

At the End of the Day

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At the End of the Day

by [celestineangel](#)

Summary

At the end of the day, being an Auror sometimes means making hard decisions.

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

He isn't in on the plan, and he hates not being in on the plan.

Ted Tinkins is the kind of guy who likes to be in on the plans, because he likes to believe he is in control. He might not be the leader's right hand, but he's on his way there, and he *is* in the inner circle. They've pulled a lot of what he thinks of as pranks in pursuit of the group's goals, from cursing the doors of certain shops, to jinxing their owners and hexing people at rallies. Ted's been part of every single one of them. To be left out now is more than insulting. It means Calvin suspects.

"Fuck yeah!" screams Annie Wyght, a pretty young woman standing next to Ted, her hair changed with her wand to a bright, dazzling purple. Her green eyes blaze with a hatred Ted Tinkins completely understands as Calvin kicks the huddled form on the stage. "Burn the fucker!"

She's exactly the kind of woman to whom Ted Tinkins is attracted.

All around them, people cry out their approval of Annie's plan. There are older witches and wizards among them, but the vast majority of this crowd are young, Ted's age or younger. Kids, really, who have been sold an idea. For them, it's about blood purity, family, keeping what's magic in the magical community in the magical community, and what's Muggle in the Muggle community. In reality, it's power they're after. It's always power, but most of them don't even realize they aren't very original. Calvin does, oh, he certainly does. He takes some of his philosophy from Tom Riddle Jr., but most of it from Gellert Grindelwald. This is a guy who's studied the history books and has a self-made poster of Gellert Grindelwald hanging on the wall of his bedroom. Calvin knows exactly what he's doing.

The fact that most of these people are kids is proof of that. So is the fact that he's built a stage from which he can speak and shout and show off his conquests.

Calvin waves his arms, and when that doesn't work, he shoots sparks from his wand. For a moment, that only seems to rile them more, like they think it's all fireworks and celebration. Finally, one by one, they begin to understand that their fearless leader wants to speak.

"Today is a victory for our cause," he says, his eyes as bright as Annie's but for different reasons. Hers is hatred and fervent belief in this cause. Calvin's is something deeper and darker. He raises his arms, not waving now, but lifting them like some benevolent god opening his arms to his children. And the children—they of the pierced noses and neon hair, who look more like Muggle kids their age than they want to admit—cheer him, call his name, chant the words he's taught them. This is the gleam in his eyes.

"Victory!" the kids scream. "Victory!" and "Death!" and "Burn him!" They can't even see his face, hidden as it is under the sack, but they still want him dead. They don't even know if the person under the sack is a he, but it doesn't matter. If Calvin brought the person, then they are an enemy.

Calvin smiles and places a finger over his lips. Immediately this time, the crowd goes quiet.

"There will be death and burning, my lovelies. I promise. But there's fun to be had before that, and a point to be made."

Ted stands back, his arms crossed, frowning. His attitude of cautious support is carefully cultivated. He wants to be the guy who definitely supports the cause but is not known for taking risks. He wants to be the stable, secure one, as fervent as the rest but with sanity many of the rest don't have. So his frown isn't out of character at all. Calvin's crossed a line that Ted Tinkins has warned him many times not to cross.

Calvin smiles beatifically down at his flock, while two of his lackeys come forward to pull the captive to his knees. Then, amongst renewed cheers and cries, the devil with an angel's face rips off the sack covering the captive's face.

"Behold, the spawn of our enemy!"

When James Potter looks out in terror and defiance on the crowd, for one forgetful moment Ted Tinkins becomes Teddy Lupin again.

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Don't let them get to you, his boss told him before he took this mission. *They'll seem like nice enough people, because most of them are. But they're also criminals, responsible for a growing number of escalating hate-crimes. So don't let them get to you.*

When Teddy sees James up there on that stage, he realizes he's let these people get to him. He hasn't internalized any of the garbage they believe, but he has forgotten that nice enough people can still do nasty things in the name of a belief. These people who are so willing to help him move into his new—completely paid for by the Ministry—apartment, to go shopping with him, to show him around the neighborhood, are also the same people who have defaced private property with anti-Muggle and anti-Muggleborn sentiments. They are also, apparently, the type of people who see nothing at all wrong with kidnapping.

Or torture. Or murder. They are crying out for James' death right now, and for no other reason than that James is Harry's son, the oldest child of the biggest Muggle-lover they know.

Don't let them get to you, he reminds himself. There's nothing he can do right now. Not unless he wants to break his cover, and nothing is worth that. Not even, he thinks with a breaking heart, the boy who might as well be his younger brother.

Now he will have to find some way to fix this without compromising his cover. What a bitch. He's perfect for undercover work because of his Metamorphmagus abilities, but it's taken him a while to gain the patience necessary to spend a great deal of time as someone else, the stamina, and to learn to suppress his own personality in favor of Ted Tinkins' far more serious attitude. Two years it's taken him, to get this far in the group, now, Calvin's gone and kidnapped Harry Potter's oldest son, Teddy Lupin's best friend, and Ted Tinkins is going to have a hell of a time convincing him to let the guy go. If he can. At this point, Teddy isn't sure of anything. He thought he'd gotten through, but Calvin must have simply been telling him what he wanted to hear.

Later, he thinks as he puts Ted Tinkins' face back before anyone can see him. He'll get James out of here later, when he can stage it so that no one will know it was him.

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There are always consequences.

In fifth year, Teddy stole the Sorting Hat from the Headmistress' office and wore it around campus during his free period. He got caught, of course. He never expected not to be caught, but he hadn't really thought through what his punishment might be for such a thing. After all, hadn't he grown up on stories of the exploits of grand troublemakers like James Potter and Sirius Black, as well as the Weasley twins? Hadn't he considered those noble souls to be his heroes and his spiritual predecessors?

To his knowledge, none of them had ever had all their first term grades erased and had to start over, effectively repeating a term of school work. He'd been shocked, yes, and worse when Harry came to get him for the holidays, disappointment written in every line on his face and every frown. The disappointed looks didn't last, but Teddy never forgot them.

He wonders now how disappointed Harry will be in him if he allows James to be tortured or killed.

He wonders how he will live with himself if he allows James to be killed.

He wonders how he's going to live with himself after what he's already allowed to happen to James.

He has a mission, but there are always consequences.

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Teddy remembers conversations with his mentor.

Thaddeus is not an easy man to like. He's big and imposing and reticent. He's focused, dogged and determined. Once he has a hold on a lead, he does not let it go until he has exhausted all avenues of investigation. And he is the current Auror specialist in under cover living and investigating. He might be big, but he still has an everyman quality about him that makes his face easy to forget. It's a face Teddy has tried to mimic on numerous occasions, not directly but to distill and use those qualities that are so banal they don't bear close scrutiny.

Such complete featurelessness is not easily copied, however. Teddy has thus far failed.

"You shouldn't be trying to copy anyone's features anyway," Thaddeus told him once, in that long ago conversation. "You should be focused on creating completely original identities for yourself, or as original as is possible."

Ted Tinkins is an original creation, or as original as he can muster. In reality, the physical aspects of the persona is the end product of his years of studying the people around him. Thaddeus is an expert, and Teddy respects him but doesn't believe one can create a person entirely without influences. If he creates a pair of green eyes, they will inevitably be the color

of Harry's eyes, because that is the green he knows. If he creates red hair, it will be Weasley red, because that's the color he knows. What he *can* do with all the little details he's gleaned from the people he knows and has seen is combine them all into varying packages until they don't resemble any one person.

What he finally asked for from Thaddeus was a collection of photos. It didn't matter what kind. They could be family photos, photos from magazines, magical or Muggle, as long as they were of people. The point was from that collection of photos to create a collection of facial features for him to use. Thaddeus didn't like it, but he acquiesced. Ted Tinkins is only one of many results.

Two years, he's been Ted Tinkins. Two years, with no way of contacting his family, of letting them know where he is, or why. Oh, Harry has some idea, though he wasn't the one to make the final decision. At least he knows something, though, and should have told the rest of Teddy's friends and family... well, something.

None of that matters at the moment, though, because right now all that matters is the question, what is Teddy going to do about James?

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In the end, it comes down to what's more important. James? Or the mission?

His hesitation costs.

He knows what Thaddeus would say. He knows what almost any of his fellow Aurors would say, would feel obligated to say. Right now, though, he isn't sure what Harry would say. The mission or his son? Teddy wishes Harry were here, wishes he knew what his godfather would say. James or the mission? Save the young man who's been like his little brother or keep his cover? His cover might be blown anyway. After all, Ted Tinkins didn't know anything about this plan to kidnap Harry Potter's son.

His hesitation costs.

Ted Tinkins stands back as Calvin shoves James Potter off the stage and into the crowd, giving them only the order not to kill him. Not yet.

And Ted Tinkins does nothing.

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Later, much later, Ted Tinkins sits in the room where James has been locked away. He's had a heated conversation with Calvin about what a terrible idea this entire course of action is, but Calvin doesn't seem to care. He wants to kill Harry Potter's son, and he wants to do it in a way that will strike awe and fear into hearts both magical and Muggle. If his good friend Ted were ever going to change his mind, that time is long past.

"What do you want?" James asks. He's curled up in a corner of the room. There's blood almost everywhere, matted in his hair, staining his clothes at his knees. The back of his shirt

is soaked where blood has flown from a cut on his head, and worse, there's blood on the back of his pants.

"I'm here to tend your injuries," says Ted Tinkins, pulling out his wand. He flinches when James does. "If you'll let me."

"Sod off."

Sighing, Teddy kneels in front of the boy—no, no, the young man, James is nineteen, he's not a boy anymore—and says, in a lowered voice, "You need medical attention. You'll bleed to death or something if you don't let me—"

"Doesn't matter." There's resignation in that voice, a tone Teddy never wanted to hear from any of his family. "They're going to kill me anyway. *You're* going to kill me." Anger, too, oh yes, so much anger, and Teddy can't blame him for that. "That fucker just doesn't want me dead yet, so he sent you to patch me up until the right moment. Well, *fuck you*."

Is it sick that Teddy feels a certain amount of pride? James will make an incredible Auror one day, if he gets out of this.

"Maybe that's why he wants me to heal you," he says quietly, "but that's not why I will."

James' head lifts. Brown eyes peer out from a sallow face, both defiant and angry. "*Sod off and get out!*" he screams, and, incredibly, he kicks out with one of his legs. Only years of training and the resulting reflexes keep Teddy from a bruised shin.

He should tell James the truth, right here and right now. But they're being watched or snooped on in other ways. There are spells to let someone hear what's happening in a faraway room. He should know. He's used them more than once. Not to mention, WWW Extendable Ears, which are no longer exclusively under the control of George Weasley, thanks to the Ministry. Aurors use them, but so do other, less savory, factions.

Point being, it isn't just as easy as telling James anything, nor can Teddy give him a silent clue, as he can't control James' reaction, nor trust that James won't give something away. Bravado and anger only go so far.

In the end, Teddy holds down the screaming, snarling, biting James with the help of a couple of the others and heals him forcibly. Even as he mutters the spells under his breath, he knows he's only healing James for him to be brutalized again, but there's nothing else to do; if he's to get James out, there has to be a James left to save.

He tries not to think about James' mind, and what may or may not be left of that when this is over.

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Teddy's handler isn't answering.

He stares at the piece of paper, the one where his handler's response is supposed to appear, and two hours later, there's still nothing.

What do I do? he'd written, as neatly as he could while in a hurry and terrified for the life and sanity of his friend and near-brother. *What do I do? I can't let this keep happening. Send someone. There's enough evidence with James Potter here, captive. If nothing else, there's enough to convict Calvin of kidnapping while you investigate the other charges, and trust me, there's enough here to put him and most of his inner circle away for a very long time. But help, please, because this is too much for me. I can't keep doing this.*

The words vanished when he tapped his wand to the paper, the surface gone blank, waiting for the reply. He wonders if the man isn't answering because Teddy has failed some sort of personality test. Maybe the cavalry will come, will pull James out, but leave Teddy to the consequences. After all, hadn't he basically said he would break cover if no one came?

Maybe that's not a good enough reason. This has been a long assignment, and difficult. Calvin's trust wasn't easy to gain. What if there's been a meeting of Aurors, all sitting around their stodgy conference room, and they've all decided to let Teddy handle this? What if they've decided to leave James to the wolves for the sake of the mission?

Well, bugger that. Teddy knows he's intelligent. He can find a way to do this and still keep cover, if that isn't spoiled already. Before he goes, he passes one last message to his handler.

Fuck this, I'll get him out myself, and if we both make it out, I'll find some way of getting back in, I swear.

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"James," he calls, shaking James' shoulder even as his wand works to heal the latest set of bruises and cuts. No doubt there are other, deeper wounds that will need tending by a professional. After. "James, wake up."

The young man groans, and after a moment, wakes already fighting, fists swinging. There's an animal wildness in his eyes that pierces straight through Teddy's heart because he knows he helped put it there. Teddy has to fight James ragged nails and clenched fists to get through and put a hand over his mouth to silence his grunts and wordless cries of fury and helplessness. Every sound guts him.

"James, shh, it's Teddy. It's *Teddy*."

"Teddy?" At last, James stops fighting him, looking up into unfamiliar eyes in an unfamiliar face. "You... y-you... held me down."

"I know." No time for real apologies. There will be time for that later. He's cursed about a dozen people just to get to this point and will no doubt have to curse a dozen more before they can escape. "Get up, we're leaving."

But James doesn't move, so Teddy resorts to trying to haul him to his feet through a mixture of magic and sheer muscle. James finally gets the idea, plants his feet firmly on the ground, and some of his weight lifts. It's better than nothing, and Teddy moves them toward the door.

"Why?" James whispers. "Why did you... I thought you were..."

"No time. I'll explain later."

James sighs but goes quietly, and Teddy thinks the sigh might have been more one of exhaustion than annoyance. That's all right. There's still a mess of corridors to get through, and they both need to concentrate just to make it through them alive. Teddy mutters spells during every step of their journey, some of them necessary to keep the corridors navigable thanks to Calvin's paranoia, and others to throw off any pursuers, though hopefully there are none. The curse he threw at Calvin fifteen minutes ago might've worn off by now, and Calvin probably knows where he went, but he's taking the back way out. With luck, Calvin will check the front way first, buying Teddy and James more time. Especially as Teddy still needs to figure out a way to explain his actions.

"Lumos!" The voice is not his own, and it comes from ahead of them. He'd been keeping the lights off to keep his passage undetected. He raises his wand, prepared to strike. Then, "Lupin?"

For a moment, that the shape knows his name only makes him want to throw a hex even more, until his eyes adjust and he sees the face of Norman Proust, his handler. His entire body begins to shake from a sudden burst of desperate relief.

"Norm. Thank sodding Merlin, where've you been? Why didn't you—"

"No time," says Norm, in echo of Teddy's earlier words. "I need to get the Potter boy out, and you need to get your arse back in there and see if you can salvage any part of this cock up."

Punch in the gut, that one. To know Norm's laying blame squarely on him for this, calling it a cock up. Well, he didn't exactly say "your cock up," did he? No, so maybe he isn't blaming Teddy, but it sure feels like he is, especially with the uncharacteristically gruff tone. Thaddeus is the one who believes in tough love, in telling someone when they've made a mess of things. Norm's been the kinder, gentler one, until now. Maybe because of now.

There's no time for questions.

"Come on," Norm says to James, who hesitates and looks to Teddy for guidance.

There's a vague notion in his mind, something to do with the cavalry and his unanswered notes, but he doesn't have the time to think on that, either. The most he's able to do is come up with the rest of his plan, and he turns to James.

"I know what to do," he says and hands his wand to James. "You Imperiused me."

"But—"

Teddy shakes his head to cut off James' protests. "No, it's the only way I might be able to keep my position here. You stole my wand while I healed you, Imperiused me, made me hex Calvin and help you escape. It's the only way." Once James' fingers close over the handle, Teddy pulls him in to hug him tightly, and whispers, "And don't be afraid to use it."

Then he shoves the boy away, toward Norm. "Hex me, James."

This time there are no questions, save in James' eyes. Despite them, he raises Teddy's wand, and the last thing Teddy hears for a while is the sound of James' voice.

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"Teddy?"

He comes around slowly, that familiar, smooth voice in his ear.

"Wakey wakey, Teddy."

He starts a little at the nickname, his eyes coming open wider. Ted Tinkins never goes by Teddy. It's too undignified. So he mutters, "Don't call me that."

"Why not?" Definitely familiar. "It's your name, isn't it, you fucking freak?" Oh yes. Annie. The obscenity is what does it, brings the memory of her back, just a second before her hand strikes his cheek and his face snaps to the side. Annie's strong, and she doesn't pull her punches or her slaps. "Teddy. Fucking. Lupin." Each word is spit out like a curse, and punctuated with a slap to one cheek or the other. "You should have told me," she says, and she isn't talking to him. "Before I let him touch me."

"I wasn't entirely sure until recently."

Teddy opens his eyes, and yes, there they are. Precious Annie and Calvin, the man who presents his works as a calling, himself as an angel. The harbinger of a new age, he says, an age of power for wizards and witches. All he's brought so far has been a lot of pranks and the kidnapping and torture of one innocent young man, and this is the point in the show where Teddy feels obligated to tell him so. He earns another slap from Annie.

"It's understandable you would feel that way, given your... unique... background."

"Freak." Annie scowls at him. "Fucking filthy... you're not even a Mudblood. You're not human enough for that. I didn't know there was anything worse than a Mudblood."

"Annie."

She scowls deeper but quiets.

Calvin steps forward, dragging a chair behind him. Teddy has time to realize he's tied to a chair himself before Calvin sits directly across from him, smiling his arrogant smile, the one he wants people to believe is an indication of a compassionate soul. All Teddy's ever gotten from it is that Calvin thinks he's God.

"I've known for quite some time there was an Auror in our midst." Blue eyes settle on Teddy, as Calvin taps his wand idly against the tips of his fingers. "I didn't know it was you until about a month ago. Hybrid non-human you may be, but those Metamorphmagus gifts are quite intriguing. It's a shame they weren't bestowed on someone more worthy. Less tainted."

"Someone like you, Cal?"

Calvin smiled, this time all the pleasantness removed. "Now that you mention it, yes, someone like me. The things I could do if I had your gifts, Auror Lupin."

"Like, what? Sneak in the girl's loo? Really, Cal, don't you think that's a bit immature?"

Another slap, and this time Calvin doesn't reprimand Annie. Teddy lowers his head, chuckling under his breath because, well, he's a little hysterical, but that's to be expected, right? He's beginning to wonder if he will ever see his home again, or his family, but he can't shut his mouth. He wonders about James. Did James make it? He thinks about Norm, and how he didn't answer Teddy's pleas for help until the last minute. Teddy should have told Norm to fuck himself and his job. He should have gone with them and seen James safe to Harry and Ginny. If James is dead, it'll be his fault, so a little hysteria is perfectly understandable.

The tip of Calvin's wand presses to his chin, forcing him to lift his head and look the psychopath in the eyes.

"I wonder," he says, almost conversationally, "if there might be a way to transfer the Metamorphmagus abilities. I have been doing some experiments, you see, on magic transfer. There are a few other magical abilities that are innate, born in the blood, not learned. The ability to change one's form at will is only the best known. And really, the only one worth the trouble, isn't it?"

"You're a fucking lunatic."

"No, no," Calvin says, not to Teddy but to Annie, who has her wand lifted in preparation to probably send off a nasty curse. "I need him alive for the moment if I'm going to figure out a way to transfer his abilities." He stands, still looking at Teddy, his head tilted in a way that makes him look demented. "We will, however, need a body if we're to have him all to ourselves. Can't have the Aurors looking for him while I work."

Annie grins. "Can do, boss."

"Good."

They've left the room before the magnitude of what they said sinks in, and Teddy slumps in his chair, eyes wide. For a moment, just one single moment, he wishes he hadn't given his wand to James. A selfish thought, but he can't help it. With his wand, he'd at least be able to commit suicide.

I have been doing some experiments, you see...

He shudders.

~~**~~

And don't be afraid to use it.

James has no idea what Teddy meant by that, only that he's hurting and scared out of his sodding mind. At this point, he's been beaten and... and other things too often to remember

how he was brought here in the first place, or even how they caught him. He remembers... lunch with his friends between training sessions. That's all. After that, there's only blankness.

He feels five years old, ten years old, little and frightened. There is no James Sirius Potter, teenage badass and future Auror here. There is only the memory of fists, feet, screams and kicks and punches, and other things he doesn't want to think about. He supposes one day he'll have a therapist who will tell him it's okay to own what has happened to him, to be angry about it, to feel the way he feels and then to let go of it and live the rest of his life. One day, he might even agree.

But now there's this dark corridor and the man he's never met before. Teddy knows him, but Teddy held James down. *To heal you*, his mind insists, *Teddy held you down so he could heal you when you didn't recognize him*. It doesn't matter. Not right now. Maybe never.

"Where are we going?" he whispers, not realizing he meant to speak until the words are out.

The man doesn't even look at him. "Somewhere safe."

Safe. James wonders where is safe. If anywhere is safe. He's never thought about this situation before, and if he had, he would have only thought of it in terms of his sister. He would have thought it would be Lily, and he would be in the position of killing the one who did it to her, because he would. He'd kill anyone who hurt his sister. Is Lily going to threaten to kill the people who did this to him? His sister has a wicked wand arm, but somehow he can't imagine her saying something like that. Would it make him feel safe? No, probably not.

Shouldn't he feel safe? Teddy knows this guy, after all, so he's safe with him, right? *And don't be afraid to use it if you need to*.

No, no Teddy doesn't trust him, but then why, well, of course, James knows why Teddy left him with this man. Because he had no other options.

"Are you an Auror?" Has to be, right? Someone who can give Teddy orders.

A grunt in response and nothing more. James studies the man in the light of his wand and doesn't like what he sees. It has nothing to do with the man's looks, which are attractive enough, in a rough, unfinished sort of way. It has to do with the way the guy doesn't look at him, *won't* look at him. His eyes keep straight ahead. He's not even looking around them to seek out possible intruders in the shadows.

Oh Merlin, he's a traitor, he's a traitor, he's spying for these people, what am I going to do, how will I get out of this? Only two days ago, he would have been mortified to feel tears in his eyes. Now, he can't care less about it, because all he can think about is going back to that little room, the people coming and going to torture and abuse him while he waits to die. He can't do that again, he can't, he'll go insane if he has to go back, and there are no doubts in his mind, none at all, that this is what this man who ordered Teddy intends to happen. This man is going to take him back.

Behind the tears, anger rises.

"No," he says, aloud, this time on purpose.

And don't be afraid...

"What?"

"No, no you're not taking me back!"

Confusion, or what passes for it, on the man's face. James steps back, because it can't be real. He can't be afraid to use Teddy's wand. "What the hell?"

James raises the wand Teddy gave him, pulls in his breath and expels the only curse that comes to mind, the one Teddy left for him. "Imperius!" Whether it's fear or fury that fuels him, it's enough. The Auror's eyes go glassy even though he's supposed to have had training in resisting all manner of curses, but especially the Unforgiveables. Fingers go slack, the wand falls, and then James has two wands.

"Take me out of here," he commands his new slave. "Take me... take me...." He should go to the Ministry. Teddy's in there, he should go to the Ministry, but what if this guy isn't the only traitor? *Is he a traitor, is he really?* Yes. Yes he is, of course he is. "Take me home."

James' dad will know what to do. His dad always knows what to do.

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After the funeral, James sits outside his home, out on the lawn, in the grass. He stares up and up and into the sun even though it burns his vision. If he stares long enough, hard enough, maybe he will go permanently blind and never have to look at the world again, because he doesn't want to look. He doesn't want to see what he sees.

He's been to St. Mungo's. They tell him he's having perfectly normal reactions to what happened. They think they know it all, but they don't, because he didn't even tell them everything that happened. They can't know. If they did, he knows what would happen. They would continue to tell him everything is perfectly fine and normal, and meanwhile they'd look at him through the corner of their eyes and say he isn't a man anymore, not really, and he'd have to punch them in their goddamn heads, all of them, to prove otherwise.

You're a little paranoid, one of the Healers told him when he exclaimed for what felt like the billionth time that the Auror, Norman, he was a traitor. *That's understandable. You were kidnapped and tortured. Anyone in your situation would have trouble trusting strangers again.*

"James?"

He doesn't look up. It's his dad. His dad, Harry Potter, who found the... the... who found Teddy. When it was over. His dad sits next to him when he says nothing.

"Asking if you're all right is stupid. But *will* you be all right?"

Maybe that's a stupid question, too, but James can't blame his father for asking. It's a fair question. Will he? He doesn't know, so he shrugs.

"You seem to be healing pretty well, anyway." A pause, and then James' worst waking nightmare. "James, I'm sorry. This is—"

"No. It's not. It's not yours, or mine, or Teddy's, or anyone's except that fucker Calvin and his merry band of murderers, and anyone on their side." The Healers don't expect him to realize this yet. They expect him to blame anyone but the people who are really responsible. But he knows exactly where the blame lies. "Get them, Dad. Find them, and *get them*. For me, and for Teddy."

Finally, he looks at his dad and isn't surprised to see the man wiping tears from his cheeks. Hates it but isn't surprised. He looks away again.

"I just wish... I wish he knew...."

When James doesn't finish, Harry supplies, quietly, "He knew you cared about him. We made sure he was part of our family."

James doesn't answer. He only looks up again, into the searing light of the sun.

End Notes

I hope this comes somewhere in the ballpark of what you wanted, especially because it's kinda dark. I really tried for the Teddy/James, but in the end I just couldn't seem to make it fit. Thanks to captainraychill for the beta.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!