

“I’ll go,” Sirius volunteered. Harry narrowed his eyes at him. “I’ll come back safe, I promise.” He leaned in, kissing Harry’s forehead. “Get some rest, pup. You’ve earned it.” As he squared his shoulders, he winked at Snape. “Look after our boys ’til I get back, Severus.”

Snape placed a hand on Harry’s shoulder, nodding tersely, ignoring the many people staring incredulously at him for the exchange.

Kingsley, Amelia and Sirius all hurried off, and Harry and Neville shared a sheepish look as they both realised at once that they were still holding the wards too tight; no one would be able to get out. Harry eased his grip on the presence in his mind, feeling Hogwarts relax in turn.

That connection felt stronger, too, now that he was of age. Was that normal, or a side effect of being connected to the Wardstone during his maturation?

He and Neville would find out, he supposed.

“I have so many questions right now,” Ginny said, staring at the long-fingered hand on Harry’s shoulder. “But quite frankly I’m too tired to give a shit.”

Harry snorted, swaying ever so slightly. “Tell me about it,” he agreed. His mouth still tasted of bile, and he grimaced, shooting a Cleaning charm at it. His magic surged up happily, but his whole body ached with the force of it, surprising him with the flare of pain and vertigo. Draco’s quick arm around his waist was the only thing that stopped him from falling flat on his face.

“Okay, that’s it, inside time for you,” the blond murmured. “I need to check you over — I can see you bleeding in at least four places, and I dread to think what else is wrong that you haven’t even noticed yet.”

Considering Harry could only feel two places he knew he was bleeding, that was probably a fair assessment.

The castle wasn’t far off, but to Harry’s exhausted body it felt like miles. Still, he’d had worse, so he kept on walking, leaning heavily against Draco’s side.

He could sleep for a week, after this.

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The work didn’t end when the battle was won.

With many of the still-fit fighters off with Kingsley and Amelia to reclaim the Ministry and spread the word, those who remained did what they could. Those with any knowledge of healing magic tended to their own wounds and the minor wounds of those around them, all in unspoken agreement that the Hospital Wing should be saved for serious injuries. Anything not life threatening could wait a bit.

Someone must have told those seeking refuge that it was over, because Harry could see students who were definitely not of age, and adults who had not been involved in the fighting