

Afterwards

by sigh

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Afterwards

And afterwards, there was no celebrating.

Not by the people who had been in the thick of the battle, the people who had been referred to as the Order. They felt no need to celebrate what was truly the second worst outcome of the battle.

Many had survived, Voldemort had not. Surely a cause for celebration amongst the majority of the wizarding world, but not to these few. They were the bravest people of three generations, they had earned their right to freedom more than anyone else in the country, and yet, they felt no joy.

There were two sitting in a dark corner of a bar, attempting to thoroughly drown all memories of anything before that date. They were perhaps the biggest heroes of the day. And yet, it had come at such a price. The redhead had lost most of his family members. With no parents and only two of his siblings left, he almost longed for the days during the war. The dark-haired boy had lost almost everyone important to him. His parents first twenty years before in the first war, and then his mentor, and then one of his two best friends along with most of the family who had near to adopted him during his years at Hogwarts. Neither had any idea how to comfort the other.

In a house that was too big for the only occupant left sat another redhead, this one alone. His eyes were closed, an attempt to avoid looking at anything that might remind him of the loss his family had encountered. As the oldest he had always tried to look out for his siblings, but he failed. Now, the clock on the wall only had three hands left on it. He reached for the Firewhiskey and sought his comfort where he could.

Further away, in a seedier part of London, a redheaded female adjusted her dress. The youngest of such a big family had become used to noise and activity all around her. She'd even become used to being ignored. Losing so many in such a short time wasn't easy on any of them. On her it was impossible to deal with it. She forced a smile for her next customer in an effort to not scare him away. Her comfort was found in prostitution.

There were lots of them at the cemetery. There was a tall man with a big nose, bending silently over an unnaturally small grave. A bigger grave lay next to it with fresh flowers upon it. This man had lost all that he had ever known, and yet was still breathing. The Order of Merlin, First Class that lay in his drawer at home was an empty meaningless trinket. Photos of a bushy haired girl, the only one able to see any good in him and love him for it, hung in a room with an empty cot. His comfort couldn't be found anywhere.

Further on a shabby looking man walked between four tombstones. Three of his childhood friends, and his wife, all buried. That he should have lived over them was almost a joke in his mind. His was a half-life and could never be lived well. But he was stuck in this world, alone with no one. His sought is comfort in another form; it was much

easier to be happy as an animal than a human.

On the other side was an odd looking girl, out of place amongst such solemn people. Her many necklaces were cluttering against each other as she shook. Her tears for a father who had done nothing more than print the truth. Unlike the others, not a victim of the 'evil' side, but a victim of censorship and government. His death was surely a symbol of all that wasn't right with the winning side. Her comfort came through the truth she continued to print in his honour.

A plump boy sitting beside two hospital beds, mourning the living not the dead. His reason for fighting was lying next to him, victims of the first war. Even after all the work, and the 'victory' over Voldemort, these two weren't any better than before. Nothing could cure them, and he was destined to live out his life by their bedsides, his comfort found in chewing gum wrappers.

White haired splayed down his back, as a young man grieved at home. His was one of the hardest choices in the war, and he did not mourn a person. He mourned the passing of his innocence, the loss of his childhood when he agreed to play junior spy. His life was changed, yet his name had been restored to glory. Associated with the light, not the dark, people no longer feared him; they respected him. And yet, he'd turned his back on his family. He had nothing left now. His comfort couldn't be found in the newly gained respect.

A big beast of a man sat silently in his cottage. His half brother had died for him, proving with that last act that there was some humanity in him. Entering the Forbidden Forest was too hard these days, and there was an Assistant Keeper of the Keys to do all the work necessary there. This man had friends left, but they were all in mourning. No one had time to revisit this place that held so many memories. There was enough being carried around in their heads without adding to them. So he sat alone, his comfort came from his dog.

Up in a high tower of Hogwarts, a lady who would once have been beautiful wiped away her silent tears. His death had been one of the first of the war, yet this was her first chance to grieve. The portrait on the wall behind her desk made each day harder than the last. To be taunted by such a shadow of what he once was made her job near impossible. The few moments they managed to discretely have together played through her mind constantly. Yet her comfort came from showing a strong face to all the students in her care.

And all around England wizards celebrated. There were loud joyous parties and dancing in the street. Except our group of heroes. For them there was no celebrating.