

## **Fruit Ninja**

### **1**

Sixth year was going to kill him.

Harry was absolutely positive of this. And it was all because of Dumbledore.

On the face of it, the Headmaster had brilliantly persuaded Alastair Moody to teach DADA. When Harry heard, he had been ecstatic. After all, Barty Crouch Jr. pretending to be Moody had been one of the best Defense teachers the school had known. Just imagining how much better the actual retired Auror would be had given Harry an unfamiliar feeling that after much reflection he determined to be 'hope'.

That should have been his first warning.

His second warning should have been the fact that no one had given much thought to how being held captive in his own trunk for a year would affect the man.

Which is why Harry was only marginally surprised when the Headmaster made an appearance in the Defense classroom.

"Good morning class," the old man said.

"Good morning, sir," the class automatically responded.

"Now, there have been rumors of talk in the hallways about certain individuals being dissatisfied with the conduct of this class," Dumbledore said, his eyes twinkling madly. "Now, I believe you are all old enough to understand that individual styles vary widely between teachers. The way Professor Moody conducts his class is his own business, but I will tell all of you this: Professor Moody has my full confidence."

He paused for a moment. "Any questions?"

Harry imagined that he could hear crickets chirping.

"Very good. Right then. Carry on Professor!"

"Right you are, Headmaster," Moody said with an evil gleam in his eye. He waited until the Headmaster had left the room before turning to the class. "Good morning, class."

"Good morning," the class responded in a defeated manner.

"Where's all the others, then?" Moody asked, his magical eye sweeping over the empty seats suspiciously.

"They're not here," Pansy Parkinson responded.

"I can see that," Moody noted sarcastically. "What's the matter with them?"

All the members of the class present simply shrugged.

"Maybe they've got the wizarding flu, Ron Weasley suggested.

"Huh! Wizarding flu, eh?" Moody sneered. "They should eat more fresh fruit. Ha. Right. Now, Defense Against the Dark Arts. Today we shall be carrying on from where we got to last class when I was showing you how to defend yourselves against anyone who attacks you with armed with a piece of fresh fruit."

A grumble rippled through the class.

"Professor," Hermione Granger protested, "you promised you wouldn't do fruit anymore."

"What do you mean?" Moody asked perplexed.

"We've done fruit since the term began," Harry pointed out.

"And what's wrong with fruit?" Moody asked suspiciously. "You lot think you know it all, eh?"

"Can't we do something else for a change?" Pansy whined.

"Like someone who attacks you with a wand?" Tracey Davis pleaded.

"A Wand? Oh, oh, oh," Moody sneered. "We want to learn how to defend ourselves against wands, do we? Getting all high and mighty, eh? Fresh fruit not good enough for you lot, eh? Well, I'll tell you something my girl, when you're walking back to your dormitory tonight and some homicidal maniac comes after you with a bunch of loganberries, don't you come crying to me! Now, the passion fruit. When your assailant lunges at you with a passion fruit..."

"We done the passion fruit," Draco Malfoy moaned.

"What?"

"We done the passion fruit," Draco repeated.

"We done oranges, apples, grapefruit..." Pansy listed.

Seeing Moody's face light up, Hermione interjected "Whole and segments."

"Pomegranates, greengages..." Pansy continued.

"Grapes, passion fruit..." Seamus Finnegan said.

Pansy nodded and continued. "Lemons, Plums, Mangoes in syrup..."

"Well," Moody said in thought, "How about cherries?"

"Did them," the class chorused.

"Red *and* black?"

"Yes!" was the response.

"All right then, bananas," Moody suggested.

The classes' sigh was all he needed.

"We haven't done them, have we?" Moody asked triumphantly. "Right. Bananas. How to defend yourself against a villain armed with a banana. Now you," He said pointing at Greg Goyle, "come at me with this banana. Catch! Now, it's quite simple to defend yourself against a man armed with a banana. First of all, you force him to drop the banana; then, second, you eat the banana, thus disarming him, rendering him helpless."

"Suppose he's got a bunch?" Draco asked sarcastically.

"Shut up," the professor responded.

"Suppose he's got a wand," Dean Thomas asked.

"Shut up," Moody repeated. Right, now you, Mr Grape."

"Goyle," the brawny Slytherin corrected.

"Sorry, Mr. Goyle. Come at me with that banana. Hold it like that, that's it. Now attack me with it. Come on! Come on! Come at me! Come at me then!"

Moody waited until Goyle came at him with the banana, when pulled his wand and cast a severing hex, removing the boy's head from his body. Goyle only had time to make an odd gurgling sound before he died.

In a smooth move, Moody scooped the banana from the floor, and peeled it as he did so, then he took a large bite. "Now, I eat the banana."

"You killed him!" Pansy shrieked.

"He's dead!" Dean agreed.

"He's completely dead!" Vinnie Crabbe said in total shock.

"I have now eaten the banana," Moody pointed out. "The deceased, Mr Grape, is now helpless."

"You hexed him. You hexed him dead." Vinnie stuttered.

"Well, he was attacking me with a banana," Moody said as if that explained everything.

"But you told him to," Ron said.

"Look, I'm only doing my job. I have to show you lot how to defend yourselves against fresh fruit."

"And wands," Seamus demanded.

"Shut up."

"Suppose I'm attacked by a man with a banana and I haven't got a wand?" Pansy asked, trying hard not to look at the bloody mess that had been her classmate and friend.

"Run for it," Moody said decisively.

"You could stand and scream for help," Hermione suggested.

"Yeah," Moody sneered again. "You just try that with a pineapple down your windpipe."

"A pineapple?" Hermione asked.

"What?" Moody asked, spinning in place his wand at the ready. "Where? Where?"

"No I just said: a pineapple, I was just looking for confirmation," the bushy haired girl said.

"Oh," Moody sighed, almost collapsing against his desk, "Phew. I thought my number was on that one."

"What, on the pineapple?" Ron asked.

"Where? Where?" Moody shrieked, again on his guard.

"No, I was just asking a question."

Again Moody sagged in relief. "Oh. Oh. I see. Right. Phew. Right that's bananas then. Now the raspberry. There we are." He held the small fruit up for the class to see. "Harmless looking thing, isn't it? Now you, Mr Cranberry."

"Crabbe," Vinnie corrected him.

"Crabbe," Moody nodded " Right. Come at me with that raspberry. Come on. Be as vicious as you

like with it."

"No way!" Crabbe yelled, shaking his head. "No freaking way."

"Why not?" Moody asked, perplexed.

"You'll kill me," Vinnie pointed out.

"I won't," Moody said.

"You killed Greg," Vinnie said, pointing at his friend's decapitated body.

"That was self-defense." Moody protested. "He was coming at me with a banana! You all saw it. Now come on. I promise I won't hex you."

"You promised you'd tell us about fighting with wands" Ron interrupted.

"Shut up," Moody directed. "Come on Cranberry, brandish that raspberry. Come at me with it. Give me Hell."

"My name is Crabbe. Throw the wand away."

"I haven't got a wand," Moody protested.

"You have," Vinnie protested.

"Haven't."

"You hexed Greg with it" Pansy called out.

"Oh, that wand," Moody said.

"Throw it away," Vinnie directed.

"Oh all right, if you're going to be a baby about it. How to defend yourself against a raspberry -- without a wand," Moody announced.

"You were going to curse me!" Crabbe said accusingly.

"I wasn't."

"You were!"

"No, I wasn't, really I wasn't. Come on then. Come at me. Come on you weed! You pathetic little weed, do your worst! Come on, you puny little girly-man. You foul loathsome..."

Crabbe hesitantly raised the raspberry above his head, when Moody suddenly lunged toward a lever on the wall and yanked it downward.

There was a thunderous crash as a huge granite block labeled '**16 tons**' fell from the ceiling, crushing Vinnie under its mass.

"So Class, as you can see, if anyone ever attacks you with a raspberry, and you are without your wand, just pull the lever and the 16-ton weight will fall on top of him."

"Suppose there isn't a 16-ton weight?" Hermione asked.

"Well that's planning, isn't it? Forethought," Moody explained.

"Well how many 16-ton weights are there?" she persisted.

"Look, look, look, Miss Knowitall, the 16-ton weight is just *one way* of dealing with a raspberry killer. There are millions of others!" Moody insisted.

"Like what?" Daphne asked.

"Cursin' him?"

"But what if you haven't got a wand or a 16-ton weight?" Dean asked.

"Look, look. All right, smarty-pants," Moody said, clearly at the end of his patience. "You two, you two, come at me then with raspberries. Come on, both of you, whole basket each."

Dean and Seamus exchanged a look of panic.

"No wands," Dean insisted.

"No wands," Moody agreed.

"And no 16-ton weights?" Seamus asked.

"No 16-ton weights."

"No wands?" Dean asked again.

"Shut up, the professor instructed.

"No rocks up in the ceiling?" Seamus asked.

"Or hidden spikes in the floor?" Dean asked.

"No and no," Moody confirmed.

"And you won't kill us?" Dean asked.

"I won't."

"Promise." Dean insisted.

"I promise I won't kill you. Now. Are you going to attack me or keep whinging like a pair of sissy-marys?" Moody asked sarcastically.

The pair nodded and each picked up a basket of raspberries, and looked at the small fruit suspiciously.

"Right," Moody said, "now don't rush me this time. Stalk me. Do it properly. Stalk me. I'll turn my back. Stalk up behind me, close behind me, then in with the raspberries! Right? O.K. start moving. Pay attention class, the first thing to do when you realize you're being stalked by an ugly mob with raspberries is to -- release the nundu!"

"The great advantage of the nundu in unarmed combat is that he eats not only the fruit-laden foe but also the raspberries," Moody said watching the carnage the nundu was wrecking on the two unfortunates. "Nundu however do not relish the peach. The peach assailant should be attacked with an acromantula."

Harry and Ron exchanged a look, and then each looked to Hermione who was standing to protest the casual murder of her classmates. With a nod, the pair of them reached up and took hold of Hermione, one on each side, and they ran for the exit carrying their indignantly protesting friend with them.

Right, now, the rest of you..." Moody said as he turned back to the class room to find himself alone. "Where are you? I know you're hiding somewhere with your damsons and your prunes. Well I'm ready for you. I've wired meself up to 200 gallons of the Displodo potion, and if any one of you so much as makes a move we'll all go up together! Right, right. I warned you. That's it..."

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"It was horrible," Hermione said several hours later in the relative safety of the Great Hall.

"It was," Susan Bones agreed, while Hannah Abbott nodded energetically.

"I'm just glad we were smart enough to follow Potter and Weasley when they carried you out of the room," Tracey said.

"Why didn't Dumbledore believe us?" Daphne asked.

"He didn't think any of you were in danger," Harry said as he reached for a sandwich. "He was expecting a completely different outcome. Personally, I think this class was one of the best we've ever had."

"What do you mean?" Susan demanded.

"Well, usually the DADA Professor tries to kill *ME*," Harry pointed out. "Having him focused on you all, well, that was kind of relaxing, you know? I finally got to see what it was like for all of

you all these years."