

“Just ignore it, Harry,” was Hermione’s helpful advice, as if it was that simple. As if he should just let Skeeter write whatever she wanted about him. This wasn’t some silly little school-wide paper, this was a *national newspaper*.

Finally they had Charms with Hufflepuff, and Harry made sure to get that early, grabbing Susan as soon as she and the other Hufflepuff girls rounded the corner. “Hi, can I ask you something?”

“Sure, what’s up?” Susan was one of the few Hufflepuffs who hadn’t hated him for even a little bit of time, and Harry would be forever grateful to her for it. Even now, Sally Anne Perks and Megan Jones were glaring at him over Susan’s shoulder.

“I was wondering if you knew if it was possible for me to sue Rita Skeeter for that article in the *Prophet*. I didn’t provide any of those quotes — you’ll have several witnesses who can assure you that I didn’t consent to any sort of interview — and half of what she’s said is so wrong it’s downright insulting, for me and for the other champions. Can I get her for slander, or something?”

Susan’s brow furrowed. “Technically it would be libel, since it’s written,” she mused, thinking. “If you didn’t consent, and your guardian didn’t consent, then she shouldn’t have even quoted you at all. I don’t blame you for being furious, that whole article is just... ugh.” She shuddered. “Tell you what, I’ll write to Aunt Amelia before dinner and see if she can do anything. She knows loads of lawyers, and I bet there’s plenty of them just waiting to give Rita Skeeter what for.” She smiled, hitching her bag further up her shoulder as Flitwick opened the classroom door, beckoning them inside. “I’ll take care of it, Harry. I’ll let you know when I hear back.”

“You’re the best, Susan,” Harry declared vehemently, hurrying to take a seat next to Neville before he could be forced to sit with Hermione. The Slytherins had teased her about the article, too, and she wasn’t in the best of moods because of it.

With any luck, Amelia Bones would get back to her niece before much more damage could be done.

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The weekend before the task was a Hogsmeade weekend, and Harry let himself be dragged down to the village by Hermione and Neville. On the walk down, he glanced at the dark-skinned girl. “I’d have thought you’d be hanging out with Ron,” he remarked cautiously. Since the article, she was somewhat reluctant to be seen with Harry, as people kept asking her if she was his girlfriend.

“Oh. Well.” She began to blush. “I thought we might meet up with him at the Three Broomsticks.”

Harry stared at her incredulously. “I’m not sitting with him.” Ron was still making it very clear he thought Harry was some arrogant little glory hunter.

“Harry, *please*, this has gone on long enough.”