

handful of muggle restaurants, in that summer before his fourth year when Sirius and Remus tried to introduce him to all the things he'd missed out on.

It was a big step up from the Three Broomsticks, that was for sure.

But whether or not Draco suspected his unease, the blond's calm demeanour went a long way to helping Harry relax. Draco ordered first, so Harry could just do what he did; tapping his desired order with his wand and having it appear on the plate in front of him. After that it was perfectly natural to slip into conversation — so much so that Harry almost forgot where they were until their waitress stopped by to ask if everything was to their liking.

The sweet wine slowly trickled warmth through his system, twining with the happy flutter in his belly that came with being out with Draco like this. "We should do this more often," he said as they were choosing their desserts. "Maybe not, like, *this*," he gestured to the very fancy restaurant around them, "but going out together. Sometimes it feels like the only time I get to be truly alone with you is when we're in bed." He blushed at saying something like that in public, glancing around, but no one could hear them through the spells.

Draco reached across the table, taking his hand with a fond smile. "I know what you mean. I love our family, but they're rather... a lot." He gave a lopsided grimace, chuckling. "I grew up an only child with mostly Crabbe and Goyle for company, or the house elves. I'm still not used to having so many people around."

"Think how I feel; I grew up in a bloody cupboard," Harry returned wryly.

It was wonderful, having a family as large and welcoming as theirs, having friends they could finally hang out with without masks or pretence or some sort of emergency to figure out.

But part of Harry missed the days of sneaking into classrooms to meet with Draco, playing Bluff and pretending they were the only two people in the world.

"It'll be harder at Hogwarts," Draco mused, running his thumb over Harry's knuckles. "But there's always the Chamber for privacy. And the wards certainly work in our favour," he added, eyes alight with amusement. "A lack of privacy is to be expected at school, though." His smile turned boyish, almost tentative. "I like the idea of doing more things just for us, when we can."

Harry grinned back, heart hammering in his chest. "That's settled, then."

They stared at each other, love in their eyes and dopey smiles on their faces, for longer than either would be willing to admit. Then a loud laugh from elsewhere in the restaurant broke their trance, and the two boys blushed, turning back to the dessert menus.

The sun was setting by the time they left, Harry not even blinking at the exorbitant price on the bill on his way out — it was worth every single knut, to see Draco smile like that.

"Our parents are going to be unbearable when we get in," Draco sighed, unable to hide the fondness in his voice. "I don't want this evening to end just yet."