

Harry was just considering calling an end to the mock-duels, when suddenly someone screamed. Immediately, everything stopped, and the problem became clear — Hannah Abbott was on the ground, screaming in pain, while her duelling partner stood chalk-faced and horrified. “What happened?” Harry asked, dropping to his knees at Hannah’s side. “Draco!” He called for the blond, the only person in the room he knew had *any* kind of healing experience. Draco was at his side in a flash, wand already scanning Hannah’s prone form.

“I don’t know!” her duelling partner, a middle-aged man who Harry was pretty sure was the father of some Ravenclaw third year, exclaimed in fear. “It wasn’t my spell — I used a Freezing hex on the floor, trying to slip her up. Something hit from the side and she just went down! I swear, I didn’t hurt her!” He looked so terrified at the prospect, Harry shook his head in assurance.

“I believe you.” He looked back to Draco, whose face was set in concentration.

“Bone-Melting curse,” the Slytherin gritted out. “Get Pomfrey.”

The blood drained from Harry’s face. That was *not* a spell he expected to be used in a group like this.

He turned, raising his wand, but Kingsley’s hand came down on his shoulder. “I already sent for her,” he assured. As if in answer, the mediwitch appeared suddenly, an elf at her side. She took in the scene quickly, dropping down beside Draco to get to work, both of them muttering spells over Hannah as the blonde girl clenched her jaw in an attempt not to scream.

Harry tore his eyes away from her, looking back up at the rest of the group with fury burning in his eyes. “Did anyone see who did this?” he roared, gesturing to his friend on the stone floor. “Who used that curse in here, in *training*?”

No one moved. No one answered.

“I... it had to be an accident, right?” Lavender piped up hesitantly. “Otherwise the new wards would have reacted. Like you said they did with Fay and the others. They read intention.”

“The wards are lax around here while we’re training.” It was Neville who answered, voice hollow. “There’s too many people, too many offensive spells going on — it’s almost impossible to tell what’s self-defence and what’s not. Making a mistake on that judgement and freezing someone mid-duel could lead to more harm than good.”

Everyone looked around uneasily. Still, no one owned up to casting the curse.

“I can only assume,” said Harry in a tight, harsh voice, “that this silence means this was an *attack*, not an accident.” He stared at the group at large, eyes burning Avada Kedavra green. Several people flinched. “Whichever one of you did this, don’t think you’re safe. There are ways of finding out what happened.” He took a steadying breath before his temper could get the better of him. “Go. We’re done for today.”

They didn’t need telling twice. As the rush began to leave the hall, chatter rising, Harry turned back to the two healers. “How is she?” Fear churned in his stomach — the Bone-