

## **If Walls Could Talk**

I'm not one to gossip, not really.

Of course, I like to know what's going on, who doesn't?

But I couldn't be called a gossip.

That would be like comparing me to that Lavender Brown in sixth year. Now *she* could gossip for England. If there was a world championship in gossiping she'd win.

Really she would.

But not me.

And then there's that Hufflepuff in fifth year – Lucy Webb. She's got a mouth on her like a motorbike, that one.

Talking of Lucy Webb, did you know she's started going out with Daniel Newberry of Slytherin? Now *that's* a scandal. A Hufflepuff and a Slytherin stepping out together! Never would have happened in my day.

Seems to me it's happening more and more often now. The other day, I heard a little second year girl in Gryffindor saying how much she admired David in Slytherin, and how handsome he was. I would have said something to her, telling her to stop her foolish thoughts, but that would have been rude of me.

And I'm not a rude person.

I like to mind my own business.

Keep out of other people's affairs.

Sometimes it's nice to know what's going on though.

Why, only last week I saw something that turned out to be of vital importance to Professor McGonagall. There I was, minding my own business, talking to Mr Brindley, my neighbour, when all of a sudden a kaffuffle broke out down the hall.

It started with raised voices.

“I hate you, Amanda!”

“Well I hate you more Stephanie!”

“I can't believe you kissed him, you cow!”

“Who are you calling a cow?”

And then there were hexes.

“Locomotor Mortis!”

“Expelliarmus!”

Well that was the wand gone.

And then-

*Slap!*

Well, Mr Brindley and I were having a right time of it. Nothing so entertaining had happened since the Malfoy-Ferret incident a couple of years ago.

Anyway, a prefect soon came along and put a stop to the fight. Mr Brindley and I were most put-out. That Hermione Granger’s a little too much of a goody-two-shoes if you ask me!

But that’s beside the point. Although, now that you’ve mentioned Hermione Granger, it might be worth noting that she’s not always the saint she makes herself out to be. Caught her kissing that Bulgarian seeker once, when I was visiting my good friend Kate in the library.

But back to the story.

I was able to tell McGonagall exactly what had happened, and the wayward third years were punished accordingly.

‘A big help’, McGonagall said I was.

That’s me.

Credit to the school.

I don’t know what they’d do, if it weren’t for me.

This is just between you and me, but I don’t know what’s become of this school.

When I was a student here, if you were caught fighting, that was it – out on your ear, wand broken and never to do magic again.

But now.

Now it’s different.

You know, no one’s been expelled from this school since poor Hagrid back in 1942. And that was for a crime he didn’t commit.

Although, I’ll tell you, there’ve been a few close calls with that Harry Potter.

I remember a few years ago, that poor boy and his friend Ron Weasley flew a car here instead of coming on the train.

A car, I ask you!

I think if it had been up to Snape, they would have been out. But Dumbledore let them stay.

He's always had a soft spot for Harry Potter.

Probably something to do with him being the 'Chosen One' or whatever it is the papers are calling him these days.

He's got a fair few nicknames with the girls around here, you know.

Not all of them repeatable in polite company.

His friend Ron's got a share of the nicknames too.

There's a group of second years quite enamoured with "The Weasley King". They've taken to following him around. It's quite amusing, actually.

Me, I don't see the attraction.

He's too tall.

No, his twin brothers were the dishy ones.

There were two of them!

And such troublemakers. Ooh, if I were a few decades younger!

Now *they* came close to being expelled many a time.

If they weren't blowing up toilets, they were stealing McGonagall's underwear and turning Snape's hair pink. They've left now, more's the pity.

They left earlier than they were meant to, as well.

A little selfish, if you ask me.

Depriving me of my eye-candy.

That's a thing as well – you pick up on the pupil's language.

Although I'd sound ridiculous if I tried to use it.

Imagine that!

I'd be talking to Mr Brindley or Kate about something or other and I'd be telling them

how 'groovy' that girl is, and how 'phat' her skirt was.

I'd describe someone who likes homework as 'sad', and something good as 'bad'. I don't know how they understand each other! Why, only the other day Colin Creevey was telling his brother about how 'wicked' Quidditch was.

I was mightily confused until I realised 'wicked' meant 'great'.

Sometimes I wish I were still a teenager.

And then I remember all the angst and tears and self-doubt.

Like that Daphne Greengrass. Her boyfriend dumped her last week, poor love.

Ran past, bawling her eyes out.

No, I'm glad I'm not a teenager anymore.

There are other things I don't miss about being a teenager too.

I hadn't remembered how bitchy teenage girls could be.

Not long after poor Daphne had run past crying, a group of girls appeared and started talking about how she deserved it, and if she was going to, well, *you know* with a boy after only two dates, then it was her own fault anyway.

I would have said something to them, told them not to be so cruel, but that would have been interfering.

I don't interfere.

But them girls were harsh. Poor Daphne, all the rumours and gossip hounding her.

I don't like gossip.

Not really.

But when you're a painting, hung on a wall, what else can you do?