

She shook her head in faint amazement. “Just when I think you’ve run out of ways to surprise me, Potter.”

He laughed again, louder this time — and swayed, his shoulder bumping Neville’s. His taller friend steadied him with an arm around his waist. “That’s enough for you for one day, then,” he declared, voice lightly chiding. “Pretty sure even castle-magic counts as magic that you’re not supposed to be doing.”

Harry wanted to argue, but his vision was starting to swim, his blood feeling sluggish in his veins. Maybe he had overdone it a little bit.

“You disaster of a wizard.” That was Draco, as affectionate as he was deeply unimpressed, and Harry smiled when he half leaned, half fell into his boyfriend’s embrace. “Come on, up to bed with you.”

“Mm, as long as you’ll be there too.” This whole damn problem had started because Harry couldn’t stay the night in the same bed as Draco; to hell with that, now.

He gave a vague wave to the people who called out to wish him goodnight, letting Draco lead the way out of the hall. The blond poked him gently in the side. “Go on, then, give us a shortcut.”

Harry grinned, nudging the castle in the back of his mind. Hogwarts was more than happy to oblige — he thought it still felt bad for not doing more to warn him about Dumbledore lurking in the dark. He tried to send reassuring thoughts in its direction; the castle couldn’t be blamed for that. Dumbledore was a tricky little bastard at the best of times.

One staircase behind a tapestry magically took them up seven whole flights, spitting them out behind the tapestry of the trolls doing ballet. The Room of Requirement was already waiting for them, looking exactly like Harry’s room back at Seren Du. Harry let out a long sigh as he collapsed onto the bed, the strain finally starting to catch up with him, pounding at his temples. “I’m going to feel like shit in the morning,” he announced.

“Good thing you promised Ginny you’d go to Pomfrey, then, isn’t it?” Draco replied, unsympathetic, even as he pulled Harry’s shoes off his feet. Harry undid his Gryffindor tie with clumsy fingers, feeling almost drunk as he tried to help Draco undress him, the blond patient and gentle even as the worry returned to his grey eyes. Draco stripped himself quickly, tugging back the duvet and crawling into bed in just his underwear. Harry rolled over, claiming the blond like his own personal teddy bear, burying his face in the curve of Draco’s neck.

“For a while I thought I’d never have this again,” he admitted in a heartbroken whisper. “Never hold you again.”

Draco’s arms wound around him, pulling him impossibly closer, like the two of them were trying their best to merge into one being. “You’re stuck with me, Potter,” Draco reminded fiercely. His voice was thick — was he crying? Harry couldn’t tell. “You promised me that.”