

Still, Draco was right, and the two boys had to part ways; Harry up to the castle, and Draco doubling back to the Slytherin changing rooms to gather his things.

Harry should have expected to be accosted by two red-headed devils as soon as he walked through the portrait hole.

“There he is!” Fred shouted, thrusting a bottle of butterbeer into Harry’s hand.

“Man of the hour!” George cried, offering a second bottle.

“Finishing his walk of shame—”

“Stride of pride!”

“Shut up, both of you,” Harry groaned, obediently necking back the first bottle.

“About time you showed up!” Ginny exclaimed. “Everyone, Harry’s back!”

A roar of celebration went up around the common room, and Harry was shoved into the centre of the fray. He couldn’t even be mad about the looks the twins were sending him, or even the way Neville — shy little Neville! — kept making quiet innuendos about snakes, not when everyone around him was so happy. And occasionally transforming into canaries, thanks to snacks provided by the twins. Harry let himself be jostled over to where the rest of the team were celebrating, one of his butterbeers having been claimed by Lavender on his way through. He felt like he was walking on air; they had won the quidditch match, he had seen his boyfriend naked, and the whole house was happy for the first time since Umbridge had arrived.

As he turned to watch Fred and Lee juggling empty bottles, he caught sight of something out the window.

There was smoke drifting from the chimney of Hagrid’s hut.

A face-splitting grin tugged at Harry’s cheeks; Hagrid was back!

It was truly an excellent day.

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With the party going on in Gryffindor for most of Saturday evening, Harry decided to go down and see Hagrid in the morning. Wrapped up in several layers with his charmed cloak from Sirius and Remus shielding him from the snow, he trudged down to the hut, knocking on the door.

Hagrid opened the door, smiling widely at the sight of Harry. Harry, on the other hand, stared at his friend in horror. “What the hell happened to you?”

“Nice to see you, too, ‘Arry,” Hagrid said reproachfully. Harry scoffed, stepping into the hut and hanging up his cloak, edging closer to the blazing fire. Hagrid’s face looked like he’d had a run-in with a meat grinder, one of his eyes puffy and swollen. The way he moved, ambling