"Follow me," said Filch, lighting a lamp and leading them out-side.

"I bet you'll think twice about breaking a school rule again, won't you, eh?" he said, leering at them. "Oh yes ... hard work and pain are the best teachers if you ask me. ... It's just a pity they let the old punishments die out ... hang you by your wrists from the ceiling for a few days, I've got the chains still in my office, keep 'em well oiled in case they're ever needed. ... Right, off we go, and don't think of running off, now, it'll be worse for you if you do."

They marched off across the dark grounds. Neville kept sniffing. Harry wondered what their punishment was going to be. It must be something really horrible, or Filch wouldn't be sounding so de-lighted.

The moon was bright, but clouds scudding across it kept throw-ing them into darkness. Ahead, Harry could see the lighted win-dows of Hagrid's hut. Then they heard a distant shout.

"Is that you, Filch? Hurry up, I want ter get started."

Harry's heart rose; if they were going to be working with Hagrid it wouldn't be so bad. His relief must have showed in his face, be-cause Filch said, "I suppose you think you'll be enjoying yourself with that oaf? Well, think again, boy — it's into the forest you're going and I'm much mistaken if you'll all come out in one piece."

At this, Neville let out a little moan, and Malfoy stopped dead in his tracks.

"The forest?" he repeated, and he didn't sound quite as cool as usual. "We can't go in there at night — there's all sorts of things in there — werewolves, I heard."

Neville clutched the sleeve of Harry's robe and made a choking noise.

"That's your problem, isn't it?" said Filch, his voice cracking with glee. "Should've thought of them werewolves before you got in trouble, shouldn't you?"