

me, Ollie or Angie.” He gave that dimpled smile that Sirius loved, and Harry grinned back.

“Quidditch Captain,” he murmured, looking down at his badge. Sirius clapped him on the shoulder.

“Proud of you, kiddo,” he said, heart squeezing fondly at the way his godson’s face lit up.

“And hey, now I’m a free man I’ll be able to come see you play.” He hadn’t watched Harry in a quidditch match since that disastrous game in his third year where the dementors had swarmed him.

“Really?” Harry asked hopefully, and oh that broke Sirius’ heart a little bit, that he seemed so surprised that Sirius might actually want to come and support him like that.

“Every game Dumbledore will let me,” Sirius vowed earnestly.

With any luck, he’d have Harry’s whole career to watch him play quidditch, but he wanted to start as early as possible. He’d missed enough as it was.

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After the booklists arrived, it was decided that Harry and Draco would take separate trips to Diagon Alley, for safety reasons. Harry couldn’t really argue with that; he and Sirius got stared at enough as it was, without adding Draco and Narcissa to the mix. Diagon was a dark place these days, and Harry just wanted to get in and out as quickly as possible.

So he went first, with Sirius and Remus, apparating into the alley on a slightly grey afternoon. There wasn’t much Harry needed, really; Snape — *Severus*, Merlin, he’d never get used to that — had assured them he would take care of both boys’ potions ingredients, and Harry could have owl-ordered all the books and writing supplies he needed. But he needed new Hogwarts robes thanks to what he suspected was his final growth spurt, and that could only be done at Malkin’s.

Besides, Remus said it would be good for morale if people saw Harry out shopping for his school things.

Now that he was in Diagon, Harry wasn’t so sure about that.

The alley was certainly... different. The first thing Harry noticed was how empty it was; the few people who were there walked quickly and kept their heads down. No one stopped to chat, or called cheerful greetings.

Then he realised how many of the shops were empty. He’d heard, of course — the twins had told him about Fortescue closing up only days before someone smashed the shop up, and it had been in the *Prophet* when Ollivander mysteriously vanished one night. Even Luna wasn’t sure where her great-grandfather was, and Harry knew the Ravenclaw girl was worried about him. The further down they walked, the more it seemed shop owners had decided not to risk staying open in case Voldemort and his people took offence to that.