

Chapter 89

The first week of October was a fairly ordinary one, as far as Hogwarts went.

At least, it started out that way.

Harry went to bed fairly late on the Friday night, after a HA meeting that culminated in him and Draco staying back in the Room for some alone time. He was exhausted when he finally collapsed on his mattress, looking forward to a nice long rest before he had to spend his weekend writing essays.

He was not expecting to be woken up at four in the morning by a strange, persistent sort of magic.

His hand went reflexively to his scar, alarmed, before he remembered it was entirely inert these days. And this magic felt... different. It didn't set him on edge — if anything, it was welcoming. But it was impatient. It needed him for something.

Trepidation brewing in his stomach, Harry pulled back his curtains, swinging his legs over the edge of his bed — and froze. Neville stood in the middle of the darkened room, pulling a dressing gown over his pyjamas.

Both boys stared at each other, wide eyed.

"I... do you feel it, too?" Harry asked tentatively. Neville blinked, then nodded.

"What is it?" he asked. Harry shook his head, shoving his feet into slippers.

"No idea." The rest of their dorm mates seemed utterly oblivious, Ron's snores drifting through his poor attempt at a Silencing charm.

Utterly bewildered, wands in hand, Harry and Neville crept down the stairs. The common room was empty — the boys' frowns deepened. The magic continued to push, like a guiding hand on Harry's shoulder, urging him to leave Gryffindor Tower. He followed, though his gaze was wary.

Once out in the corridor, the magic directed him to turn right. The feeling of intent grew — it was almost... excited. Eager.

Absently, a memory flashed through his mind. Speaking to Salazar at the beginning of the year — *the castle is keen*.

Was that what was happening? But what was the castle keen *for*? And what did he and Neville have to do with it?

His shoulders relaxed a little at the realisation that the magic was Hogwarts itself; it wouldn't hurt him. But where was it taking them?