

Harry grinned to himself, attention turning back to the professor — he *knew*, of course, but having confirmation like that made his stomach flutter happily.

“Ugh,” Blaise muttered under his breath, glaring at them both. Harry winked at him.

“I’m sorry, Blaise — I’m sure the smell of fireworks is going to make it really hard to tell whether your cauldron is burning today,” he replied quietly, snickering as Blaise’s glare intensified.

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Potions class with Slughorn was far more relaxed than Potions with Snape — or perhaps it was that everyone in the room had chosen to be there.

Or maybe, it was because Harry was brewing using the altered instructions in Snape’s book, and it made the Draught of Living Death an absolute *breeze* to brew. Even Draco kept looking over at his cauldron in amazement. “Tell you later,” Harry promised quietly, stirring his cauldron — with the additional clockwise stir Snape recommended.

The result was a cauldron of flawless Draught of Living Death, which had Hermione — wild-haired and flustered after her frantic brewing process — glaring daggers at him across the classroom when Slughorn sung his praises, handing over the small vial of Felix Felicis.

“Inherited your mother’s talent, to be sure!” the old professor declared excitedly. “My, my, well done indeed, Harry my boy!”

Harry slipped the book carefully into his bag on the way out, already mentally rearranging his evening.

“How did you do that?” Hermione cornered him as soon as they were outside the classroom. “You— your potion was *perfect*, that shouldn’t have been possible in the time allotted!”

“I guess I just got lucky,” he replied, utterly straight-faced. Hermione glared at him, huffed loudly, and stormed off, dragging Ron along with her. When she was gone, Draco chuckled.

“No, really, how *did* you do that?” he asked, bumping Harry’s shoulder. “Don’t get me wrong, I know you can brew. But that was something else.”

Seeing Blaise and Theo looking equally curious, Harry beckoned them into an empty classroom and pulled out the book, showing it to them. “I found it in the cupboard when I grabbed a book for Ron. Whoever owned it last made some adjustments to the instructions,” he explained. “I just followed them, and it worked out well.”

“I’ll say,” Theo murmured, brows knitting together as he studied the spidery writing. “Well, that’s much less interesting than you suddenly developing incredible potion-making abilities.”

“Sorry to disappoint,” Harry replied with a chuckle, putting the book away. “I’ll share, if you like.”