

“Look at it this way,” Harry roared, eyes flashing. “You can sit there and think I’m crazy; fuck knows I can’t stop you. You can think I’m a liar and a lunatic and everything else the *Prophet* says about me. But on the off chance I’m *not* lying and Voldemort is actually out there, do you really want to take the chance of not being prepared?”

Seamus was milk-white at Harry’s words, and even Dean had gone ashen-faced. Harry snorted. “Thought not.” Then he stalked past them, heading for the bathroom just as the door opened to admit Ron.

Harry just wanted to brush his teeth and go to sleep, and hope to hell he didn’t dream of that *fucking* corridor again.

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Cool grey eyes surveyed the Slytherin common room, watching the assorted students greet each other after a summer apart, no longer on display in the Great Hall. They were still far more reserved than most, but Draco could see the tension leave each pair of shoulders as they stepped into their dungeon haven.

He watched closely, seeing the way certain students gravitated towards others, avoided some. The lines were already being drawn. Those with parents in the Dark knew the storm was coming, and they had instructed their children to ensure they remained on the correct side, to make sure they kept away from their classmates whose loyalties could not be certain. Even right down to the brand new first years, currently getting the ‘Welcome to Slytherin’ speech from Pansy, Draco could tell which way their parents leaned just by watching them interact with their peers.

It made the knot in his stomach tighten. He was going to have to walk those lines very carefully. A large number of people in this school knew his true feelings on the matter — he just had to hope they kept his secrets as well as they kept Harry’s.

Draco wasn’t so naive to think that he too wasn’t being watched. Being Lucius Malfoy’s son wasn’t enough to give him immunity — if anything, it would make him a beacon. A shining example of how the future soldiers of the Dark Lord’s army should act.

A very tall pedestal from which to fall, if he were caught.

If he was sensible, he’d keep his head down; befriend all the other Junior Death Eaters, avoid Harry Potter entirely, and hope the war ended before he was forced to make a clear choice.

But he’d long ago lost the ability to be that sensible. Right about the time he realised his heart skipped a beat when those vivid green eyes looked at him with joy instead of anger.

He looked across the room, meeting Blaise Zabini’s even stare. They had talked about it, in encoded letters, over the summer. As much as Draco would love to help nudge his fellow Slytherins out of the Dark Lord’s clutches, he was in far too precarious a position for that. Blaise, on the other hand, was a known neutral party. His mother lived in Italy, and couldn’t give a single fuck about any Dark Lords.