

“I can’t do anything that means I have to explain what the connection is,” Harry warned her. “Or have it examined or anything. *I* know what it is,” he added at Amelia’s mild look of alarm. “But it’s not something that should be talked about, even in private.”

The fewer people who knew anything about horcruxes, the better.

“I understand,” Mrs Frobisher assured. “Don’t worry, I won’t let it get that far. A cease and desist to the *Prophet* is likely all it’ll take.” She pursed her lips. “With influential people like Albus Dumbledore, a lot of the work is done behind the scenes. Much like his own work — let people read their own conclusions into the little things that *are* done, and you’ll get better results than attacking outright. From what I’ve heard from Vicky, you’ve already done very well with that — a lot of the students at the school think more critically of the headmaster these days, and that’s gradually spreading to their families. And with Amelia working on the Ministry and the Wizengamot, the dissent is certainly rising.”

Slowly, a devious smile overtook her face — the kind of look that Harry had learned to be wary of, after so many years with both Weasleys and Marauders around.

But in this case, it was Dumbledore about to face Mrs Frobisher’s wrath, so Harry wasn’t wary at all.

“I have something of a plan, if I may?” Frobisher asked, and Harry shared a look with Sirius.

“The floor is yours,” Harry offered.

The devious smile grew wider.

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Once they were back at Seren Du, Sirius slung an arm over Harry’s shoulders on the walk back up to the house. “Remind me never to get on your bad side,” he said conversationally. “Your lawyer would eat me alive.”

Harry laughed, grinning. “Keep that in mind when you’re planning your summer pranks,” he teased. Sirius ruffled his hair.

“You did well tonight, pup,” he said, stopping Harry just outside the front door. With his hands on Harry’s shoulders, Harry had to tilt his head up a little to look Sirius in the eye, though the difference between them was far less than it had been a year ago. “Both over dinner, and afterwards. I know you were worried about the whole thing.” Harry flushed.

“You think it went okay?” Harry still worried that teasing Vicky about Colin in front of her parents was too far, even though her mum had been the one to bring it up in the first place. He was so used to considering the quidditch team practically family, Vicky had just slotted right into that spot in his mind.

“I think it went brilliantly. And as someone who has purposefully made about every social faux pas in the book at one time or another, I’d say you avoided them well enough.” He winked, grey eyes softening. “I can’t say if Prongs would be proud — he always hated all