

Duelling in pairs was where things really got intense; Harry and Draco had trained quite a lot together, but never against opponents who were also used to duelling in partnership. Fighting Sirius and Remus was the closest they got, but the older pair had a whole twelve year gap in their lives that had changed their duelling style. Tonks and Kingsley worked together, lived together, knew each other inside and out; and it showed in their fighting style, the pair working with a fluidity that Harry and Draco could only dream of.

Still, it was an incredibly helpful exercise, and Harry was a little sad when there was suddenly a chirping sound from the inside of Kingsley's robe. Tonks cursed, while the bald man just frowned and pulled out something that looked like a pocket watch, but was flashing bright red. "Duty calls," he sighed. "Good work today, boys. I'd be happy to come back and work with you further, work permitting." He turned to Tonks, kissing her chastely. "I'm sorry, Tonks; we'll have to postpone our dinner plans. I'll see you at home?"

"Be safe," she replied. "If it's Proudfoot fucking up again, do me a favour and hex him."

A flicker of a smile, and then Kingsley was striding from the room, leaving the three of them behind. When he was gone, Tonks let out a long sigh. "I swear to Helga, if he's gone all evening because of something stupid that the in-office aurors could've handled, I'm going to blow up the whole fucking Ministry."

"I thought the on-call aurors were only for emergencies?" Harry broached tentatively, and Tonks huffed.

"You would think so," she agreed, "but we've both had all sorts of ridiculous calls lately — it's worse than when Fudge was in charge! At least then it was genuine incompetence; now it's just Dark supporters within the Ministry *accidentally* letting things go wrong." She scowled, the tips of her hair turning red. "Sometimes I think they've figured the pair of us out; this only ever seems to happen on the times we have the whole day off together."

"Will it be bad, if you do get caught?" Draco asked with furrowed brows.

"Depends," Tonks said, shrugging. "They could technically fire both of us, if they wanted to. If they're trying to get Light-sided aurors out, that could happen. Best case scenario is a slap on the wrist and maybe a bit of suspension time, with a warning not to bring personal drama into the workplace. But ideally we'll keep it secret until it's no longer a problem."

At that, a secretive smile crossed her face. Harry and Draco shared a look; what did those two have planned?

"Well," Draco said eventually, checking his watch, "we were about due to finish up anyway, and I have some potions I wanted to brew. Are you staying for lunch, cousin?"

"Won't turn down a free meal," Tonks chirped cheerfully. "Especially now I've got nothing to go home to for a while."

Draco nodded, and tugged Harry into a brief kiss.