

“You shut up about Hermione,” he sneered. “She seems to be the only bloody girl in this school that isn’t obsessed with you. You’ve even got my sister under your thumb. You’ve got some nerve, parading it around in public like that, pretending to be queer so no one notices you’re sleeping with any girl that’ll have you.”

“I’m not sleeping with any girls!” Harry argued. “And I’m not *pretending* to be anything.”

Ron scoffed. “Like I believe that! We all know what Lavender’s like, I really doubt you two are just *friends* when she’s throwing herself at you in Divination.”

*Smack!*

Harry hadn’t noticed Lavender Brown appear, but there she was, her hand raised and a rapidly forming red mark on Ron’s face. Her face was a picture of utter fury. “*How dare you,*” she hissed.

“Lavender!” Ron was wide-eyed, in shock or fear Harry wasn’t sure. “Well— well it’s true! You’ve had half the rest of the Gryffindor boys, and we’re supposed to believe there’s nothing going on with you and Harry?”

Harry was quite impressed she didn’t slap him again. “You’re just jealous because of all the boys I’ve kissed, *you’re* not one of them,” she retorted. “And you never will be. After a comment like that, I’ll be surprised if you ever get a date in this school, Ron Weasley!”

Indeed, of the girls in the audience, most of them were looking at Ron like he was dirt on the bottom of their shoe. His face reddened further.

“So he’s fooled you, too, has he?” Ron taunted. “Haven’t you realised he’s always off with girls but never seen sneaking around with a boy? He’s always turning them down, too. Never even *holding hands* with one.”

“I have a boyfriend!” Harry blurted, and a chorus of gasps rang out. “Clearly I’m just better at keeping my private life *private*. It’s none of your damn business who I’m with, Ron.”

“Mr Potter!”

Harry’s heart sank at the high-pitched call. Umbridge was approaching the hall, face severe. “Detention, for inappropriate behaviour. Tomorrow evening, my office.” She looked around at the gathered students, who quickly dispersed, heading in to dinner. Ron was still glaring at Harry, even when the pink-clad teacher had left.

“Come on, Harry,” Lavender huffed, linking her arm with his. “Let’s go sit down.”

Harry let her take him to the Gryffindor table, fury still pounding through his veins. It would be all over the school by morning, his mysterious boyfriend. Draco was going to kill him.

“I’m sorry he said that to you, Lavender,” he sighed, and the girl shot him a sharp look.

“Don’t you dare apologise for his *slut-shaming bullshit*,” she snapped. “I swear, just because he’s got his emotions so far up his arse he can’t find enough of them to tell Hermione