

*furious.*

Privately, Harry thought that was what fuelled the rumours so quickly — the only thing that would make Dumbledore so visibly mad was them being *true*, and everyone knew it.

Of course, there were attempts at retribution. Only days after the first rumours began, more began to crop up — rumours that Harry had gone Dark, that he'd spend his Christmas break with Voldemort himself, making plans to take out the headmaster and rule the wizarding world together.

Harry wasn't as bothered by those rumours as Dumbledore probably hoped he would be. Hell, similar things had been floating around for *months* already; the people who thought that were always going to think that, and he was done with trying to convince them otherwise.

They were in a minority that was getting smaller and smaller with every day that Dumbledore acted strangely.

Still, all of the whispers were starting a sort of civil war within the school — a stand-off between those on Dumbledore's side and those on Harry's, a clear divide amongst the students. Ron and Hermione were the guiding force behind the Dumbledore-supporting side, countering the accusations of false friendship with angry diatribes about how they'd tried their best to be friends with Harry but he'd started pulling away from them after Voldemort returned, leaning more and more towards Dark magic and pureblood ideals.

Had anyone been paying attention, they would have realised that half the stuff they used as evidence — the rift in their friendship, Harry's relationship with Draco — had all begun *before* Voldemort's resurrection. But, well; details like that were rarely necessary in such juicy gossip.

The teachers, to their credit, were trying to stay out of things. Likely because they thought they'd be fired if they supported Harry publicly. He knew which ones were on his side, though — he could see it in their eyes, the ones who thought he was evil. Likewise, he could see the solidarity in those who stood by him.

He hadn't seen much of Hagrid, lately. Harry hoped that wasn't on purpose. They were both busy, after all.

Through all this, classes continued. The HA continued. Harry's training sessions with Snape continued.

And, to keep him sane, his late night rendezvous' with Draco continued. Perhaps a few more nights than they really should, considering how much work Harry had to do lately, but... school sucked, and the only real peace he could get these days was in his boyfriend's arms, as disgustingly cliché as that was. An hour or two with Draco before bed was sometimes the only thing stopping him from hexing every nosy little shit who muttered insults under their breath when he walked past them.

Harry was on his way back from one such encounter, crossing the fairly short distance between the Room of Requirement and Gryffindor Tower. His step was light, his head still