

Hermione had to be desperate, Harry mused, to be volunteering to help him with work. Not that he needed it these days; if she'd been paying close attention, she'd notice he was doing just fine on his own. "Yeah, alright."

He pulled out his Transfiguration textbook and writing supplies, sliding down into the armchair to lean over the coffee table. Ron grumbled a bit, but got his things out too, and the three of them settled in to work. Harry couldn't really call it working together — despite Hermione's offer, she kept to herself and glared at Ron every time he tried to sneak a look at her parchment — more just working in proximity to one another, but it was a start.

Harry was only half-focused on his work, the rest of his brain still trying to figure out what had prompted the change of heart. Despite the agreed-upon truce, after the disaster of the Yule Ball and the following fallout, Harry had expected to go the whole rest of the year without overtures of any kind from Ron and Hermione. Ginny was still pissed at Ron for ignoring Luna all night, Hermione wasn't impressed by the rumours circulating about her and Harry, and Harry had thought Ron was still convinced he was some kind of traitor for making friends with people from other schools and houses. What had happened to make them so determined to clear the air and start over?

It was a testament to how fractured their friendship had been lately that the sight of the three of them studying together gained many odd looks from the Gryffindors who passed through the common room. Neville was one of them, eyeing Harry in concern, but Harry just waved him off. If they wanted to try, he was willing to try.

When he finished his essay — faster than Ron and Hermione, though Hermione was at least four inches over the requirement with no signs of stopping — Harry sat up with a stretch. "I'll be right back, I'm gonna go get my History of Magic book." Might as well get a head start on the next essay, even if he couldn't finish it in one night.

Heading towards the dorms, Harry started jogging up the stairs, almost falling flat on his face when an arm reached out and yanked him through a door. "What the hell, George?" he asked the redhead, straightening up with a scowl. It faded when he saw the concern on George's face.

"What did those two say to you?" George asked. Harry frowned.

"What? They just want to try being friends again. I guess Hermione misses me, I suppose Ron might as well." Ron was still a little off with him, but he'd tried cracking a few jokes while they worked, some of which were actually funny. To Harry's surprise, that made George grimace.

"I don't want to ruin anything, in case they genuinely mean it," he started cautiously. "But I thought you should know. I saw the two of them talking with Dumbledore after lunch today." Harry's heart sank. "I couldn't get close enough to hear what they were saying, not without risking being caught. But he looked like he was annoyed with them for something, and Ron didn't seem too pleased about whatever he was saying."

"Do you think..." Harry trailed off, unable to voice his concern.