

“No, seriously, we’re not, I— have you thought that all summer?” Incredulity crept into his voice. “Surely someone showed you the *Quibbler* article?”

Mrs Weasley’s lips pursed. “Oh, that silly little rag has always been full of nonsense. Really, I’m amazed old Xeno Lovegood gets enough money to keep it in print!” She waved him off, starting the dishes washing in the sink.

Harry grimaced — so she had *seen* the article, then. She just refused to believe it. “I mean, I don’t know enough to comment on the rest of the stuff in the *Quibbler*,” he admitted — sure, a lot of it *seemed* like nonsense, but Harry wasn’t so arrogant as to assume anything he didn’t understand was made-up — “but I wrote that article myself. I asked Luna’s dad to print it. Ginny and I aren’t dating; I’m gay.”

Water sloshed over the edge of the sink as Mrs Weasley abruptly dropped a saucepan. “Really, Harry — you should be more careful about what you allow the media to say about you, even if it is in a small magazine like that. Whatever you think you might be feeling, it’s rather hasty to go and spread something like that about everywhere; you’re only fourteen, after all.”

Harry stiffened. Across the table, he saw both twins grimace. A stilted silence filled the kitchen.

“So I know my own mind when you think I’m going out with your daughter, but when I say I’m gay it’s *hasty*?” Harry was slowly beginning to realise why he was almost always paired with Ginny to do chores around Grimmauld. Anger bubbled in his belly.

“Mum, come on, not this again,” Bill started, sighing.

“If you aren’t with Ginny, that’s perfectly fine, Harry,” Mrs Weasley said, ignoring her eldest son. “Though the two of you would make a wonderful couple. But there’s no need to go saying things you can’t take back.”

“I’m not likely to take it back,” Harry retorted sharply. He wished he could say something about Draco — something to make Mrs Weasley realise he wasn’t just *confused*, or whatever else she’d convinced herself was going on in his head. Then again, he doubted even his relationship with another boy would change her mind on that; it didn’t seem to have done any good for George or Charlie, from what he’d heard.

“I think he knows his own mind, Molly,” Sirius piped up, the barest hint of a growl in his voice. Mrs Weasley huffed.

“Well, you *would* say that, wouldn’t you?” she muttered derisively. Harry clenched his hands under the table, trying to rein in his magic before it made the plates shatter.

“I’m going to eat in my room,” he declared, getting to his feet. He glanced over to the twins and Ginny. “I’ll meet you back in the library in half an hour.”

“Harry, *really*, there’s no need—“ Mrs Weasley tried, but he ignored her, picking up his plate and striding to the door. Before he could even leave, he heard her sigh. “He’ll come around,