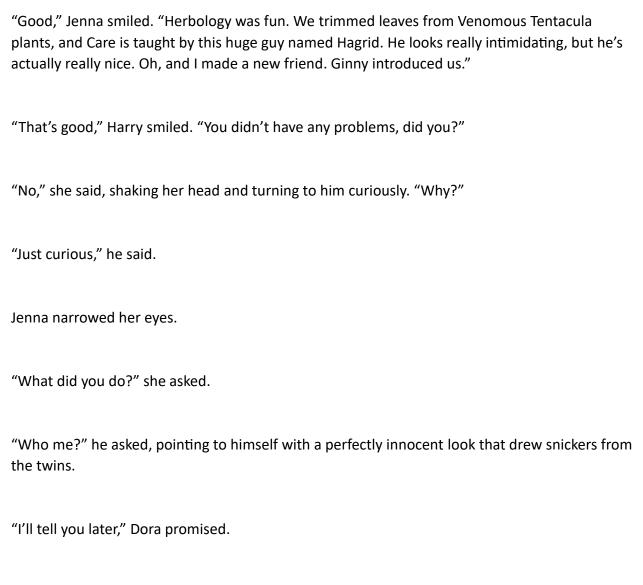
Chapter 20

Dora dropped into the seat next to Harry and across from Hermione at the Gryffindor table and gave her boyfriend a look.
"Why is there a rumor going around that you cursed Snape?" she asked.
The Weasley twins, sitting a couple of seats down, leaned forward excitedly.
"I didn't curse him," Harry said, rolling his eyes.
Quickly, he and Hermione explained what had happened during their Potions class. They all goggled when he got to the part about jamming his wand against Snape's testicles.
"I bet mom was livid," she said.
"I don't know what she said after I left, but she looked as mad as that time you pretended to be her so we could skip classes and go to Salem," Harry said.
Dora whistled.
"How much detention did you get?" one of the twins asked.
"None," Harry smirked.
"None!?" they chorused.
"None," he grinned.

"You're our hero," they said in awe. Hermione rolled her eyes, huffed, and buried her nose in a book for a couple of seconds before Harry snatched it out of her hand. "No reading at the dinner table," he said. He moved to set the book next to his plate, out of her reach, paused mid-movement, and then handed the book back to her with a look of chagrin. "Sorry," he said as she snatched it out of his hand angrily. "Habit." Dora snickered. "Do you normally steal books from defenseless little girls, Harry?" one of the twins asked. "I'm not a little girl," Hermione huffed. "Or defenseless," she added. "We have a friend at Ilvermorny who likes to study a lot," Dora explained. "Harry steals her books once in a while to make sure she has some fun." Seemingly mollified, Hermione carefully marked her place with a worn Muggle bookmark and set the book down next to her. As she began piling food on her plate, Jenna arrived and plopped down on the bench next to Dora. "How was class?" she asked.



They fell into casual conversation as they ate their dinner and were eventually joined by three girls the twins introduced as Angelina Johnson, Katie Bell, and Alicia Spinnet. They were all on the Quidditch team together, and Angelina and Alicia were dating Fred and George, respectively. Once they were finished eating, they broke into groups and went their separate ways. The twins and their teammates headed back to the Gryffindor common room to get started on their homework while Hermione promised to show Harry, Tonks, and Jenna where the library was.

On their way, they ran into Fleur and a few of her classmates, who were heading in the same direction. They made it halfway down the hall on the first floor when they were interrupted.

"Potter!"

The voice was so high-pitched that, for a wild moment, Harry thought a chipmunk was shouting at him. Spinning around, he spotted Malfoy and his two lumbering friends marching angrily toward him. He noticed that the school Medi-witch had been able to fix the boy's nose, which had shrunk from the potion, but, apparently, hadn't been able to restore their voices.

Vaguely, he remembered hearing a warning about the dangers of overheating a potion and inhaling the fumes, but he hadn't been paying enough attention at the time to recall it.

"Yes?" Harry asked, not even attempting to hide the smile on his face.

"This is your fault!" Malfoy squeaked furiously.

"In all fairness, you deserved it," he replied.

"You'll pay for this, Potter," Malfoy hissed, his voice reaching a range that was difficult to hear.

"Tell you what," Harry said. "Why don't we take this outside and deal with this like men?"

Taking two steps away, he opened a heavy wooden door that led onto the front lawn of Hogwarts.

"After you," he said, making a sweeping gesture with his arm.

With an angry huff, Malfoy stormed outside. The two large boys cracked their knuckles menacingly and glared at Harry before following the blonde outside. As soon as the last one had stepped through, Harry slammed the door closed behind them and locked it with a flick of his wand.

"What an idiot," he exclaimed.

The girls dissolved into laughter around him. Behind them, the door handle rattled as they continued down the hall toward the library. Someone started pounding on the door a moment later, but by then, no one was around to hear it.

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The next day, Harry was in the middle of Ancient Runes class when there was a knock at the door.

"Enter!" Professor Babbling shouted.

The door creaked open, and Professor Turner hobbled into the room.

"I apologize for the interruption, but Mr. Potter is needed for the Weighing of the Wands," she said.

"Of course," Professor Babbling nodded. "Mr. Potter, your homework tonight is to finish reading chapter thirty-two of your textbook. I'll be available after dinner all this week if you have any questions."

Harry gave her a cheery salute, stuffed his book and notes in his bag, and slung it over his shoulder. He closed the door behind him as he stepped out into the hall with Professor Turner and followed after her.

"So, what exactly is a Weighing of the Wands?" he asked.

"They need to ensure your wand is in proper working order," Professor Turner said. "I understand the press will also be there."

Harry glanced down at his uniform and quickly magicked away a bit of egg yolk on his lapel, tucked in his shirt, and straightened his tie.

"How's my hair?" he asked, pausing to check his reflection in a passing window.

"Presentable," Professor Turner said.

Frowning, Harry ran his fingers through his hair a few times until it had the proper 'just crawled out of bed' look.

"I've been an educator for more than sixty years," she said as they continued down the hall, "and in that time, I've learned a lot from my students. One thing that I fail to understand, however, is your fashion."

"Girls like bad boys," Harry shrugged.

"And having the hair of a homeless man gives that impression?"

"Yup," Harry smiled. "Make sense?"

"Not in the slightest," Professor Turner said. "In fact, I believe I understand less now than I did a moment ago."

Harry grinned as they reached the room where the Weighing of the Wards was being held. The door was already open, and he paused respectfully to allow his Headmistress to enter before he did.

They were the last to arrive. Cedric was there with his Head of House, and Madame Maxime towered over Fleur off in one corner. Dumbledore stood in the center of the room with an excentric-looking man with frazzled white hair and large, pale blue eyes.

Near them stood the press. There were two reporters. One of them was a blonde woman with bleach-blonde hair, garish makeup, and a lime green tweed jacket. The woman beside her was much younger, possibly in her early to mid-twenties. She had short brown hair, a plain, pale face, and wore a plain blue dress that wouldn't get her spotted from space.

Both of them had brought their photographers. They were both around the same age. One was a witch, the other a wizard, and neither was anything special, but it was easy to tell whose was whose based on the way they dressed.

"1910 called, and they want their cameraman back," Harry muttered.

Professor Turner gave him a pointed look even as a smile twitched at the corners of her lips.

"Ah, just in time," Professor Dumbledore said. "If everyone would gather around, we can begin."

Harry stepped into the center of the room, and Professor Turner stood just behind him. Fleur and Madame Maxime took up a similar position on his left, while Cedric and Professor Sprout took up a position on his right.

"What about interviews?" the blonde reporter asked.

She pinned Harry with a stare, and the predatory gleam in her eyes sent a shiver down her spine.

"Perhaps the Champions will answer a few questions afterward, Rita," Dumbledore said diplomatically. "Now then, this is Garrick Ollivander. He's a world-renowned wandmaker, and he'll be checking over your wands to make sure there are no defects. Garrick?"

"Thank you, Albus," Ollivander said. "I believe we'll start with ladies first. Ms. Delacour, if I may see your wand?"

Fleur strode forward confidently and placed her wand in the man's outstretched hand. Lifting his other hand, he held it lightly between his fingertips, turning this way and that as he examined it closely.

"Nine and a half inches long...," Ollivander murmured. "Rosewood and... dear me!"

"What?" Rita asked eagerly. "What's wrong with it?"

"Wrong? Nothing's wrong," Ollivander said. "It's the core. Most curious. Veela hair, I believe?"

"Oui," Fleur nodded. "One of my grandmuzzer's."

A notepad and an acid-green quill suddenly appeared over Rita's shoulder and began scratching away furiously.

"Remarkable," he said.

Waving the wand in an arc through the air, he produced a stream of purple butterflies that fluttered around the room before vanishing into puffs of purple dust the moment they landed.

"It's in fine working order," Ollivander said, handing it back to Fleur with a smile. "Now then, Mr. Potter."

Drawing his wand from the holster on his hip, Harry stepped forward and placed his wand in his hand.

"Oh my," Ollivander said, taking it between his fingertips.

Rita leaned forward eagerly, but when he didn't elaborate right away, her eyes narrowed.
"Well?" she asked impatiently.
"A Quintana wand, I believe?" he asked, and Harry nodded. "It's been many years since I've seen one of Miguel's creations. Let's see ten inches rather flexiblemade from a most unusual Snakewood and, is that a Thunderbird feather I detect?"
"Yes," Harry replied.
"From your familiar?" Ollivander asked.
"No, her mother," Harry said. "She landed right outside the wand shop and dropped it off."
"Fascinating," Ollivander murmured.
He examined the wand for another few seconds before raising it about his head. Nothing seemed to happen at first, and then there was a flash of lightning outside the window, followed by a crack of thunder that rattled the castle.
"A fine wand," he said, handing it back to Harry. "And, finally, Mr. Diggory."
Cedric stepped forward and handed his wand to Ollivander.
"As yes," he murmured, smiling softly. "One of my own. Twelve and a quarter inches ash pleasantly springy and containing a single hair of a particularly fine unicorn. I remember it

well. It nearly gored me when I plucked it. It's in fine condition... you treat it regularly?"



"Of course," he said, smiling patiently.

"And perhaps a quick word from each of the Champions," Rita added.

The photographers maneuvered the Champions so that the window was behind them and asked them to scooch closer together. Fleur struck a serious, intimidating pose while Cedric went for something Harry thought was supposed to be heroic. With a grin, Harry slung his arms around their shoulders, ruining their posture. As they turned to glare at him, he gave the photographers an open-mouthed grin and two thumbs up just as they snapped a picture.

It took half an hour and dozens of more pictures before they were satisfied. All throughout that time, the reporters took turns asking questions. Rita, in particular, seemed determined to find some sort of scandal.

'How did you enter the tournament, Harry?' 'You and Ms. Delacour seem close. Are you an item?' 'As a boy of just fourteen, do you feel intimidated by your competition?' she asked.

Thankfully, the other reporter, who he learned was Mary from the Salem Harald, was much more professional. She asked questions of all the Champions, not just Harry. After Fleur saw the way the British press were handling the interviews, she pulled the American over to the side and quietly asked for a copy of her article to be sent to her parents so it could be re-printed in France.

During that time, Harry helpfully distracted Rita by giving her the most outlandish and outrageous answers to her questions that he could think of.

"Oh yeah," Harry nodded. "People duel in the streets all the time in America. It's like the wild west. I once saw an old lady kill a man for playing his music too loudly."

"How tragic," Rita said, lips her lips and smiling as the quill and note page floated next to her, writing furiously. "Have you ever killed anyone?"

"Only a couple," Harry shrugged.

"I believe that's enough for one day," Professor Turner said before Rita could ask her next question.

Frankly, Harry was surprised she let him go on as long as she had.

The reporters packed up and left, Ollivander said his goodbyes, and Harry was relieved to find he'd missed class entirely, and it was now time for lunch.

"Oh, Harry," Dumbledore said as he and the other Champions were about to leave. "Before I forget. Our Care of Magical Creatures professor, Hagrid, would like to know if you would allow his class a look at your Thunderbird."

"Sure," Harry shrugged. "I'll have to check with Levina, but I don't think it'll be a problem."

"I'm sure Hagrid would appreciate it," Dumbledore smiled.

Harry smiled back and left with Fleur and Cedric for the Great Hall. They arrived a little later than the rest of the students, and after a bit of cajoling, he convinced his fellow Champions to join him at the Gryffindor table. Harry was just about to ask Dora if she wanted to skip class to go with him to Hagrid's hut when Fleur made a sour face.

"Eet's that boy again," she muttered disgustedly.

Harry glanced over his shoulder and saw Malfoy strutting towards their table with his two lumbering friends.

"This guy just can't take a hint," he sighed.



He stopped talking suddenly when Dora reached up and undid the top two buttons of her blouse. The top of her black bra was just visible, and the twins leaned over exaggeratedly for a better look.

"I'll do it," she threatened. "Do you want the whole school to see your mom's saggy tits?"

Harry frowned, looked her over, reached around, and grabbed both of her breasts.

"No need to be mean, babe," he said. "These don't feel saggy."

"Potter-" Malfoy growled.

He stopped again when Dora quirked an eyebrow and reached for another button.

"One more word," she hissed.

"Come on, Malfoy," George said. "You're not just going to stand there and take that, are you?"

"Yeah," Fred agreed. "Speak up, man. Say something."

Malfoy glared furiously but kept his mouth shut. Smirking, Harry gave Dora's breasts one last squeeze before letting go.

"Good," Dora said, redoing the buttons of her blouse, which drew disappointed groans from the twins. "Now, fuck off back to your table and leave us alone. And the next time you run your mouth at Harry, I'll be running *mine*, with your mother's face, up and down his cock."

Malfoy fumed silently, his cheeks turning a shade darker before suddenly spinning on his heel. He tried to force his way past his friends, but they were much too large, and he came to an abrupt stop. They blinked slowly for a moment and then moved out of the way so he could storm away furiously.

"That was brilliant!" Fred exclaimed.



"He doesn't have an office," she told him. "He lives in the hut on the grounds."

"Really?" he asked, smirking as he turned to Dora. "Feel like skipping class?"

"What do you have in mind?" she asked, eyes sparkling.

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Fifteen minutes later, Harry and Dora were soaring through the skies above Hogwarts on Levina's back. As they circled the castle, they spotted the nest she'd built atop Ravenclaw Tower. After a bit of a search, they found Hagrid's tiny hut near the edge of the Forbidden Forest.

"There," Harry said, pointing.

Levina followed his finger and dove down. Dora whooped, her arms tightening around Harry's waist as the wind whipped past.

"Let's give him a show, girl!" Harry yelled over the rushing wind. "Buzz the tower!"

Leveling out just a few feet above the ground, Levina banked, circling around the hut, and let out a piercing cry. Not a moment later, Hagrid came stumbling out of his hut, accidentally ripping the door off of the hinges in his excitement. Dropping the door, he stared up at the massive bird in awe as it circled around once more before coming into land.

Harry slipped off of Levina's back, helped Dora down, and grinned at the towering man.

"I heard you wanted to teach your class about Thunderbirds."