

“Yeah, sorry about that. I told so many people, I suppose one of them went to Skeeter about it. At least she’s excusing it as you being heartbroken and not just you being bad at snogging,” she said with a supportive pat to the shoulder. “I’m sorry I can’t be... ‘*the one you truly yearn to be with*’, by the way,” she added, checking the article quote by learning over Harry’s shoulder. “Clearly while I resemble your mother, it’s not enough to tear your heart away from that harlot over there.”

“I beg your pardon!” Hermione gasped when she realised Ginny was talking about her. Beside her, Ron went almost purple in the face. Harry tossed the magazine her way, watching her eyebrows rise into her hairline. “This is... where did she get all this?”

“Out of her arse, by the looks of it,” Ginny mused. Neville snorted pumpkin juice from his nose.

“No, the bit about Viktor asking me to come to Bulgaria. That was right after he pulled me from the lake, there’s no way she was around to hear it!” Hermione explained. Ron spluttered, grabbing the magazine to read it himself.

“He wants you to go to Bulgaria? *Never felt this way about any other girl* — don’t tell me that’s all real?”

Hermione nodded, blushing faintly. “That part is. Obviously the rest of it is drivel.”

“I don’t know, Granger,” the soft drawl of Draco Malfoy cut through the air. “That bit about Potter being a terrible kisser probably isn’t too far off the mark. I don’t blame you for setting your sights higher. Positively Slytherin of you.” The remark made Ron growl, and Hermione glare. Harry just snorted.

“At least I can improve my kissing skills,” he said, meeting grey eyes with a devilish look. “Sadly I don’t think there’s anything you can do about being an utter prat.”

“You’d have to find someone willing to help you improve, Potty,” Draco taunted. Harry winked at him.

“Are you offering, Malfoy?” That made several people eavesdropping choke on whatever they were eating, while Ginny howled with laughter. Draco went bright red, turned on his heel and left. Harry’s smirk widened.

“I can’t believe you just propositioned *Malfoy*!” Hermione hissed. Harry shrugged.

“Made him leave, didn’t it?” He couldn’t wait to get Draco alone later; he would *pay* for that comment about Harry’s kissing skills.

“Still. Gross, mate.” Ron shuddered, making a face. Harry didn’t react, even when Neville nudged him under the table, the tiniest grin on his lips. “This article is out of order, though. It makes Hermione look like some sort of... scarlet woman.” Ron was blushing as he said it, and Hermione’s lips pursed.