

Harry cut him off, pulling the blond into a tight hug. “Don’t even,” he scolded. “You did everything you could, Draco. Fuck, you probably saved Hannah’s life. Pomfrey was quick but even that short space of time...” The curse could have made it to Hannah’s knees and shoulder blades by then. “You did amazingly, sweetheart. You’re not a healer yet, you’re not even in training for it! And yet you identified the curse and stopped it in under a minute!” He pulled back, cupping Draco’s face. “That’s incredible. *You’re* incredible. And I won’t have you blaming yourself for any of this. Pretty sure Hannah would kick your arse if she heard you trying.”

That earned a flicker of a smile. After a beat, Harry ran his own words back in his mind. “Hell, is that what it’s like for you when I get on my saving-people bullshit?” He made a face, and Draco chuckled.

“Pretty much, yeah,” he confirmed.

“Oh. Well. Sorry.” No wonder it annoyed everyone so much when Harry did it. He couldn’t stand Draco putting himself down when he’d already done so much good!

He wrapped his arms around his boyfriend again, looking over at Hannah’s bed, at Susan and Ernie clutching each other because Hannah’s state was too delicate for either of them to hold her hand.

Harry was *so* ready for this battle to be over.

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There was a meeting, that evening. It couldn’t really be called an Order meeting, since those who had once been part of the Order had since eschewed Dumbledore and all that he stood for — the existing Order were out there, somewhere, perhaps with the ex-headmaster but perhaps not. Either way, they hadn’t shown up to fight, and that said it all.

But it was everyone who Harry associated with the Order, plus a few extras; himself and Neville and Luna, whom the adults had kicked up a fuss about but were promptly reminded of *why* the attack had targeted Hannah. Amelia and Narcissa, both women glaring fiercely at anyone who dared question their inclusion. Professors Flitwick and Sprout — and McGonagall of course — wan-faced at the two very different but awful fates of their charges.

“For anyone who is unaware, Terry Boot has been confirmed under Veritaserum as a supporter of Lord Voldemort, though he does not yet have the Dark Mark,” Kingsley declared in the tense silence of McGonagall’s office. “He admitted that he intentionally cast the Bone-Melting curse at Miss Abbott, with the intent to kill her. Apparently, he was under orders to weaken the new school wards however possible, and believed that killing one of the heirs — especially the only one who is currently of age — would sever the connection. The founders’ lines are linked, after all.”

“Cut down one of us, cut us all off,” Neville murmured, grimacing.

“Who else?” Harry asked flatly. “Who else in this castle is working for *him*.”