

She wasn't the only one who spotted the mistletoe. The twins thought it was a grand idea to charm it to float around the room, and each time two people stood beneath it they couldn't move until they kissed.

"It's to practice being aware of your surroundings," Fred declared brightly, looking far too devious when his brother ended up stuck under the mistletoe with Blaise Zabini. George got him back for that one, still blushing from the soft peck Blaise had given him — Fred was abruptly rooted to the spot right beside Zacharias Smith, when he'd been creeping past the boy trying to slip some kind of rubber worm down the back of his robes.

No one seemed truly bothered by the antics, so Harry let it slide; it was only a review lesson, as he didn't want to start anything new right before a three week break.

It was amazing, seeing how far they had all come since the first session, just a couple of months ago. Everyone in the room was capable of stunning, disarming and blocking even while dodging spells, and they were racing through the OWL curriculum. Harry wouldn't be surprised if he had even the fourth years up to NEWT level by the time exams rolled around.

He hoped Umbridge had been exposed as a shit teacher by then, or people might think her methods had actually *worked*.

"I've got a bit of homework for you all," Harry declared as the session came to a close. A chorus of groans rang through the room. "Don't worry, it's nothing difficult." Merlin knew they all had enough actual homework to do over the break. "I want each of you over Christmas to think of one spell you don't know that you think would be handy to have in a fight. Doesn't have to be an offensive spell," he added, as they had learned over the weeks that with some creative usage, practically *anything* could be an offensive spell, "any spell, as long as you can give me a reason you think it'll be useful. Whether it's something you read in a book, or heard about from someone you know — first meeting after Christmas, you'll share the spells you found, and we'll all learn it." Unless they found some *very* obscure sources, the chances were either Harry would know the spell already, or either Snape or Remus would and could teach it to him.

That seemed to be the kind of homework everyone could get on board with, so it was a cheerful group that dispersed when Harry called it a night, wishing Harry a Merry Christmas on their way out. As the group began to thin out, Harry noticed Cho stood alone off to one side. He frowned, and when Neville gestured for them to leave, Harry waved him on ahead.

"You alright, Cho?" he asked, approaching her once it was just the two of them left.

She was by the section of the mirror that had turned into the group's informal message board. It had started with a request for tutoring help in other subjects, stuck to the mirror by a stressed-out Parvati who was convinced she was going to fail all her exams. Since then it had evolved into other requests, as well as little notes of encouragement and support, even a few anonymous love notes among the mix. There were photos, too, thanks to Colin Creevey; pictures of members of the group casting spells, or laughing together, or suffering the hilarious results of a Weasley Twins prank.