

After a few moments, the blond's face appeared in the glass. A tightness in Harry's chest eased. "Hey. I've missed you."

Draco's face softened. "Missed you, too, Scarhead." There were dark circles under his eyes that made Harry's heart ache. "Merlin, I can't wait to be out of here tomorrow. Did you see booklists finally arrived? I thought they'd forgotten, honestly."

"I think Dumbledore only just managed to find a new Defence professor," Harry supplied. "I have to say, I'm not impressed at their book choice, whoever they are. Slinkhard, ugh." He made a face, and Draco hummed in agreement.

"I don't know who it is, but Father said Fudge is very pleased by the appointment, so that doesn't bode well."

It definitely didn't; a tiny knot of trepidation formed in Harry's belly. Perhaps he'd been too flippant in his jokes about teachers trying to kill him.

Teachers trying to support the Ministry might be worse.

"Anyway, that doesn't matter. Let's see it, then," Draco prompted, lips curving in a smirk. Harry blinked, perplexed. "Come on, Potter." His silver eyes darkened playfully. "I'll show you mine if you show me yours."

Then his hand appeared in frame, long fingers carefully cradling a green and silver prefect badge.

"Oh!" Harry's stomach did a complicated little flip of emotions — joy; pride; the *briefest* snatch of jealousy; frustration, that Draco would now be busier. "I, uh, didn't make prefect."

Two pale blond eyebrows shot up. "*Really?*"

"Dumbledore, giving me authority?" Harry pointed out with a snort. "Don't be ridiculous — it might make me think I'm actually *worth* something." He rolled his eyes, hoping Draco didn't catch the little twist of bitterness as his joke fell a fraction short.

"I expected he might want to show a bit of support for his *Golden Boy*, considering what the *Prophet* has been saying about you all summer," Draco reasoned. His brow furrowed. "I'm sorry. Who is it, then; Longbottom?" Harry must have made some kind of face, for Draco blanched. "Don't tell me it's Weasel."

"Him and Hermione," Harry confirmed dryly. "Everyone's very proud."

"Merlin's beard," Draco muttered. "Granger was a given — that badge has been hers since first year. But *Weasley*, seriously? What was Dumbledore *thinking?*"

"Probably some kind of incentive for Ron to keep an eye on me," Harry said with a shrug. He'd had some time to think about it, and it made sense. "Give him something to lord over me to keep him happy — something the *famous Harry Potter* doesn't have. Better than giving it to me and having another thing for Ron to be jealous over." God, Harry was exhausted by all the posturing. "I think I've pissed him off by not being mad about it. As far