

With Draco living at Seren Du, Harry's training had picked up in full force — it was good for him to go back on things he might have already learned, while Draco learned them for the first time. And at the rate the blond was progressing, he'd be caught up to Harry in no time; Harry might have the raw power to smooth his way, but Draco had the brains and determination to match the fiercest of Ravenclaws. Not to mention far too much pride to let himself look bad in front of both his godfather and his boyfriend.

For Harry, who had spent the past two summers feeling like he'd stolen Snape from Draco, it was great to see the pair finally getting to work together. And very amusing, to see Snape working with someone he didn't feel the need to snipe at every few minutes, even in jest. Harry could see how much Draco idolised his godfather; sometimes, watching them, he could easily imagine a much younger Draco, begging Snape to teach him about potions, carefully mimicking the man's every movement. Snape indulgently explaining the different techniques for preparing ingredients — he didn't suffer fools, but his godson was no fool.

It always made Harry think back to the memory Snape had shown him, of his heavily pregnant mother; of her offer to carry a child for Remus and Snape. Snape's instant dismissal of the whole thing — far too quick, in Harry's opinion.

How different things could have been.

But today they weren't working with Snape, as the Potions Master was at Hogwarts brewing for the upcoming school year. Instead, they were with Sirius, walking out into the woods surrounding the property; past the property line entirely.

Outside the apparition wards, for lessons both Harry and Draco could hardly wait to start.

"Apparating isn't really as hard as it's cracked up to be," Sirius told them as they walked. "Won't be for you two, anyway; it's all about focus, and you've got that in spades."

Another thing Harry likely would have struggled with under Dumbledore's compulsions. Merlin, the man really had hoped to make Harry helpless!

They stopped in a clearing not too far from the ward line, and Sirius brandished his wand, tracing two sets of white circles on the ground, about ten feet apart. "We'll start off easy, to get a feel of things. You can see where you're going; all you'll have to do is get from one circle to the other."

As Sirius began to explain the three Ds of apparition, Harry tried his best to focus, stepping into the nearest circle. He very pointedly didn't look at Draco — the look on the blond's face when he was concentrating incredibly hard was far too cute, in Harry's opinion, and he knew he'd just end up getting distracted.

"Don't expect much to happen immediately," Sirius warned them, stepping back to watch. "It takes some time to get the hang of it. Remember, you've got all summer. No need to rush it and splinch yourselves." Both boys winced; yes, they definitely wanted to avoid that outcome.