

Immediately, they all began to scramble into action. Harry almost fell flat on his face in his urgency to get out of the booth, wand shooting from his holster into his hand. “Katie, Sully, get the younger kids safe inside,” he instructed immediately. “We need to clear the streets.”

They flooded out of the pub, right into a battleground.

Black-robed Death Eaters were everywhere. Flashes of spellfire lit up the street, while students and Hogsmeade residents alike screamed and fled for safety. He could see Flitwick and Vector, the two staff chaperones, holding bright blue Shield charms over a cluster of students fleeing from Puddifoot’s.

Harry threw himself in front of a pair of terrified third years, raising a shield and sending a Severing hex straight back at the Death Eater who had attacked them. “Get inside the Three Broomsticks,” he told the kids. “Now!”

They finally snapped themselves out of their fearful stupor, sprinting across towards the pub.

“Potter!” someone roared, voice echoing over the shouts of spells and cries for help. “We were wondering if you’d come play the hero!”

“Well, you’ve got me,” Harry snarled, dropping into a defensive position, shooting off spells at whoever was within distance. Proper combat spells, not the stuff he taught the HA.

Harry wasn’t going to pull his punches with people who came to attack *children*.

Around him, he noticed familiar faces standing their ground with their wands raised — those who had been with him in the pub, sure, but other members of the HA who had been in the village at the time. Cho with one of her yearmates; Justin Finch-Fletchley and the fifth year Slytherin girl he was currently dating; the Creevey brothers and Vicky Frobisher. All of them taking to the fight without fear or hesitation.

The Death Eaters didn’t seem to know what to do. One of them yelped loudly as Vicky hit him with a Stinging hex, distracting him enough for Colin to Disarm him and snap his wand over his thigh. Another ended up with enormous bats flying from his own nose, attacking his face — that had to be Ginny.

Harry grinned, sending an Impediment jinx at a Death Eater before they could finish casting a fire spell at Dogweed and Death Cap. What the hell kind of idiot set fire to a herbology shop; did they not know what kind of reactions that could cause?

It was clear they had not expected this kind of resistance in Hogsmeade. “Has your *master* gotten so desperate he’d send his lackeys out to torture and kill a bunch of third years?” he taunted, firing a curse that would shatter the bones in one Death Eater’s hand, making them drop their wand with a scream.

“*You watch your mouth!*” The screech was familiar, sending ice through his heart.

Bellatrix Lestrange was in Hogsmeade.