

“Playing at?” Harry repeated incredulously. “I’m not *playing* at anything — I’m saving lives, because your lot were too fucking slow to get here!”

“This isn’t a fun little training exercise for your bloody duelling club, boy!” Moody argued. Harry blamed his exhaustion for the way that he flinched at the word.

“Does it look like we were training?” he retorted, spreading his arms wide. “We’re the only damn reason Hogsmeade is still standing. You should be thanking us.”

Moody scoffed. “For putting yourselves in danger because you think you can stand up to a real fight, just because you’ve done it in your classroom? You’re going to get them all killed!” He looked around, glaring at the HA members. “All of you! Idiot children, involving yourselves where you’re not wanted. And you!” He rounded on Fred and George. “Where the hell were you two? You were supposed to be guarding the place, not reliving your glory days with your little friends!”

“Mad-Eye, I think you need to calm down,” Kingsley started, placing a hand on the man’s shoulder only to be roughly shrugged off. “Potter and his friends did good work here.”

“Potter and his friends need to keep their heads down and their noses out of other peoples’ business!” Moody snapped.

“They came here for me,” Harry said hotly. “They made it my business. Regardless, I wasn’t going to stand by and let them torture a bunch of third years!”

“You had no right to ask students to fight your battles for you! It’s one thing to take on Death Eaters yourselves; it’s another to throw kids in their way. Or do you want another Diggory on your hands?”

“Harry didn’t ask us to do anything!” came Ginny’s furious response. “We fought on our own decisions. And we *won*.” For good measure, she kicked the bound and unconscious Death Eater at her feet.

“And don’t you *dare* talk about Cedric like that!” Cho added, voice shaking only slightly.

Moody growled, turning back to Harry. “I knew something like this would happen. Before he left, Albus said—“

“Albus?” Harry repeated, wide-eyed. “You’re still listening to what Dumbledore told you, after he tried to *kill* me?”

Moody’s gaze narrowed, his electric blue eye darting up to Harry’s scar. “Don’t think because you’ve got the rest of the world convinced every word out of your mouth is bloody gospel, that you can hide the truth from those of us who know it.”

“Mad-Eye, that’s *enough*,” Kingsley cut in sharply. Another Order member scoffed.

“You *would* say that, wouldn’t you?” she muttered, glaring at Kingsley. “Still bitter you’re not leading the Order yourself, Shackbolt?”