

so he had to assume they were incredibly fashionable. He took some extra time to try and tame his hair.

“You’re putting in an awful lot of effort for a bloke who’s seen you at your worst, y’know,” Neville remarked in amusement. Harry shrugged.

“We don’t get dressed up very often. And it might only be Slughorn’s party, but... this is a big deal, for us.” Their first time in public as a couple. He didn’t want Draco to have a single ounce of regret about standing at his side.

“Well I think that’s about as good as it’ll get, mate,” Neville told him bluntly. Harry looked in the mirror, turning his head to check his hair from several angles, then sighed.

“I suppose.” He put away his hair potion, washing his hands with a quick spell. “Let’s go, then. Don’t want to keep Ginny waiting.”

The redheaded witch was indeed waiting for them, her face lighting up at the sight of Neville. She wore pretty gold dress robes Harry hadn’t seen before, but they complemented Neville’s robes well enough Harry wondered if that had been an intentional matching. Perhaps Neville’s gran had been involved?

“Well, you two scrub up nicely,” she said approvingly. “Shall we go find you a man, Harrikins?”

She sounded so much like George for a moment, Harry had to do a double take. Then he snickered. “Good thing I know exactly where to find one,” he joked.

“Oh, I wish I was going tonight,” Parvati moaned enviously, sprawled on the sofa in front of the fire with Lavender. “You all look so good! There’s never any excuses to dress up around here.”

“We need another Yule Ball,” Lavender agreed with a wistful sigh. “You three have fun.”

Just as she said that, Hermione started to descend the staircase from the dorms, and the trio exchanged a look, then hurried out of the portrait hole. The last thing they wanted was to get stuck walking to the party alongside Ron and Hermione.

“I wonder who McLaggen’s taken,” Harry mused, thinking of the only other Gryffindor in the Slug Club.

“One of the Hufflepuff girls in my year, but I can’t remember which,” Ginny supplied.

“Pretty sure all the girls in sixth and seventh know better than to agree to anything with him.”

That wouldn’t surprise Harry one bit.

“You ready for this, then?” Ginny asked, looking excited. “Your official coming out. Well. Y’know. Your *other* coming out.”