

He did tell George, though. Which had the unintended result of also telling Fred, and Harry used the time to tell them the truth about Dumbledore, too. Both because they needed to know, and to distract them from the news that he was dating a Malfoy.

It sort-of worked. They were too busy being angry at Dumbledore and confused by their mother's actions to really say anything about his choice of boyfriend, but they got round to congratulating him eventually. In between some mild insults to Draco's father, which Harry couldn't really complain about. Draco's father was the worst.

Having two people at school know his secret was enough, sort-of. It had to be, for now.

Harry almost thought about telling Neville, but the other Gryffindor didn't even know that Harry liked boys, and every time he tried to bring it up the words got stuck in his throat. It was ridiculous; he knew Neville wasn't going to judge him. But he still couldn't bring himself to say it. It didn't help that Hermione had decided she wanted to be friends again, and was at his side almost every free moment he had.

Tugging his cloak tighter around himself, Harry surveyed the few remaining blast-ended skrewts that they had just failed to encourage to hibernate, somewhat wishing one of them *would* set something on fire. Not anything important, mind. But it was freezing outside, and warming charms could only do so much.

"Well, this does look like fun!" The overly-cheerful voice made Harry even colder.

His letter from Amelia Bones had arrived the weekend after the first task, as Susan had promised it would, introducing Harry to the lawyer that would be helping him take legal action against Rita Skeeter. He'd been assured that it was most definitely not legal to quote a minor who had denied being interviewed, and a warning had been sent to Ms Skeeter forthwith. Clearly she was looking for other angles. Harry was amazed the woman was even allowed in the castle.

To Harry's surprise, she didn't immediately come up to him. Instead she started talking to Hagrid about the skrewts, smirking delightedly as the man got more and more flustered. Harry watched with a feeling of impending dread; she was doing this because of him. She knew she wasn't supposed to talk to him, so she was going to start going for the people he cared about instead. That *bitch*.

"Oh, *you're* here, Harry. Hello, there!" she greeted far too innocently, before turning back to Hagrid and asking him more about the skrewts, eventually making arrangements to meet for a proper interview at the Three Broomsticks. Class ended, and Skeeter stayed by the hut as the rest of them trudged up towards the castle.

"She's going to twist everything he says," Hermione breathed, horrified. Harry grimaced. "You should've just given her that interview, Harry. She wouldn't be going anywhere near Hagrid then."

Harry stared at the girl, unable to believe what she'd just said. "*Excuse me?*"