

The pair eventually parted ways, and Harry slipped away towards Gryffindor under the cover of the invisibility cloak. His mind still on the feeling of Draco's soft skin under his fingertips, Harry hardly noticed the insistent push of magic against his own; the castle trying to warn him of something. It was only when he heard the faint thunk-thunk of Moody's wooden leg that he froze. Slowly, he tried to back around the corner, away from the source of the noise.

"Potter!"

He cursed under his breath. The invisibility cloak was useless against Moody's magical eye. "Professor Moody," he greeted, dropping the hood reluctantly. Moody limped closer, smirking at Harry in the dim light.

"Out for a little late night stroll, are we?"

"I don't sleep well sometimes," Harry replied evasively, hoping he didn't look as ravished as he felt. Draco was usually pretty good about not leaving marks, unlike Harry. They both knew Moody could see through glamour charms, and Harry didn't want questions in class. "I'm sorry, I'll go back up to my dorm."

"Don't worry about it, Potter," Moody waved him off. "What McGonagall doesn't know won't hurt her." Harry thought it interesting that he chose to mention the Gryffindor housemistress and not the headmaster. Was he implying Dumbledore already knew, or just that he was likely to tell the man? "Listen, while I've got you here; how are things going with that egg of yours?"

"Fine," Harry replied, eyes narrowing. "I'm not supposed to accept help from people. Especially not teachers." As if he hadn't been helped by Snape plenty already. But Moody didn't need to know that.

The Defence teacher let out a raspy laugh. "Like you'll be the only champion getting outside help," he pointed out. "You sure you don't want to talk it over? My office is always open to you."

"No, I've got it covered, thanks," Harry insisted. "Look, if you're not going to take points or anything, can I go? I'd really like to go to bed now." It was nearing midnight, and he had Potions first thing in the morning. Snape would crucify him if he dozed off in class.

"Aye, be on your way, Potter. But be careful; there's all kinds of strangers in this castle. Even with that fancy cloak of yours, you wouldn't want one to come and snap you up." Moody grinned, though it was more of a grimace, his disfigured face twisting in a way that could easily give a person nightmares.

Harry almost pointed out that Professor Moody was one of those strangers, but quite frankly he was ready for that whole interaction to be over as quickly as possible. He nodded, throwing the hood of the cloak back up to cover himself and hurrying away from the creepy professor.

When he was several corridors away, Harry paused and pulled the map out of his bag, wanting to make sure Draco got back to his common room safely. If Moody came across him