

“Uh, thanks. Bye, then.” And, ignoring her stuttering, he neatly side-stepped her and carried on towards the dorm.

Slughorn’s party couldn’t come soon enough. Maybe then people would finally leave him alone.

Tossing the chocolate cauldrons aside, uncaring of where they ended up — he certainly had no intention of eating them — he dug through his satchel for his invisibility cloak and the map, and paused for a moment. What else could he bring Draco? What did you bring people when they were unwell?

He had vague memories of Aunt Petunia plying a poorly Dudley with endless soup and ice cream. But Draco wasn’t a big fan of ice cream, and he’d probably already eaten. Anyway, bringing food wasn’t that impressive when Draco had full access to the same house elves Harry did.

What else? He stared at his trunk, as if it might hold all the answers. There was no point in bringing potions, not when he’d likely had all he could take from Pomfrey and Snape. A book, maybe?

Then, Harry’s gaze landed on the blanket balled up at the bottom of his bed. It was a new addition; Andromeda had quilted it for his birthday, a patchwork of monochrome fabrics with the Black family crest in the centre.

Perfect. It wouldn’t even look out of place if Crabbe or Goyle saw it — they would just assume it was a gift from his mother.

Harry folded up the blanket, shrinking it down to put in his pocket, and hurried from the dorm.

It was a little difficult getting out of the common room — far too crowded to try and sneak out under the cloak, but being visible meant people trying to talk to him — but he managed it with a few brusque remarks, and once he was in the corridor outside he headed to the nearest Parseltongue passage.

Sneaking into the Slytherin common room was easy, with the castle wards negating the need for a password. The snake pit was a much more morose sight; they had nothing to celebrate, after all. But nobody noticed the door open for no one, and Harry was entirely silent as he snuck towards the boys’ dorms. He had the Marauder’s Map open in one hand beneath the cloak, edging towards the room that only held one single dot; he had been correct to assume Draco’s dorm mates would seek refuge elsewhere, just in case he was contagious.

He crept through the door, shutting it firmly behind him, murmuring a privacy ward under his breath. He heard a quiet, muffled call. “Blaise, that you?”

“Not Blaise,” Harry said softly, shrugging the cloak off.

The lights were dimmed, but he could see Draco lying in his bed, the drapes only half-closed. He was propped up on some pillows, his face paler than usual and his hair ruffled and