

Ron's wand being used to cast the Mark didn't do them any favours, but they eventually got it all sorted out and made it back to their tents, where luckily the rest of the Weasley family were waiting mostly unharmed. Bill had a cut across his cheek and Percy's right sleeve was a little charred, but other than that they were fine. Ginny was chalk-white, tucked into Charlie's side.

They gathered in the bigger tent, no one willing to tell the girls to go back to bed after that ordeal. The trio ended up sharing what had happened to them, and Ron asked about the Dark Mark, not understanding why it was such a big deal. Harry stayed silent through Mr Weasley's explanation, but forgot to pretend to be unaware of such things — all the things Snape and Remus had taught him over the summer, about the first rise of Voldemort and why it was such a bad sign that Snape's Dark Mark was hurting again. Mr Weasley shot Harry an odd look when he didn't react to Bill's remark that the crowd was obviously Death Eaters who had lied to keep themselves out of Azkaban. Harry covered it with a yawn, hoping the man would just believe he was zoning out due to exhaustion. It had been one hell of a day.

They were all sent to bed shortly after, though Harry lay awake for a long while, listening to Charlie's soft snores. He wished there were a little more privacy in the tent; he had the two way mirror in his bag, and he was desperate to talk to Sirius and tell him what happened. He'd no doubt find out from the *Prophet* in the morning. If Snape didn't know already. Had he been part of the group? To keep his cover?

Harry's nerves tied knots in his guts as he squeezed his eyes shut, imagining Remus staying up late worried about his partner, Sirius pacing the living room and demanding to go check Harry was okay. He'd call them in the morning, as soon as he could get some time to himself.

.-.-.-.

They'd only had a few hours sleep when Mr Weasley woke them all up, and soon they were packed and trudging back to the crowded portkey departure point.

Mrs Weasley was waiting anxiously when they returned, rushing forward to meet them at the garden gate. She threw herself into her husband's arms, before hugging each of her children in turn, then Harry and Hermione. "Oh, thank goodness! I was so worried! The paper said there were *bodies*, oh, you're alive!" She doubled back to hug the twins, sobbing about having yelled at them before they left.

Breakfast was a somber affair, Mr Weasley and Percy barely staying long enough to wolf down some toast before they headed into the Ministry to start dealing with the aftermath. Harry didn't know who Rita Skeeter was, but he already didn't like her; that article was causing more fear and worry than the Death Eaters themselves!

He got his chance to slip away when the other Weasleys decided to start up a game of quidditch in the garden. Promising to be out in a minute, he hurried up to Ron's room and dug through his backpack for the two-way mirror. "Sirius Black," he said quickly — it was barely a second before Sirius' worried face filled the glass. He'd obviously been waiting for the call.