

So he reached for his inkwell, and etched a message on the silver plate. *Training. Great Hall, Tuesday, 3PM.* He made sure to clarify, not wanting those outside the castle to think it was an emergency meeting. To his surprise, many of them turned up at the Hogwarts gates on Tuesday morning, bags slung over their shoulders. “Alright, Potter,” Cassius greeted, nodding in his direction. “Room for one more?”

“Always,” Harry said, grasping the Slytherin’s forearm in welcome. “Where’s...?” He trailed off, not sure if he could name Cassius’ partner where others could hear.

“Finishing out the season, best he can,” Cassius explained. “I left him my inkwell, he says he’ll come when it’s time.”

Harry grinned — of course, even a war wouldn’t tear Oliver Wood away from quidditch.

At 3PM on the dot, Harry stood on the raised platform at the head of the Great Hall, looking at the cluster of students in front of him. Around the edges of the hall lingered a number of the adults now living in the castle; either because they didn’t know where else to go, or they were curious about what Harry Potter was up to this time.

“Alright, everyone. Welcome back, to a few familiar faces,” he added, nodding to the returned graduates. “I thought we’d start off easy, get warmed up. Some of you might be a little rusty.” His voice was teasing, and Patrick flipped him off from the back of the group. “Pair up, get going. Aiming to disarm, for now — Madam Pomfrey has better things to do than reattach limbs. Although Draco’s gotten better at it, so y’know. If you fancy your chances.” He wiggled his eyebrows. “I’ll be roaming.”

They got to work straight away, and Harry stayed where he was, watching with no small amount of pride as his students began duelling. He could see the exact moment their onlookers realised they weren’t just sticking to student-level spells, watching their eyes widen and their jaws slacken. Molly Weasley looked like she might faint as she saw Ginny ducking a Reductor curse and sending back a sickly orange hex that would have dislocated both of Cho’s kneecaps if she’d let it hit.

Harry walked between the pairs, pointing out weak spots, offering advice. Occasionally a spell came his way, forcing him to dodge or deflect — perhaps their spectators thought it was sloppy casting, but Harry knew it was intentional. They were all checking Harry was still paying attention.

“When this is all over,” a deep baritone murmured, and Harry looked up as he reached the edge of the group to see Kingsley approaching him, “I’m going to need names. Any of these kids want to be an auror, they’re in.” He squeezed Harry’s shoulder. “I’d offer the same to you if I thought you’d take it. You’ve done a damn fine job with them. What year is that scrawny kid in?” He was pointing at Dennis Creevey, who was duelling against Justin Finch-Fletchley and holding his own remarkably well.

“Just finished his third,” Harry answered. Kingsley let out a low whistle.

“Fucking hell, Potter. Aren’t his parents stopping him from fighting?”