

Chapter 38

Harry woke up early the next morning, keen to start his training even though he knew it wouldn't start until after breakfast. He filled the time with his Charms homework, and met Remus and Snape down in the kitchen for breakfast.

"Now will you tell me what the plan is for today?" he pleaded, turning hopeful green eyes on Remus. The werewolf sighed.

"I suppose," he agreed, a smile creeping across his lips. "Unlike last summer, we won't divide the day into subjects; there are too many different things to teach you, and they all overlap. After lunch we'll start you off with some duelling practice, see where you stand there. But this morning I'm going to test you on Arithmancy and Runes. You have been keeping up your study, haven't you?"

"I have." Harry had spent a lot of time in the last week of school working on them; it was a good way to keep his mind busy. "So, duelling? What else?"

"If you are going to be fighting Death Eaters, there are many curses you will need to become familiar with," Snape said. "They won't stick to stunning and disarming you. I'll be teaching you to recognise some of the more common dark curses by sight and feel, and even to cast many of them yourself. There may be times when you don't want to risk your opponent escaping unharmed."

Harry swallowed sharply. He got the feeling it was going to be a very different duelling practice to the ones he'd had last summer. "I can do that."

"I will also be trying to drill some strategy into your Gryffindor skull," Snape continued. "If you are going to be leading the resistance against both Dumbledore and the Dark Lord, you need to learn to think like they think, to beat them to their mark. You will not win this war if you are one step behind the whole time, on either front."

"You're going to teach me to be a Slytherin," Harry realised with a smirk. Snape's eyes glittered.

"You keep insisting you would have done well in my house. It's time for you to prove it."

Harry could hardly wait.

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He passed Remus' Arithmancy and Runes tests with flying colours, and the werewolf beamed with pride when he handed Harry back his papers shortly after lunch. "Well done, cub. If you keep it up, you'll get Os in your OWLs with no problem."

At last, Snape took Harry into the duelling room, rolling up the sleeves of his dark blue shirt. "Your duel with the Dark Lord was a mockery," he declared. "He was toying with you. You