

Harry turned back to his breakfast, listening with half an ear as McGonagall gently harangued Ron into continuing Potions, since Slughorn accepted E students. The redhead didn't look thrilled by it, but obviously his desire to be an auror won out — and the hope that Slughorn might be less awful than Snape.

Harry looked down at his schedule; he had Ancient Runes first period. Annoyingly that meant dealing with Hermione all in a tizzy, but on the bright side he knew Draco would be in that class.

Bidding goodbye to Neville, who had a free period first thing, Harry set off. Unsurprisingly, Hermione hurried after him. "There's no way *you* got Os in both Runes and Arithmancy," she declared, and Harry kept walking, unfazed.

"Well, that's what my results said, so I guess I did," he replied.

"There must have been some sort of mix-up," Hermione insisted. Harry shrugged.

"If there was, we'll soon find out, won't we?" he said. "But again, I suggest you focus on your own classwork — it won't make any difference to you how well I'm doing, will it?"

Then he picked up his pace, grateful for his growth spurt giving him longer legs to get away from her nagging.

.-.-.-.

Runes was a much more enjoyable class than either Divination or CoMC had been, and Harry was excited to be able to study the subject properly rather than just working on summers and over the mirror with Sirius and Remus.

Draco was mostly just entertained by Hermione Granger glaring daggers at the pair of them through the entire thing.

The homework load was a little daunting, but Harry set the stack of books inside his satchel, thankful for the Feather-Light charms. Hermione kept looking at him as if expecting him to burst into tears at the prospect of so much reading and a fifteen inch essay on the first day. Harry ignored her, pulling out his schedule to compare against Draco's. "Hey, look, we've both got free periods this afternoon," he said cheerfully. "Library?"

"Works for me. I'm sure this won't be the only homework we've picked up by then."

The crowd outside the DADA classroom was much larger than the one for Ancient Runes. Harry and Draco joined Neville and Susan, both of whom had expressions of mild dread on their faces. "How bad are we expecting?" Susan asked grimly. Harry shrugged.

He wasn't going to lie and say that Snape would be even remotely bearable. "I mean, hopefully fewer explosions than Potions class?" he said instead, making Neville choke on a laugh.

No one had a response — the classroom door opened, and the sixth years filed in.