

There were several people around the room who had dark looks on their faces as they stared at Harry, even from the Gryffindor table. It was a familiar sort of look; the look of people who thought Harry was dangerous, deranged, the next Dark Lord in the making. They probably thought he'd murdered Cedric himself.

"Thanks."

Cho smiled at him, reaching over to start piling mashed potatoes on her plate.

There wasn't much conversation through the meal; a few attempts at making summer plans, or relief at the end of exams, but nothing like the usual buzz of noise. Harry looked down the table, feeling like something was wrong. Someone was missing, but he couldn't figure out who.

Eventually, it hit him; there were most of the usual Slytherins in their group, but Cassius was missing. He craned his neck to look over at the Slytherin table, seeing the sixth year boy eating with his head down, surrounded by his year mates. He looked pale and wrung out. Harry's heart clenched. Had his uncle been in the graveyard too? Had he already drawn the line on Cassius' behalf?

"Susan," he called softly to the girl sitting a few seats over on the opposite side of the table. She looked up, frowning at the grim look on his face. He gave a pointed glance to Cassius. "We need a study group meeting."

Understanding dawned in her eyes, and she shook her head. "Neville already gave us the run-down, before dinner," she assured. "I'll owl you in the summer, we'll figure things out."

That didn't satisfy Harry, but he couldn't say anything further when they were surrounded by so many people. Susan gave him a pointed glance. "Not everything's all on you, Harry. Let me take care of this one for a bit."

Harry didn't have the energy to argue with her.

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Announcing the return of Voldemort in the middle of the end of term feast was a bold move on Dumbledore's part, but Harry wasn't surprised. The headmaster had already practically declared war on the Ministry, threatening Fudge with the inevitabilities of his continued ignorance. It was a smart move, too; those who were against Voldemort would see Dumbledore standing for the truth and align themselves with him, encourage everyone to put the Ministry in his hands — because obviously they were too incompetent to keep running themselves, with Fudge in charge. Harry wondered if they'd forgotten who had endorsed Cornelius Fudge to begin with.

The game had begun, and Dumbledore was setting up his pieces. Harry would have to start doing the same, soon. The prospect made his stomach squirm anxiously. Was he really going to take on Dumbledore, the Ministry, and Voldemort?