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Friday's exam day was the one Harry had been quietly anticipating; the Ancient Runes exam. There was just the one written exam, with no practical; the afternoon would be taken up by the Muggle Studies exam.

All the students who had not chosen Runes as an elective eagerly left the hall at breakfast, keen to get in a day of relaxation — or of more revision for the exams to come. Harry waited with the small group of Runes students, hands in his pockets as he mentally went over his notes.

It took several minutes for Hermione to notice him. "Harry, what are you doing?" she asked, and he shrugged.

"Waiting for the exam?"

"But you don't take Ancient Runes," she said rudely. Harry nodded.

"I know. I've self-studied."

The very concept seemed to outrage the girl, and just as she was gearing up for what would no doubt be a very impressive rant, the door opened. Hermione wheeled around instantly. "Professor Marchbanks!" she called. "Harry says he's taking the exam but he's not in Ancient Runes class, he can't do that! You must tell him he's got it wrong."

Professor Marchbanks frowned faintly, then looked down at the parchment in her hand, one gnarled finger trailing down the list of names. "Potter...Potter... yes, there he is! Potter, Harry. He registered his intent with the Ministry, young lady. He's as much of a right to this exam as you do. Come on, in you go, all of you!"

"But—but— that's not fair! He isn't in the class!"

No one listened to Hermione's protests, filing past her to enter the hall. As Harry walked past, she grabbed his sleeve. "You're going to fail, Harry. You shouldn't do this. It'll look bad on your record."

"I think that's my problem, not yours, don't you?" he replied neutrally, tugging his sleeve free and carrying on to his desk.

It was incredibly satisfying watching Hermione try and look back at him without getting scolded by the examiners, as if she expected to see him staring blankly at his paper or having a breakdown over all the things he didn't know. On the contrary, Harry was fairly confident with how he did in the exam; between Remus and all his friends helping him — and Draco, of course — Harry faced no surprises in the paper.

Hermione was probably going to regret paying more attention to his progress than her own, though.

He left the exam with a smile on his face, which widened when Hermione just glared at him and stormed off. "Oh, you have upset her, haven't you?" Blaise remarked in amusement as he