

“Don’t know if it quite works that way, Lu,” she replied. “Would be nice, though.” Then she made a face of disgust. “There’s always the Chamber of Secrets, I suppose. It’s certainly big enough. And hidden enough.” She didn’t seem thrilled by the suggestion. Harry shuddered.

“And full of basilisk corpse,” he reminded her.

“Oh, yeah.” She shrugged. “Maybe you can split the group into smaller groups. Do it by year, or something.”

That sounded like an enormous time commitment to Harry, and he said as much. “I know I said I’d try and stop getting detentions, but I still have homework to do,” he pointed out. A frustrated sigh escaped his lips. “We’ll sort something out. Maybe. It’s a nice idea, at any rate.”

He reluctantly went back to his essay, tapping his quill against his lower lip in thought. Luna’s words, ridiculous though they sounded, stuck in his head.

He was Slytherin’s heir; the castle’s magic had helped him out plenty of times last year, avoiding Crouch and such. Always small things, but there was definitely some sort of sentient presence there.

...Asking couldn’t hurt, right?

.-.-.

That night, once the rest of his dorm-mates were asleep, Harry snuck out beneath his invisibility cloak, Marauder’s Map in his pocket just in case. Stood unseen in the corridor outside the tower entrance, he closed his eyes, and *reached* with his magic.

It was hard, but after an evening spent meditating in search of his animagus form, the magic came easier than it might have done otherwise. He stretched it towards the ambient magic of the castle, one thought echoing in his mind.

*I need a place we can all learn. Help me, help the students.*

He stood there for several minutes, magic thrumming, feeling like a bit of an idiot as he silently begged the castle for help. He let out a long breath, disappointedly letting his magic fade — and then there was a nudge.

He froze. Another nudge; a familiar feeling, the castle’s magic reaching back, urging him. A grin split his face, his breathless laugh echoing in the empty corridor. “Show me,” he whispered, focusing on that nudge.

The magic pulled, and he followed.

It didn’t tug him towards the main staircase, like he anticipated. Instead, Harry followed the pull through the winding corridors of the seventh floor, keeping his footsteps quiet and a careful eye on the map, just in case. He didn’t pay much attention to where it was leading him, focused so hard on not losing the feel of the magic.