

heads ducked together and their faces serious. “Fred, George!” he called out to them, watching them both look up in alarm. They relaxed a little at the sight of Harry.

“Harrikins!” they greeted, changing course towards him.

“Fancy seeing you here. All alone, are we?”

“Getting up to *mischief*?” Fred smirked at him, wiggling his eyebrows, and Harry flushed.

“Christmas shopping,” he replied evasively; there were too many people around for him to risk mentioning who he was shopping for. “What are you two doing out here?” They looked a bit shifty — well, shiftier than usual for the twins.

The pair shared a glance. “Bit of a long story, dear Harry,” George said. Harry got the picture pretty quickly.

“I won’t ask you any questions, you don’t ask me any?” he suggested, watching the twins brighten up.

“See, this is why you’re our favourite!” Fred declared, ruffling his hair. “Be safe, little brother! Watch out for any rogue reporters!” He winked, and the pair disappeared, leaving Harry alone once more.

Harry sighed to himself, eyes scanning the shops once more. This was his last chance to shop before Christmas — unless he got a *very* speedy owl order in — and he couldn’t go back empty handed.

He grit his teeth, determined. It was his first Christmas with his boyfriend, and his present was going to be *perfect*. It had to be.

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The Yule Ball was five days away, and Fleur Delacour had a problem.

“None of these boys are worth my time!” she declared at lunch, looking distinctly unimpressed. ““Ow am I supposed to look fantastique when all the available ‘Ogwarts boys are... average at best?”

“I’ll try not to be offended by that,” Harry said lightly, and she jabbed him in the side.

“Two champions cannot attend togezzzer, or I would ‘ave asked you,” she insisted. “But all the boys I ‘ave considered are taken. I cannot believe Roger abandoned me so last-minute!”

Harry knew she wanted to go with a Hogwarts boy, to continue the theme of international magical cooperation. She had been going with Roger Davies, but then he’d realised that the Gryffindor seventh year girl he had a crush on actually liked him back and was willing to go with him, and he’d very apologetically told Fleur he had to change his mind. Harry couldn’t believe Roger had turned down *Fleur Delacour*, but he supposed even Ravenclaws could be idiots sometimes.