

“He’s Harry,” Fred piped up with a weak grin. “He’s always fine.”

“Terrifying in a fight,” George agreed; and he would know, after months of the HA. “And if he’s got our sister with him, those Death Eaters will be wetting themselves already.”

Charlie visibly stiffened at the prospect of Ginny fighting Dark wizards. Sirius put a hand on his arm. “Hey, it’s okay. If she’s here, it’s because Harry thinks she can handle it. He’s protecting her,” he assured, catching all the Weasley men with him in his gaze.

“They’re just kids, Sirius,” Charlie whispered, ragged and heartbroken. Sirius understood; he felt the same way when he watched Harry be taught multiple ways to kill a man, to fight against magic far more complex than he would learn in school. But it was too late to shelter the children, now. The best way to protect them was to teach them to protect themselves.

The lift doors shrieked as they opened, and the six of them stepped into the corridor.

They could hear the sounds of battle already.

Sirius didn’t wait for the rest of the group; he surged forward, heading for the door to the Department of Mysteries. He didn’t get very far, though; Charlie was still holding onto him, and reeled him back in, kissing him before Sirius even knew what was happening. “Don’t do anything stupid,” the redhead growled. “Alright? I’m not telling Harry I let you die on my watch.”

Sirius could only nod, and then blush when Fred let out a quiet wolf-whistle. He’d forgotten other people were around.

“Well, then,” Arthur said quietly, eyes wide behind his glasses. “That’s, uh... that’s a conversation best had later, I think.”

Sirius snorted, sharing an amused look with Charlie. They had that to look forward to, then.

With that in mind, he turned to the door, wrenching it open.

Sirius had been to the Department of Mysteries twice as a young auror, and both times he’d found it utterly creepy. Now, it was just terrifying.

Several of the doors were open, though all the ruckus seemed to be coming from one in particular. There was an unconscious and hog-tied man in a Death Eater robe in the middle of the circular room, a snapped wand at his side. Sirius turned to see Fred and George quietly high-fiving.

“That’s our lot,” Fred confirmed proudly.

Sirius was already looking for his godson, running straight past the Death Eater and into the room where the action was. It was a large coliseum style room, stone steps leading down to a plinth on which an archway stood, a piece of faded black fabric hanging from the stone.

The old execution chamber. Of all the places to end up...