

Only seven hours since the moment they had dropped the wards. Seven hours, and so many lives lost.

The dam broke, the first sob escaping him — a raw, painful thing, shaking his shoulders and making his whole head ache, tearing through him worse than any spell he'd taken that morning. Once he started, he couldn't stop, sobbing hideously into Draco's chest, tears and snot and the whole shebang, blubbing his apologies; to Draco for making a mess, and to Colin and Padma and everyone else for not being fast enough, not being strong enough, just not being *enough*.

Draco stroked his hair, and hugged him tight, and didn't make a single comment about the snot. He just kept holding him, his own tears coming more quietly, a release of all the fears he'd ever had in his entire life. The fear of losing his mother, the fear of losing *Harry*, the fear of having to bow to Lord Voldemort and act like he meant it.

Those fears were a thing of the past.

It was this way that the two boys eventually fell asleep, tangled so close together it looked almost painful, their eyes puffy and their shredded hearts slowly beginning to piece themselves back together.

They had survived, and that was the important part.

Chapter End Notes

I thought about dragging this out over multiple chapters but, quite frankly, I hate writing battle scenes lmao. Still, we've got a little ways to go before this story is fully put to bed!