

## Chapter 63

The news that Hagrid had been put on probation was just the icing on top of the exceptionally shitty cake. No one seemed particularly surprised — not even Hagrid himself, who was still covered in an absurd amount of bruises, and Harry *did not want to know*. Hagrid didn't seem all that worried, either; not about the probation, at least. He was definitely worried about something else, his mind absent during classes and his gaze often on the Forbidden Forest. He brought much more mundane creatures out to study — likely at the behest of Hermione, who Harry noticed practically coaching Hagrid through his lessons — but every single one of his lessons was now attended by Umbridge, and Harry suspected Hagrid had come to the same conclusion he had.

Not even perfect lessons were likely to save him from Umbridge's blood-purist wrath.

Trelawney, too, now had to deal with the presence of the High Inquisitor in every one of her classes.

"You'd think she'd be focused on teaching her own bloody classes," Parvati hissed venomously once they were out of earshot of the Divination classroom, her expression thunderous. "Maybe that's why all she does is have us read the textbook."

To add insult to injury, Umbridge had introduced another Educational Decree, this one banning teachers from discussing anything but the subject they taught with their students. Harry suspected this was to stop teachers talking to them about the Azkaban breakout, or anything related to what was going on outside the castle walls — as far as Lavender and Parvati were concerned, it stopped them talking freely to their favourite professor, and that was a step too far.

Umbridge was making enemies all over the school, but there was very little they could all do about it. Except what they were already doing, of course.

With that in mind, Harry scheduled a HA meeting as soon as his busy timetable allowed it. As instructed, everyone had spent Christmas researching a spell they wanted to learn — Harry now had quite an impressive list of magic to work through, only a handful of which he would have to have Snape teach him first.

"Brilliant, guys. I'll sort that list out and we can start working on them next week. Today, I thought we'd do something a bit more fun."

"Are we breaking out the duelling dummies again?" Cho asked excitedly, looking over to the corner where a trio of dummies waited. Each of them now had a picture of Umbridge's face stuck to the front of their heads, and it made practicing with them that much more entertaining.

"Not today. Instead... how many of you know what paintball is?"