

“Remus would kill me if I let you walk out of here with a wound like that,” he said flatly, though he made no move to grab Harry’s hand. There was a brief staring competition, before Snape pinched the bridge of his nose in frustration. “Salazar save me from stubborn, idiot Gryffindors. Give me your hand.”

“No dittany?” Harry checked warily, holding his hand out only after Snape nodded. He waved his wand over Harry’s skin, murmuring two spells in quick succession.

“The first should stop the bleeding,” Snape explained, watching as the cut quickly scabbed over, but didn’t heal any further. “The second spell is one you’ll need to learn — it removes the build-up of magic from the connection to the quill.” Harry’s nose wrinkled in confusion. “Blood Quills are for binding contracts — prolonged use can, in some cases, have the same effect as a magical vow.”

The blood drained from Harry’s face. “You mean it could make it impossible for me to lie?”

“Not impossible, but... uncomfortable. Misdirection and avoiding the truth will be fine — which, luckily, is more your usual method anyway — but outright lies will trigger the magic. Between those two spells, and the dittany when you’re out of her clutches, there should be no lasting damage.”

Harry watched as Snape succinctly demonstrated the second spell, then repeated it a couple times himself. “Good. Now, I will hold on to this,” Snape said, brandishing the dittany, “and you will come here *immediately* after your final detention on Friday. Are we clear?”

“Yes, sir.” Harry really didn’t see what the big deal was about leaving the wound until Friday. He wouldn’t let it get infected or anything.

“Good, now go to bed. I won’t have you falling asleep in your cauldron tomorrow.”

The poorly-hidden concern made something warm in Harry’s chest, and he bid the man goodnight. “Oh, and I have this for you,” he added before he could forget, digging the two-way mirror out of his pocket. “Could you get that back to Sirius, please?”

“He’ll have it by the weekend,” Snape assured. Harry grinned, then scurried from the professor’s quarters, hurrying back up to Gryffindor Tower. He had a dream diary and six inches on the proper handling of bowtruckles to write before he could go to bed.

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In Thursday’s detention, the words stopped healing entirely after around three hours, blood dripping slowly down the back of Harry’s hand. The sight of it made Umbridge grin sharply. Harry was just glad it meant he was free before nine, instead of at midnight.

As exhausted as he was, he still had homework to do when he returned to the common room, a glamour covering his hand so Neville wouldn’t ask about the obvious cut. They seemed surprised to see him back so early.