.

When oxygen became necessary, the two separated, eyes meeting inches from each other.

Sobbing Harry threw his arms around Severus. Shocked by his own actions and Harry's response, Severus hesitated a moment before gently enfolding the younger man in his arms. Harry held Severus tight, a novel joy blossoming in his chest as the misery of the last few weeks melted away. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean it, please Severus…Sirius is back and he's with Remus, and everyone's just so goddamned happy, and I just can't stand to be without you, not now, not after I finally know how I feel, what I feel, please Severus…please"

Returning to himself, Severus raised a hand to thread his fingers into Harry's wild hair. "Hush. I'm not letting you go anywhere."

Harry pulled back to look into those beloved onyx eyes. Long, potions stained fingers rose to cradle his face, thumbs gently caressing his cheeks. Silent tears spilled out of verdant eyes, brushed away by those very fingertips, a gentle smile playing at the Slytherin's lips. Severus's eyes suddenly softened, even as disbelief appeared in them again. "Say it again."

Harry gave a watery smile, murmuring the words against Severus's fingertips, "I love you, Severus."

Severus took a shuddering breath, "Do you…are you sure, Harry?"

Harry smiled and nodded, "Ron says I'm the only idiot in this world that could be in love for years and never notice it."

Severus let out the breath he'd been holding and swept down to possess Harry's lips in a kiss so tender, so loving, that Harry's toes curled and his knees went weak.

Lips still touching, Harry said, "I love you. I love you. I love you."

Severus rested his forehead against Harry's, eyes closed against the hope welling in his chest. "I…"

Harry's hands clenched the Headmaster's robes tighter, "I want to be with you Severus. Please. I know this is what I want. And I want it forever. Forever, always, this. Only this. Only you."

Severus looked into glittering emerald eyes, the unshed tears and the hope and desire obvious within them.

"Unless…unless you don't want me like that," Harry whispered, fingers loosening, eyes dropping, shoulders drooping.

Severus had a split second to decide. He could deny himself this, in hopes of warding of future pain, or he could embrace what was being given to him freely and cherish it while it lasted.

Severus tightened his hold on Harry, "I believe, Mr. Potter, that I am feeling quite unwell, and as I have exposed you as well, you and I must be quarantined to my rooms for a few days. So that you may…nurse me back to health."

Harry's gaze flew up to meet amused, dancing, lust and love filled ebony eyes. A sly smile appeared on Severus's lips before he once again possessed Harry's lips in a kiss so intense that Harry's heart nearly stopped. Damn the man could kiss.
Suddenly he was shoved back against the wall as long fingers expertly began to undo the buttons of his robes. Lips traveled down his jaw, nibbled at his throat, before licking their way up to Harry's ear. Massaging his earlobe with that deft tongue, Severus whispered, his breath hot and seductive against Harry's ear, "You better prepare yourself Mr. Potter. I am not going to let you out of my bed until I am quite through ravishing you."

Glad that Severus seemed to be holding him as his knees gave way, Harry moaned and pressed up against Severus.

Severus smiled against Harry's throat, lips caressing the soft, sweet skin.

Severus was a Slytherin after all. Even if Harry wanted this for just a little while, Severus would take the time to make sure Harry wanted for no other.

"Severus?" Harry's breathy voice broke through Severus's reverie.

Sucking on Harry's neck, reveling in the moan that erupted out of Harry, Severus smiled and murmured against the soft skin, "I love you, Harry."

In the pursuit of happiness, Severus Snape had finally, finally, won.

End Notes

Disclaimer: Sadly, I don't own the Harry Potter Universe, but I do lay claim on my ideas. :)

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