

“None of you children are attending Order meetings, and that’s final!” she screeched. “If you don’t like it, take it up with Dumbledore; I’m sure he’ll agree with me.”

Harry scowled — there was no way in hell Dumbledore would allow Harry to go to Order meetings. He needed his little pawn as oblivious as possible.

Sirius was scowling too, and even Remus looked unimpressed by the whole argument. Some of Harry’s ire cooled — they would both tell him anything he needed to know.

It was just frustrating, to know that he was closer to the action than ever, and yet still expected to keep his head down and pretend to be an ordinary teenage boy without a care in the world. He couldn’t even take his frustrations out on Snape in a duel, or on the quidditch pitch.

God, he missed home already.

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Apparently, while Harry and the other teenage members of the household were too young to be part of the Order, they weren’t too young to be put to work in making the house habitable for said Order. After breakfast he was handed a rag and a spray bottle, and sent with Ron and Hermione up to the drawing room, where they were told to clear out the china cabinet and check for infestation.

“Infestation of what?” Harry asked with a grimace of disgust. Hermione pursed her lips.

“Doxies. We got most of them out of the curtains yesterday before you got here, but there might be more hiding elsewhere.” She opened the china cabinet, coughing at the swirl of dust it sent up. “Watch your fingers, boys; some of this stuff might be cursed.”

The shelves of the cabinet were full of all sorts of odds and ends; small weapons, tarnished silver boxes, several crystal potion vials with curious-looking contents, and even a coiled snakeskin.

Harry watched Hermione use her rag to pick up one of the boxes, tossing it into a rubbish bag. His brows furrowed — if they were potentially cursed, surely they shouldn’t be touching them? At the very least, they should have wands ready. Neither Hermione nor Ron even had theirs with them.

Surely they didn’t think their magic would be traced *here*? The house was unplotable!

But as he kept watching, neither of them used so much as a Shield charm. “If this stuff is dangerous, surely someone old enough to use magic should be dealing with it?” he said cautiously. Hermione glanced over at him.

“They’re busy with the important things, Harry,” she told him, voice dripping with condescension. “Besides, Mrs Weasley scanned it yesterday and said it’s probably fine, we just have to be careful.”