

Hermione glared at Harry right up until the examiners let them in, and then glared at Marchbanks when she made no move to eject him from the hall.

Harry desperately hoped he got Os in both Runes and Arithmancy, just to rub it in her self-righteous face.

After dinner, some of the Gryffindors chose to revise for their Astronomy exam, but Harry decided to take a nap instead. Sirius had quizzed him over the weekend — all Blacks did well in Astronomy, apparently, and he would make damned sure Harry did too — so after two difficult exam papers already written he'd much rather get some restful sleep before needing to write another. There were only so many constellation and moon names he could cram into his head.

The whole year group went up to the Astronomy Tower at eleven o'clock, and set up their telescopes ready to observe the cloudless sky. It was a good night for it — a full moon, bathing them in bright silver light.

Had Remus had to take exams on full moon days, he wondered? That sounded awful.

Professor Marchbanks bid them to start, and Harry reached for the blank star chart he was supposed to fill out, carefully angling his telescope.

It was surprisingly peaceful, working away up there with no noise but the rustle of parchment and scratch of quills, the occasional squeak of a telescope being adjusted. Harry thought he was doing quite well with his chart — and then he noticed the light spill onto the lawn, and several long shadows stretch onto the grass.

Ever curious, he couldn't tear himself away from the group of six figures walking across the grounds. He recognised the walk of the leader of the group; the shortest, squattest member of the group. Dread filled his stomach. They were headed to Hagrid's hut.

He tried to focus back on his star chart, which was three quarters of the way finished. He had to fill it, even if he didn't use his extra time to go back and double-check.

He heard a faint knock, and the muffled barking of a dog. He pressed his face closer to his telescope, blocking the sounds from his head, ignoring the light turn on in Hagrid's window.

Suddenly, a loud roar echoed through the night air, and Harry was no longer the only one staring at Hagrid's hut instead of the starry sky.

Tofty and Marchbanks tried to keep them focused on their exams, but even they were astonished when spells began to fly.

"Look!" Parvati squealed, pointing to another dark shadow approaching the chaos from the castle doors.

"How dare you!" the figure yelled, in a familiar Scottish brogue. "How *dare* you!"

McGonagall scolded the aurors, brandishing her wand — and was cut off mid-sentence by four bright red Stunners hitting her all at once. It blasted her back, illuminating her body for a