

Harry laughed. “Neither. I’ve been thinking, today — now the twins are gone, I’m really the only bit of the Marauders’ legacy in this school. Maybe I should take up the mantle a bit.” So far, he’d really only stuck to little things to piss off Umbridge, and sneaking around the school in fox form at night when it was easy to be mistaken for a cat.

Umbridge would think she was safe, now the twins were gone.

He couldn’t have that.

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Harry didn’t seem to be the only one who was determined to fill the void left by the Weasley twins; everyone was trying their hand at becoming the next Master Prankster, inspired by their boldness. It was now impossible to go anywhere without a Bubblehead charm thanks to the number of dungbombs being dropped everywhere — Harry was highly amused to see one of the Ravenclaw seventh year prefects herding a group of first and second years down to dinner on one of the worst days, all the kids’ heads in one giant bubble like some sort of ridiculous aquarium. A niffler had been deposited in Umbridge’s office, the suits of armour were liable to jump out and challenge you to anything from a duel to a dance-off, and amidst it all Peeves was taking the twins’ parting shot to heart, causing more chaos within the school than all previous years of Harry’s memory combined.

Despite Filch’s insistence that he would get permission to exorcise the poltergeist, that had yet to happen. And with so many troublemakers popping up, Filch couldn’t keep track of them all, pacing the corridors and yelling at any student he happened to find but unable to punish any of them.

In between the times in which he was stationed at the edge of the swamp in the east wing, which Umbridge had been unable to remove despite many attempts, hauling over any students who were incapable of levitating themselves. Harry had spent one excellent lunch hour hidden as a fox, watching Filch punt first years across the foul-smelling miniature biome.

On top of all that, members of the Inquisitorial squad kept suffering strange and mysterious accidents, leaving them unable to help Umbridge put a lid on this wave of terror. Nothing particularly serious, but all very entertaining.

Harry didn’t feel the need to join in until a few days after the twins’ disappearance, when the initial wave of pranking began to die down. Then he prepared his supplies, and got to work as soon as curfew had passed.

He had asked Draco to join him, hoping to spend a little quality time with his boyfriend, but the blond had studying to do apparently. Still, Harry was surprised to see a different Slytherin waiting for him outside the Gryffindor common room.

“That you, Harry?” Blaise whispered, after seeing the portrait open for seemingly no one. Harry lowered the hood of the cloak.

“Everything alright?”