

He was desperate for the day to be over by the time he walked into his Divination exam, the incense in Trelawney's classroom already making him sleepy. He almost thought he'd dozed off and imagined it when she went rigid in her chair, speaking to him in a raspy voice.

Had he just witnessed a real prophecy?

He climbed down the ladder, unsure whether to tell Ron and Hermione — Hermione would laugh for sure, and Ron probably wouldn't believe him either. He wasn't even sure if he believed it. But all thoughts of prophecies, real or not, flew from his head when Ron showed him the note from Hagrid.

"We have to go," Harry said immediately. "We can't let Hagrid face that by himself."

"But Harry, the teachers will never let us out at sunset! Especially not you," Hermione pointed out.

"I've got the cloak. We'll go after dinner." He'd taken to keeping the cloak in his Twilfitt bag at all times, just in case he might need it. He wanted to always be prepared.

"Okay," Hermione agreed, not even putting up a token protest about Sirius Black and school rules. Hagrid was far too important for that.

Trelawney's words rolled around Harry's mind as they joined the crowd of students heading down for dinner, worry gnawing at his stomach. What sort of chaos was he about to get into now?

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He could hardly remember the last time he'd spent actual social time with both Ron and Hermione — not that this really felt like socialising, hurrying down to Hagrid's hut under the invisibility cloak. The half-giant didn't let them stay long, worried they might get caught, but it was enough for Hagrid to get some small comfort from their support.

And, unfortunately, enough for Ron and Hermione to start bickering again.

"I'm just saying, I can sympathise," Ron hissed as they walked away from the hut, careful to avoid the sight of the Minister and Dumbledore heading down to Hagrid's. Why on Earth was the Minister himself involved in a matter as simple as a dangerous creature execution? It baffled Harry, but he shook the matter from his head; what Fudge got up to was none of his business, not right now.

"After all, I know what it's like to have your pet *killed*," Ron finished, and Hermione let out an offended noise. Harry sighed to himself, wondering if he could cover himself with the cloak and just slip away, if they would even notice once they truly got arguing.

"What happened to Scabbers was an *accident*, Ronald!" Hermione retorted indignantly. "How dare you suggest I can't feel bad for Hagrid just because my cat did *what cats do*!"

Harry was about to turn away and leave them to it — and then, in the fading light of the sunset, he saw a blur of orange running towards them.