

“I don’t know why I’m so shaken by this,” he muttered, scowling as he got to his feet. “I didn’t even take the potion.”

“But you might have,” Parvati said, voice sympathetic. “It’s scary. I... I can’t believe Romilda would do that. I can’t believe *anyone* would do that.” She shuddered, wrapping her arms around herself.

“I hope she gets suspended,” Neville muttered darkly.

“Doubt it,” Harry replied. “You saw Dumbledore — he was all ready to sweep it under the rug. Fuck, he thought it was my fault for letting Ron eat the chocolates!”

All four of them scowled. “Dumbledore’s losing his mind,” Lavender declared. “I never thought I’d say this, but he really needs to retire.”

Harry glanced up, meeting Neville’s gaze. It wasn’t the most ideal situation to start shattering peoples’ trust in Dumbledore, but Harry would take it.

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It was decided that the current *political climate* made it too dangerous to suspend Romilda, so she was given a month’s worth of detentions with McGonagall and was banned from Hogsmeade for the rest of the year. She was also, so he heard, *strongly discouraged* from trying to speak to Harry ever again.

Even if McGonagall hadn’t ordered as much, Harry felt sure she wouldn’t have spoken to him again anyway; when she saw him in the common room after lunch, she turned bright red and fled to her dorm.

Harry, on the other hand, spent most of the evening angrily duelling Snape in the Chamber, having earned a detention of his own in class. His friends were all ready to riot, but Harry was secretly glad for the chance to blow off steam.

“Do I need to go over your detection spells?” the Potions Master asked, when they took a break from duelling. Harry shook his head.

“I know them. And I would have used them, if I’d planned to eat the chocolates at all.” He wasn’t so stupid to have just blindly eaten the gift from a girl he barely knew.

“I want you using them at every meal. And on anything else you might consume, unless it has come from Ceri or Dobby.”

“Yes, Severus.” That was a rule Harry would happily follow.

He straightened up, intending to ask for another duel, then cocked his head as the castle nudged at his senses. He was shown a mental image of Draco pacing outside the Room of Requirement. Blinking away the image, he grimaced up at the tall man. “I, uh— Draco’s in the Room, I think he wants to see me. Can I...”