

Melting curse could be fatal, if not reversed immediately.

Draco sat back on his heels, looking exhausted. “She’ll live,” he said. Behind him, Harry heard someone let out a sharp, relieved breath. “I... I don’t know what state she’ll be in. How well she’ll recover. But she’ll live.”

“We’ll move her up to the Hospital Wing, get some Skele-Gro in her,” Pomfrey declared, conjuring a stretcher and carefully levitating Hannah onto it. The Hufflepuff was unconscious now, her face frighteningly pale. “Time will tell how she responds to it.”

A whimper, and Harry glanced over his shoulder; it was Ernie, looking at his girlfriend with watery blue eyes. “I— what can I do?” he asked, taking a hesitant step forward.

“You may come with me, Mr Macmillan,” Pomfrey told him gently. “I do not know when Miss Abbott will awaken, but I’m sure she’d appreciate a familiar face when she does.”

Ernie nodded, falling into step behind Pomfrey and Draco with the stretcher, heading out of the hall.

It was only Harry, Neville and the two aurors remaining, now. Neville looked especially grim. “I don’t think it’s a coincidence that it was Hannah who got hit,” he declared, voicing the words that were rattling in Harry’s mind. “Seems a bit suspicious that out of everyone in this hall, that curse hit one of the four people connected to the castle wards.”

“They always think Hufflepuffs are the weakest,” Tonks muttered, scowling.

“I was facing that area, but I didn’t see who the curse came from,” Kingsley admitted.

“Could you pull a memory?” Harry asked, brain whirring. “I have a pensieve.”

The auror perked up. “It’s worth a shot.”

The Potter family pensieve was down in Snape’s quarters, where they’d been using it to go through his memories of Death Eater meetings in the hopes of identifying any potential spies within the castle. It was a good thing Neville had been let in on the secret when Harry had been kidnapped, or he would have been incredibly surprised when Harry stepped up to the statue guarding Snape’s rooms and gave her the password.

“I heard about what happened,” Snape said in greeting; he was sat on the sofa, with the pensieve already on the coffee table. “I thought you might be on your way.”

Ignoring Neville’s trepidation at being in his feared professor’s personal rooms, Harry walked over to the stone bowl, raising an eyebrow at Kingsley. It was the work of only a few moments for the broad-shouldered man to raise his wand to his temple, extracting a strand of silver memory and dropping it into the pensieve. All five of them gathered around it, and in unison they put their hands in the liquid.

Immediately, Harry was right back in the Great Hall, stood beside the memory version of Kingsley and watching the training duels at work. “Spread out,” Kingsley instructed. “The spell came from somewhere behind her.”