

Harry Potter 571

Chapter 571: A Terrible Report

The following week, Evan asked Professor Lupin to help him select a list of classic music songs.

He instilled them in beautiful shell products and prepared to take them underwater and give them to the Merpeople.

In the midst of her busy schedule, it was soon November, and Rita Skeeter finally published her piece on the Triwizard Tournament.

With the publication of this report, Evan's quiet life was immediately shaken.

Rita Skeeter was a master of rumor-making. Her article was not so much a report on the tournament and more like highly colored life story of Evan and Harry.

Since Evan did not accept her interview at the time, Harry was still the main source of the report.

Much of the front page of the newspaper had been given over to a picture of Evan and Harry standing together, one which was taken secretly.

The whole article, continuing on pages two, three, four, six, seven, and twelve had been all about Evan and Harry, Ron's name had been occasionally inserted in it, the names of Fleur and Krum, misspelled, had been squashed into the last line of the article, and Cedric hadn't been mentioned, as though there was no such a person at all.

In Harry's words, this article gave him a sick, burning feeling of shame in his stomach. Rita Skeeter had reported him saying an awful lot of things that he couldn't remember ever saying in his life.

I know they will be very proud of me if they could see me now.

Yes, sometimes at night I still cry about them, I'm not ashamed to admit it.

But Rita Skeeter had gone even further than transforming his "er's" into long, sickly sentences. She had interviewed other people about him too.

Harry has at last found love at Hogwarts. His close friend, Colin Creevey, says that Harry is rarely seen out of the company of one Hermione Granger, a stunningly pretty Muggle-born girl who, like Harry, is one of the top students in the school.

Evan was fascinated by Miss Granger; and the two of them often avoided Harry and the others to be alone.

In a word, she depicted the relationship between Evan, Harry and Hermione as an entangled love triangle.

Moreover, from Rita Skeeter's words, she more or less implied that Evan was very fickle in this part of the article. Under the circumstance that Harry and Hermione had developed a love affair from the first year, he ignored the friendship and stole Hermione from his good friend Harry.

If this page was still just a shadowy speculation, then the next page was a full-blown explosion.

Rita Skeeter's purpose was very obvious. She wanted to tarnish Evan's reputation; it was the price Evan had to pay for offending her.

She chose a very good starting point. First, she played the emotional card and portrayed Harry's lonely and hard-working image of the savior.

This was also in line with what most people in the wizarding world knew about Harry and it was something that aroused their sympathy. Under such circumstances, it was a wonderful and difficult thing for Harry with his miserable life experience to find his first love.

Then, at this point, the relationship between Evan and Hermione emerged.

The next page adds a touch of vinegar, depicting the ambiguous relationship between Evan and other girls, such as Fleur, Gabrielle, Luna, Cho, Ginny and so on.

She listed all the girls who were close to. In her description, Evan seemed to be pursuing several of them at the same time. His relationships were unusual; he was dating several girls at the same time. True and false, it was hard to tell, according to Rita Skeeter.

Reading her article, Evan looked beyond imagination. Not only did he take the initiative to pursue girls of his own age, but he also began to pursue sisters at the same time, and younger girls like Gabrielle.

Not to mention the wizards of the outside world, the students at Hogwarts felt a sudden awakening after reading it. After reading this article, they seemed to have just discovered that Evan's private life was so chaotic.

At the end of this page, Rita Skeeter also speculated on why Evan was able to do that.

She suspected that he was secretly making Love potions and aphrodisiacs, which made the girls lose their senses and became obsessed with him.

She called on the school to investigate the matter and prohibit the abuse of drugs and magic by young wizards.

Of course, she still had a positive attitude towards Evan's magic power.

After compiling Evan's messy private life, the next page shifted to the theme of the Triwizard Tournament, targeting Ron.

Ron was also one of the champions she depicted the most. Rita Skeeter described Ron's bad performance in school, which was not too much to add to the story, because Ron's usual behavior was really bad enough. She didn't have to make it up; she could just use it as it was.

After a brief introduction, she began to question Ron's qualifications as a champion!

In Rita Skeeter's view, such talented young wizards as Evan and Harry did not become champions, while Ron was able to become one, obviously because someone was acting behind the scenes in this tournament.

Ron's father's role in the Ministry of Magic was also highlighted, and Rita Skeeter believed it was because of the good relationship between Mr. Weasley and Dumbledore, Mr. Fudge and Mr. Crouch.

At the end of the article, Rita Skeeter expected the Ministry of Magic to give everyone an explanation and said that she would continue to pay attention to the matter.

This report was really terrible, like throwing a huge stone on the calm lake, suddenly bursting into waves.

Now, no matter where Evan, Harry, Ron and Hermione went, there were people pointing fingers at them.

Here, the outcome was actually not too negative for Evan.

Evan's reputation and strength were there, and the young wizards still admired him.

The boys had expressed their admiration and envy of Evan's ability to date so many girls at the same time, and at most a few sour words. The girls expected to be able to communicate with him. There were many people who had a crush on Evan. If Evan was making love potions, they actually also hoped to receive some.

As for Harry, Ron, and Hermione, the impact of the report was not so easy.

Chapter 572: Negative Effects

Talking about Ron, he had been under the most pressure since this article appeared.

Although there was not much in the newspaper about him, it was very deadly.

The opposition voice, which had gradually subsided, was restored. Everyone thought that Ron's champion status had been obtained through dishonorable means. He had hoodwinked Dumbledore and the Goblet of Fire, and even many wizards outside the school believed so.

Being a champion did not bring honor to Ron, but shame.

Rita Skeeter's article pushed Ron to the forefront of the storm, making people think that he was a despicable villain who had no corresponding strength but who liked to show up, show off himself, and gain honor through covert manipulation.

Now, wherever he went, he could hear people shouting loudly at him.

They all wore badges of support for Cedric, quoted the words in the article and sneered at him.

Ron's temper became so bad that he could quarrel with Hufflepuff or Ravenclaw's students. As for Slytherin, he even had another fight with Malfoy.

His popularity among students dropped rapidly, and many people were secretly pointing fingers at him.

The same was true for Harry here, and the descriptions of him in the newspaper were even more embarrassing.

“Do you want a hanky, Potter, in case you start crying in Transfiguration?”

“Since when have you been one of the top students in the school? Or is this a school you and Longbottom have set up together?”

“Hey ... Harry!”

“Yeah, that’s right!” Harry found himself shouting as he wheeled around in the corridor, having had just about enough. “I’ve just been crying my eyes out over my dead mum, and I’m just off to do a bit more...”

“No ... it was just ... you dropped your quill.”

It was Cho Chang. Harry felt color rising in his face.

“Oh ... right ...sorry,” he muttered, taking the quill back.

Hermione had come in for her fair share of unpleasantness too, but she hadn’t yet started yelling at innocent bystanders.

“Ignore it,” Hermione said in a dignified voice, holding her head in the air and stalking past the sniggering Slytherin girls as though she couldn’t hear them. “Just ignore it.”

Harry and Ron looked at Hermione admiringly, but they couldn’t ignore it.

“We all know that woman is making rumors, and what she wrote is rubbish!” said Hermione, “You two should learn from Evan. He doesn’t take these things seriously.”

Yeah, only Evan and Hermione could totally ignore what was said in the article.

The two of them agreed that now was not the time to think about the gossip, but to help Ron find a way to successfully complete his first task.

As the tournament approached, they spent more and more time in the library.

Harry, Ron, Hermione, Colin, Gabrielle, and Ginny were all speculating about the content of the task. Evan knew, but couldn’t say it for the time being. It was better to wait for Caresius and Hagrid to tell Ron.

On parchment he listed the ways to deal with fire dragons one by one, and at last he scratched them off one by one.

It was not that these methods were not feasible, but that Ron’s current ability simply could not allow him to use them.

Not only Evan, but also Caresius was worried about how to help Ron get through the competition.

With Ron's magic and magic level, spells or Transfiguration abilities, it was impossible for him to succeed.

He couldn't use a broomstick as well as Harry, but it was something that could be thought about.

They checked a lot of information in the library, and Evan noticed that Krum had been there recently. He was now able to meet and greet everyone, not as cold as at the beginning, but it was nothing more than that.

Hermione often complained about Krum being there, not that he ever bothered them because he even rarely talked, but because groups of giggling girls often turned up to spy on him from behind bookshelves, and Hermione found the noise distracting.

Evan also felt this way, but couldn't stop Krum from appearing in the library. He could only sit as far from him as possible.

"Why don't we sit with Krum?" said Ron. "He invited us over."

"Unless you want to be stared at by dozens of girls, pointing at you and muttering..."

"He's not even good-looking!" Hermione muttered angrily, glaring at Krum's sharp profile. "They only like him because he's famous! They wouldn't look at him twice if he couldn't do that Wonky-Faint thing..."

"Wronski Feint," said Harry through gritted teeth, not wanting anyone to say Quidditch terms incorrectly.

"Face reality, Hermione!" said Ron. "Many girls like Krum, not only because he is the most famous Quidditch Seeker, but also because he has a lot of magic and a lot of knowledge, just as those girls like Evan."

"How many times have I to repeat it, Evan's private life is not as chaotic as that woman described!" Hermione turned her head immediately, looking at him discontentedly, "and he didn't get so many girls around him like that guy."

"It's not Krum's fault that he's popular!" Ron muttered. "He looks cold, but he's actually a good guy. He told me a practical spell some time ago, and it helped me a lot."

"Well, this is your opinion?!" said Hermione. "We've been sitting in the library every day to help you find a way to get through the first task, and we haven't seen you thank us."

"Of course I'm thankful; you're the only people who support me now, and I'll never forget it!" Ron said embarrassedly, turning around and talking to Evan, who was reading a book, "Evan, how does this Impediment Curse work?"

In this way, time passed quickly, and it was soon the week before the start of the tournament.

Evan had to admit that at some point, Ron's nerves proved to be really strong.

While others were worried about how Ron would complete his first task, he subjectively underestimated the difficulty of the tournament.

Ron didn't panic much, but he always thought about the glory that winning the tournament would bring him.

He had already told Evan, Harry and Colin more than once what he would do after winning the tournament.

This optimism continued until the Saturday before the first task, and all students in the third year and above were permitted to visit the village of Hogsmeade.

At breakfast, Ron told everyone that he wanted to go outside the castle to relax!

Chapter 573: the First Task

"We can't go, Ron!" Hermione objected directly, and took a thick book out of her bag. "We're only a few days away from the tournament. You haven't mastered all the spells I've summed up for you yet."

"There are several spells, including the Conjunctivitis Curse, that you must learn as soon as possible," said Evan.

"Evan ...Hermione, give me a break. That's the seventh year course!" said Ron, "Over the past two months, I've learned more than a dozen spells and should be able to cope with emergencies. The tournament will start soon, what I need now is to adjust my mood ..."

Before he had finished speaking, there was a sudden rustling noise above them.

More than a hundred owls came soaring through the open windows carrying the morning mail.

Hedwig's white figure mingled with a large number of brown and black owls, slowly landed to the table. She gently pecked Harry and stretched out her right leg with a crumpled parchment tied to it.

Harry quickly untied it and looked at the content of the letter.

Hedwig chirped softly, flapping her wings and looking for something to eat on his plate.

"It's a letter from Sirius!" said Harry excitedly. "He wants to meet us this afternoon in Hogsmeade."

"Great!" Ron cheered, proudly saying, "We must go to Hogsmeade. Sirius..."

Just then, a screech owl landed to their side and threw a parcel on Ron's lap.

"What's this?" Everyone looked at Ron curiously.

"I don't know!" Ron looked down at the parcel and said puzzled, "Strange, Charlie sent it."

Charlie Weasley was Ron's second elder brother, whom Evan had met during the summer vacation.

When he was at Hogwarts, he was a legendary figure of the Gryffindor Quidditch team. He led the Gryffindor team to win the Quidditch Cup many times. After graduating with excellent results, he went to Romania to study dragons.

Charlie doesn't usually contact Ron, let alone send him a parcel.

He put down the note and looked through the two books, his brow tightened and tightened.

"Charlie must be crazy. Why would I need two books related to dragons? And he doesn't even tell me why!"

Seeing Ron's inquiring eyes, Harry shook his head, with the same puzzled expression on his face.

"Even if he wrote the book himself, there is no need ..."

"Ron, don't you still understand?!" Evan interrupted Ron and said impatiently, "Charlie sent you these two books to tell you the challenge of the first task is a Fire Dragon!"

His voice was not very loud, but it seemed to have some magic.

Hearing his words, no one spoke, and they all turned to look at him in astonishment.

"God, Evan!" Hermione exclaimed, covering her mouth with her small hand.

"You ... what did you say ... fi ... fire dragon?!" Ron stammered, looking pale.

"Yes!" Evan nodded solemnly. "Charlie is sure of it, but he can't say it. It's against the rules."

"It's impossible. How can they use dragons as a task?!" Ron stared closely at Evan, "With the ability of a young wizard, how could it be possible to defeat a fire dragon? That's impossible!"

Looking at his expression, it seemed that he expected someone to suddenly tell him that it was April Fool's Day.

There was still silence, and that gradually turned into despair.

Thinking about it carefully, everyone thought that Evan's reasoning was very likely, accepting this shocking fact.

Only Ron was unwilling to accept it. He answered Charlie's letter as quickly as he could to ask about the matter.

In his words, it was just a coincidence.

Seeing Ron's obstinacy, Hermione wanted to say something, and Evan pulled her gently.

Ron now needed time to digest the news, and he didn't need to be pushed into it, for he was probably already overwhelmed

Although no one was talking about the fire dragon, this incident still cast a shadow over the next visit to Hogsmeade.

Ron seemed preoccupied, not as excited as he had been at the beginning.

They went back to the dormitory, put on their respective cloaks, and they set off for Hogsmeade.

Harry, Ron, Colin and Ginny went first, while Evan and Hermione went to Gabrielle to accompany her to Hogsmeade.

The two of them walked out of the castle and walked along the lake to the carriage of Beauxbatons.

"Evan, is the first task really a fire dragon?!" said Hermione incredulously, looking very anxious.

"No doubt about it!"

"Ron will collapse, how can he defeat a dragon? That is an impossible task."

"It won't be that difficult. The champions should be only asked to get something from the dragon," said Evan.

"I hope so, the two books Charlie sent should help." said Hermione, "I have to go to the library to have a look. We were in the wrong direction before. I remember a book said that Dragons are extremely difficult to slay, owing to the ancient magic that imbues their thick hides, which none but the most powerful spells can penetrate..."

Yes, the dragon was the most horrible and dangerous creature. When he first saw it, Evan was shocked and wondered how such a monster even existed.

But he has not had much fear since he killed a horrible fire dragon in the illusion with Okegiga, the Centaur.

Dragons were not invincible, they had many weaknesses.

In addition to the need to improve his strength, Ron had now to overcome his inner fear. This was the hardest thing for him.

They talked about the dragon until they came to the carriage of Beauxbatons.

Gabrielle was already waiting there, wearing a sky-blue school cloak and a bright smile on her face.

For today's trip to Hogsmeade, she apparently got prepared carefully.

Several girls who were ready to leave Beauxbatons's carriage passed by her and gave a silver bell-like laugh.

"Evan, we should tell Fleur about it!" Hermione suddenly whispered, "She certainly doesn't know."

Evan looked at Hermione strangely. He thought she would propose secrecy.

"Don't look at me like that. I know what you're thinking. We really should keep it a secret, but in the face of a dragon..." Hermione said quickly. "In short, aren't Fleur and Gabrielle our friends?! Go and tell her!"

Chapter 574: Fleur's Room

Evan had no objection to Hermione's suggestion; although with the relationship between Madame Maxime and Hagrid, Fleur will eventually know about the fire dragon.

But if Evan told her in advance, she would owe him a favor.

"Gabrielle, where's your sister?" said Evan. "There's something I want to talk to her about."

"She's in her room. She says she's not feeling well today. She's not going to Hogsmeade!" said Gabrielle.

She blinked and wondered what Evan had to say to her sister alone.

"Well, you take me up..."

"Go by yourself. I just came out from there. She's in a bad mood. I don't want to be near her at this time." Gabrielle made a lovely grimace and said with a smile, "you have to be prepared."

Evan looked back at Hermione, and she did not intend to accompany him.

With a sigh, he asked Gabrielle about Fleur's room and walked into the huge carriage of Beauxbatons alone.

If Fleur's character did not change, no one would really dare to contact her.

As soon as he entered, Evan had a sudden feeling of openness.

The space in front of him was much wider than it looked from the outside, and all objects were magnified in an instant.

It was not like the interior of a carriage at all, but it gave Evan the illusion of returning to the main castle building of Beauxbatons Academy of Magic.

The carriage was quiet and Evan did not see anyone inside.

He followed the golden escalator to the first floor and stopped in front of the second room on the inner side.

Here was Fleur's room, he knocked on the door.

"Come in!" Fleur said hoarsely, sounding a little weak.

This was very mismatched with her usual tough style. Was she really sick?!

Evan pushed open the door and saw a room with pink as the main decorative tone, with women's articles everywhere.

The latticed windows oozing with European style were covered by pleated white screens, and sunlight penetrated through the cracks, bringing a little brightness to the darkened room.

The air was filled with a refreshing fragrance, which was peculiar to Fleur.

The most striking thing in the room was the soft and magnificent big bed in the middle.

Fleur was lying on the bed, and the bedding was kicked aside. She was lying on it in a pink nightgown.

The low round collar was decorated with white lace, which revealed her graceful, concave and exquisite figure. Her open cleavage was snow-white and attractive. The lines of sexy underwear inside could be seen faintly. A small half of the snow-white arm was exposed, and her fragrance was floating in the air.

Her smooth and tender skin exposed outside, such as ice and snow, appeared particularly white under the light of a little bit of sunshine that came through the window.

Seeing Fleur like this, Evan stood there stupefied, hesitant to let her know of his presence.

"Gabrielle, weren't you going to Hogsmeade with that guy, why are you back?!" said Fleur, turning over lazily. "First of all, no matter how much you beg me this time, I won't..."

Fleur suddenly stopped and her eyes widened. She looked incredulously at Evan standing at the door.

They both looked at each other and the atmosphere was a bit awkward.

Following Evan's gaze, Fleur looked down and found out what was wrong.

Despite her openness, it was a little embarrassing that a boy saw her in this appearance.

"It's you?!" Fleur shook her beautiful head and rubbed her eyes, "How did you get in?!"

"You let me in!" Evan replied subconsciously, feeling a little bad.

"GET OUT!" Fleur grabbed the quilt with the fastest speed and put it on her body, his face red.

Then she thought that she couldn't let Evan go out like this. If someone else found out about this incident...

"Come in and close the door!" Fleur gritted her teeth and shook her fist. "Damn, what on earth are you doing?"

There was something wrong with the scene. The girl huddled in the bedding and curled up on the bed, as if Evan was going to do something to her.

However, to say that Fleur's appearance now could give any man wicked impulses would be an understatement...

"I want to tell you about the first task of the tournament... we... speculated..." said Evan directly, trying not to look at Fleur's eyes that wanted to eat him alive: "The first task is a fire dragon!"

"What?!"

"Fire dragon!" said Evan quickly, "You must be well prepared, as soon as possible, and practice to face a fire dragon."

Fleur stared at him, even forgetting to cover herself with the bedding.

After realizing that Evan was not joking with her, there was a flicker of fear in her blue eyes.

"Are you sure?!" she said, narrowing her eyes.

"Absolutely, believe me!" said Evan.

Fleur stared at Evan, with a puzzled, almost skeptical look in her beautiful eyes.

It was a long time before she nodded. She seemed to understand the situation and to have made up her mind.

"So, you guessed that the first task is the Dragon, and then you immediately came to inform me!" said Fleur, her voice returning to its usual tone. "Why are you doing this?"

"We're friends, aren't we?" said Evan, "You know, I have a good relationship with Gabrielle. I can't let you face those huge things unprepared, so..."

"I trust you!" Fleur whispered, and walked down from the bed. "Thank you for telling me about this, Evan!"

She tidied up her nightgown without any embarrassment.

Evan found that Fleur's figure was really good. In some parts, the originally loose nightgown seemed a little too short...

"I've been curious about you ever since I learned from Gabrielle that you helped Sirius Black clear his name," said Fleur, walking up to Evan, "I was curious about the kind of young wizard that would and could do this, but only after I saw you in person did I realize that you're the kind of wizard that I couldn't help but despise and admire at the same time."

Evan blinked, wondering what Fleur meant by this.

The atmosphere in the room was getting more weird, and there seems to be something wrong with this unfolding...

To be fair, Evan just accidentally saw Fleur in her nightgown, what would be more abnormal?!

“Every time I think I have a grasp of your strength, you do more amazing things. Evan, whether we like it or not, you are the most qualified wizard I’ve ever seen.” Fleur continued, “So...”

Before Evan could respond, Fleur suddenly lowered her head and kissed him on his forehead!

The girl’s lips were soft but warm, which made his heart beat faster.

Evan was dumbfounded, looking at Fleur’s appearance, as if he wanted to respond in some way.

Although Fleur was very beautiful and the most beautiful girl Evan had ever seen, he didn’t like her.

He only liked Hermione, and this had not changed since the beginning.

And even if he had told Fleur about the Fire Dragon, she didn’t have to be so... grateful; did she?!

“You know ... this thing, don’t tell anyone about it!” said Evan, “Hermione and Gabrielle are waiting for me down there, I’ll go!”

Looking at Evan’s back, Fleur’s face was full of pride.

She found it funny to tease this little guy.

Chapter 575: Ron’s State of Mind

When Evan breathed fresh air outside the carriage, he became sober again.

Evan recalled the expression on Fleur’s face just now, only to realize that he might have been fooled.

Fleur, that wicked girl, was definitely teasing him.

Her target would be a handsome wizard of the right age like Cedric, and it was impossible she would look to Evan.

As for what was said, it was even more impossible.

In her eyes, Evan was probably just a little brother, almost the same as Gabrielle...

But speaking of that, Fleur was really bold. Evan knew no other girls like her.

“Well, wasn’t my sister in a bad temper? I said you’d better not go up at this time.” said Gabrielle with a smile.

“It was really terrible!” Evan nodded, Fleur in her nightgown in his mind.

He had seen Hermione in pajamas before, but that was not the same thing at all.

“You told her everything?!“ asked Hermione, staring at Evan doubtfully.

“It’s done. Let’s hurry to Hogsmeade.”

Today is Hogsmeade Day, and the small village was full of excited Hogwarts young wizards.

Evan and Hermione accompanied Gabrielle through every shop in Hogsmeade. Gabrielle bought a lot of things to take them back as gifts. These things were special products of Hogsmeade and could not be seen in France.

“Where are we going next?” Gabrielle asked.

They had just come out of the Honeydukes Sweet Shop, eating large creamy chunks of nougat.

“Let’s go to the Three Broomsticks, where Harry and Ron are waiting for us,” said Hermione.

They walked down another street, and most of the students they met were wearing badges supporting Cedric.

“What does that shop do?” asked Gabrielle, pointing to Madam Puddifoot’s Tea Shop on the side of the road.

As before, it was steamy inside, and everything seemed to have been decorated with frills or bows.

“It looks so cute...” Gabrielle whispered, staring at the pink bows.

“Don’t go there, it’s not a good place!” said Hermione quickly.

“Not a good place?!” Gabrielle asked. “What’s in that Tea Shop?”

“It’s... where lovers date, and they do that kind of ... thing inside. It’s too early for you to know that!” Hermione glared at Evan, who was laughing and watching. Her face turned red and she said, “Let’s go now. Don’t let Harry and Ron wait.”

The relationship between Evan and Hermione has grown by leaps and bounds, with substantial progress being made in that small Tea Shop.

Unfortunately, the two of them did not stick to the end at that time.

Hermione didn’t know it at the time. She thought it was just an ordinary Tea Shop, but now she had no courage to go in there with Evan.

According to Angelina and other school girls, they could go out on a date at this age!

Thinking of this, Hermione stole a look at Evan and couldn’t help thinking if he would still ask her to go to the Tea Shop with him!

Although the two of them usually spent most of their time together, the feeling of going there would be totally different.

Hearing Hermione say that the Tea Shop was a place for dating, Gabrielle also thought about it.

What her sister had said to herself naturally came to mind...

In this way, the three people arrived at the Three Broomsticks, lost in thoughts.

When they entered the inn, it was crowded with people. Mainly Hogwarts students, everyone was enjoying this afternoon’s freedom.

However, there were also many wizards rarely seen elsewhere.

Hogsmeade was the unique pure wizarding village in Britain.

It was a safe haven for people like the Banshee, because they were not as good as witches in disguising themselves.

“Where are Harry and Ron?” asked Hermione.

Her voice just fell, and she saw Harry and Ron hiding in the corner waving to them.

on the table, “She’s still in the village. She must be looking for a new rumor to spread.”

“I’m sure she’ll come and watch the first task!” Harry followed.

“Yeah, to see how I get torn apart by the fire dragon; that would make a fine headline!”

Evan took Gabrielle to the bar to buy drinks, while Hermione sat down at the table.

“How are you two progressing?” Hermione asked. “Is there anything useful in these two books...?”

“Nothing, the two books sent by Charlie can’t help at all.” said Ron frustrated.

“Maybe we can try the Switching Spell!” said Hermione, taking the book that Ron threw on the table, “Professor McGonagall said in class that if you can switch its fangs into wine-gums or something, that would make it less dangerous.”

“Switch the fangs into wine-gums, are you sure I could pull that off?!” Ron asked.

“Evan should be able to do it!” Hermione whispered, staring at Ron for a long time.

He stopped abruptly, and Harry and Hermione looked at each other as if they had not heard Ron’s complaint.

Obviously, Evan did not become strong because of the Philosopher’s Stone, and he could not give it to Ron.

Knowing Ron, Hermione could be sure that even if he got the Philosopher’s Stone, he would not use it properly. On the contrary, it would be a threat to his life.

The huge magic in the Philosopher's Stone could not be absorbed by any human body. Evan nearly had a serious accident with this last time.

"We can change the way we think about it. It's definitely not possible to use the Switching Spell on the fire dragon, but you can cast it on yourself!" Hermione continued, "For example, to increase your strength, speed, defense, etc. Of course, these are not simple spells, we need to pass the ordinary Wizard Level test before encountering it in our studies, but you've got to learn in advance..."

"I can't, Hermione!" Ron said sadly, lying on the table, "I can't do it. These spells are too difficult for me. I can only pray that the task is not a fire dragon. Maybe a prank by Charlie!"

Thinking of Evan, who told her not to push Ron too hard, Hermione did not go on talking.

In her opinion, Ron's efforts were far from enough, but this was really not the time to say it.

Let him keep a relaxed and happy mood, even just for this afternoon.

"It's not a bad thing to read more books. Charlie probably thinks so." Hermione took out a bunch of things from her schoolbag and looked around the pub. She said thoughtfully, "It's a long time before we meet Sirius. We can't just sit here. Maybe we can take this opportunity to recruit some villagers to join S.P.E.W."

Chapter 576: Meeting Sirius

"Give me a break, Hermione!" Ron sighed.

"Hermione, when are you going to give up on this spew stuff?" Harry asked.

"When house-elves have decent wages and working conditions!" She said earnestly, shaking the roster in front of Harry. "I've got a lot of supporters now, and they all think my ideas are right."

Harry saw his name, Hermione's, Evan's and Ron's on the top of the list.

Evan was the President, Hermione was the Vice-President, Harry was the Secretary, and Ron is the Treasurer.

This was Hermione's initial organizational structure, and there were many Gryffindor students below.

Even Gabrielle's name was written on it. She was the first foreign member of Hermione's organization.

But Harry was surprised to find that more names he didn't know were densely filled with pages.

These were all the wizards who spontaneously wrote to Hermione asking to join S.P.E.W. after seeing the reports in the newspaper.

However, as Hermione persistently stated her position, more and more people began to identify with her. To be fair, everyone agreed that Hermione had a bit of a point and was brave enough to say such words against the ancient traditions of the wizarding world that had been passed on for centuries.

Nowadays, times were different. Whether it was the Ministry of Magic or the mainstream society in the magic circle, there were more and more Muggle apprentices wizards.

Gone were the dark days when pure-blood wizards held all power and judgment.

As one of the worst habits left over from the old system, the status of house-elves really needed to be changed.

With Hermione's efforts, this was the result so far, but there were more wizards against her. She received dozens of mails almost every week, with unpleasant and insulting words.

"We now have 300 members. This is a great achievement." said Hermione excitedly, as she wrote back to her supporters. "I think it's time for more direct action. I wonder how one could get to the school's kitchen."

"No idea, ask Fred and George," said Harry, "Evan should know too."

Hermione lapsed into thoughtful silence, while Harry drank his butterbeer, watching the people in the pub.

Right over by the door, he saw Cho Chang and a large group of her Ravenclaw friends. Harry couldn't help thinking that if he had become a champion, maybe Cho Chang would cheer for him...

Ron was lying there, with no intention to communicate with others, nor did he want to talk to Harry and Hermione.

He was now very depressed and in a terrible mood, feeling unshakable anxiety and fear.

Those people out there just needed to see him, and they would attack him with a badge or words from the newspaper.

He had had enough of this, especially with him about to face a dragon! Ron realized, for the first time, that becoming a champion was not that good of thing.

He didn't want to go out there and humiliate himself. He didn't have any chance unless Evan could lend him the Philosopher's Stone.

"The Philosopher's Stone!" Ron murmured.

He couldn't help thinking that if he got the Philosopher's Stone, he could also get the honors like Evan now.

In fact, the idea was extremely exciting.

Evan had said before that the Four Founders of Hogwarts left a secret treasure key each, which was the Philosopher's Stone.

Ron felt that he could also get a piece, and even reach the more exciting secret treasure. This might be his only chance to become a powerful wizard.

He had dreamed more than once of acquiring those treasures by himself...

Evan led Gabrielle to the bar, and the pretty landlady, Madam Rosmerta, warmly greeted them both.

Gabrielle chose a drink, and Evan saw that Hagrid and Caresius as Professor Moody were also sitting at the bar.

Hagrid had his usual enormous tankard in front of him, and Caresius was drinking the Polyjuice Potion from Moody's hip flask he carried with him.

Madam Rosmerta seemed to be very dissatisfied with this, and she was looking askance at Caresius.

Looking at her expression, she probably thought that Moody drinking other wine in her pub was an insult to her.

"We were just trying to find you, Evan!" said Hagrid, his eyes brightening, he leaned over and whispered mysteriously, "Tell Ron to meet me tonight at midnight at my cabin. Remember to wear Harry's invisibility cloak, I have something to show him."

When Hagrid finished, he straightened up and said aloud, "Nice to meet you, Evan. See you next week!"

"Good luck!" said Caresius softly, leaving with Hagrid.

Evan and Gabrielle, carrying their butterbeer, went back to the small table in the corner and told Harry, Ron and Hermione about it.

"Probably because of the dragon," Evan replied.

"I won't go..." said Ron stubbornly, "There's no dragon at all."

"It's not a bad thing to have a look, Ron. We'll all go with you!" said Hermione, "Hagrid definitely wants to tell us important information about the task. Even if it's not a dragon, it could be some other monster. We need to be prepared in advance."

Harry agreed, and Ron muttered and fell down again.

If he still had a glimmer of hope now, then after they met Sirius, that glimmer of hope vanished.

By three o'clock in the afternoon, the five of them left the Three Broomsticks Inn to meet Sirius at the Shrieking Shack. At Sirius's suggestion, they met secretly.

When they climbed the hill to the Shrieking Shack, Sirius was already there waiting for them, just as they had met for the first time last year, when he was hiding in this haunted house.

Gabrielle was excited to see Sirius. She had read a lot about him in the newspaper before.

More excited than Gabrielle was Harry. He hurriedly asked, "Sirius, how have you been doing lately?"

"Not bad." said Sirius solemnly, "You've been okay recently, haven't you?"

Chapter 577: Voldemort's New Plot

Things recently have not been going that well.

The scar on Harry's forehead had been hurting all the time. He didn't dare to say it. He did not even tell Evan and Hermione.

Ron's situation there was even worse. The first task of the tournament was actually to face a dragon! This was in fact more like a legalized death sentence to him.

Things for Evan were not going that well either, and he still hadn't figured out what Barty Crouch Jr.'s plot was.

As for Hermione, while busy with her studies, she was distracted by S.P.E.W., juggling more than what most students could handle.

They talked about these things, and Sirius listened patiently without interrupting.

He was just like an elder, listening to everyone telling their troubles.

"Sirius, they must be joking with me, aren't they?!" Ron finally said with hope. "Tell me, please! Tell me I'm not going to have to face a fire dragon!"

"Ron!" Sirius looked at him and said earnestly, "I wanted to tell you about it. The first task is indeed facing a fire dragon. Barty Crouch planned the content of this tournament, and I just learned about it."

"Then I'm definitely doomed!" said Ron, in a desperate tone.

Getting a positive answer from Sirius finally shattered the illusion that he was trying to maintain.

"Don't worry about the fire dragon, we can deal with it!" said Sirius indifferently, "We can talk about this issue later. Before that, there are things I need to warn you about."

"What?!" Everyone looked at Sirius in surprise. There couldn't be anything more terrible than a fire dragon, could it?!

“Karkaroff!” said Sirius. “I spoke to Evan alone before school began, but recent events have made me decide to warn you that he used to be a Death Eater. You all know what Death Eaters are, don’t you?”

“Yes!” said Harry, looking very surprised. “He ... what?”

“He was caught, he was in Azkaban with me, but then he got released. Maybe that’s why Dumbledore wanted an Auror at Hogwarts this year ... to keep an eye on him. You know, it was Moody who caught Karkaroff and put him into Azkaban in the first place.”

Everyone was shocked by this news. They couldn’t believe That Durmstrang’s Headmaster was actually an ex-Death Eater.

This was absolutely shocking news, if Rita Skeeter knew...

“Sirius, what have you discovered recently?” asked Evan.

“Voldemort!” said Sirius, disregarding everyone’s expression. “You know, the Aurors have been tracking the traces of vampires recently. They’re very active.”

“I didn’t see anything about that in the newspaper,” said Hermione, “Everything is calm.”

“Those vampires?!” Evan frowned.

Damn, Caresius had never told him about these things.

As head of the vampire clan, Evan thought that since he was at Hogwarts, the rest of the vampires would stop and hide from the Ministry of Magic.

Besides, Caresius had also said that Voldemort did not believe in them at all.

But now it looked like it was not the case at all. Voldemort and the vampires must have some kind of plan.

“I talked to Dumbledore about this, and we think it might be the statue he took.” said Sirius, “The traces of those vampires appear in the ancient relics left by many ancient warlocks. Voldemort may have some plans. They seem to be looking for something!”

“What are you looking for?” asked Evan.

“It’s not clear. We don’t know much about the statue of the evil god statue and the remains of ancient warlocks.” Sirius sighed and said, “And all these things have happened abroad, even in America, beyond the reach of the Ministry of Magic in inaccessible jungles and deserted ruins.”

No one spoke, and their brains seemed to be struggling to absorb yet another piece of shocking information.

Vampires frequently appeared in the ancient ruins to look for something, for sure, that was definitely not a good phenomenon.

Evan decided to look for an opportunity to talk to Caresius; he did not know what Voldemort was going to do.

Was he going to summon evil spirits? Or was he going to gain more powerful dark power from the statue of the evil god?!

“Well, this is not something you should consider. Let’s continue to talk about Karkaroff,” said Sirius.

“Did you just say that he was released?” Harry asked slowly, “Why did they release him? Shouldn’t all Death Eaters be imprisoned in Azkaban for life?”

“That’s true. But he made a deal with the Ministry of Magic,” said Sirius bitterly, “He said he had seen the error of his ways, and then he gave names. He put a load of other people into Azkaban in his place. I can tell you that he’s not very popular in there. As far as I know, since he got out, he’s been teaching the Dark Arts to every student who passes through that school of his, so watch out for the Durmstrang champion as well.”

“You mean Krum?!” Ron immediately retorted. “That’s impossible, he’s a nice guy.”

“Ron, what do we know about him besides his performance in Quidditch?” said Hermione, looking a little alarmed. “Sirius is right. We have to be careful, especially at this time.”

Ron still wanted to refute, but in the end he did not say anything, and just hummed a few disgruntled words.

“Okay!” said Harry slowly. “Sirius, are you saying Karkaroff put Ron’s name into the Goblet of Fire? Because if he did, he’s really a good actor. He seemed furious about it. He wanted to stop Ron from competing.”

“We know he’s a good actor!” said Sirius. “He actually convinced the Ministry of Magic to set him free, didn’t he? And according to our investigation, he appeared in London a few months ago, just when Moody’s was attacked.”

Chapter 578: Sirius’s Reasoning

“I think someone tried to stop Moody from coming to Hogwarts,” said Sirius, “It must have been the Death Eaters or vampires, and Karkaroff might have been involved. I’m not really sure about that.... Knowing Karkaroff, unless he’s sure that Voldemort is strong enough to protect him, he won’t rush back to his side.”

He sat down at the rotten step of the Shrieking Shack, frowning and thinking.

“But it’s undeniable that the Death Eaters and the Vampires are more active than usual. There’s Voldemort behind these things. You must know this.” Sirius continued. “They must be planning to do something during the Triwizard Tournament at Hogwarts. That’s why they tried to stop Moody, because they knew it would be much harder with him around. And no one is going to look into it closely; Mad-Eye has heard intruders a bit too often. But that doesn’t mean he can’t still spot the real thing. Moody was the best Auror the Ministry ever had.”

Sirius’s reasoning was really good, but unfortunately he didn’t know about Barty Crouch Jr. Or more precisely, he didn’t believe that Barty Crouch Jr. was still alive.

Evan had told him before, but Sirius and Mr. Weasley, who were present at the time, thought it was just Evan imagining things.

Moody, the only one who thought Evan was right, had already been attacked and locked in a box.

Of course, none of this mattered. What really mattered to Evan was what Sirius said about what vampires did abroad. These things had gone beyond Evan’s control and were developing in an unpredictable direction.

For a while, no one talked; everyone was digesting what Sirius has just said.

Gabrielle did not speak either, and her little face was full of worries. She sat down next to Hermione and listened silently to these appalling things.

Just now Evan and the others guaranteed that Gabrielle would not divulge the secret, and she could stay with them.

“Sirius, do you mean ...” Hermione said slowly, “it was Karkaroff or some Death Eater or vampire who mixed into Hogwarts and put Ron’s name into the goblet of fire.”

“For now, that’s what I think, yes!” Sirius nodded.

“Why would they do that?!” Ron stood up straight, like a cat whose tail had been trampled on, and said angrily, “What’s the point of making me a champion and then letting the dragon kill me?”

“Obviously, their purpose is Harry or Evan!” said Sirius, “They probably want to kill Harry, avenge Voldemort or accomplish other purposes. As for Evan, Voldemort probably wants His Philosopher’s Stone!”

He looked at Harry and Evan and turned to Sirius again. He couldn’t believe that he was made a champion and would face the fire dragon because someone wanted to do something with Harry and Evan.

“The exact reason is not known. This can only be guessed. Evan and Harry have been under the watch of Dumbledore and other professors. It was difficult for the guy hiding in the dark to start with them,” said Sirius “But it was much easier to put your name in the Goblet of Fire. There will definitely be something happening in the tournament, involving the two of them.”

Hearing Sirius’s reminder, Evan suddenly thought that the second task would require the champion to complete with dearest to them.

He wasn’t worried about himself, but if Ron chose Harry...

What happened under the water of the second task was not too easy.

“I’m more inclined to think they would target Harry more than Evan!” Sirius turned his head, looking at Harry with concern, “You’re still not strong enough. If anyone wants to kill you and make everything look like an accident, then this tournament is a great opportunity.”

“That’s really a seamless plan!” Harry smiled reluctantly.

Ron also gasped and sat down dejectedly. Sirius’s words were clear. If there were any accident, then he would be buried with him. Or maybe there would not be so much trouble; he probably wouldn’t even get through the dragon and would be soon torn to pieces.

“If that’s the case, what are those people going to do?!” Hermione asked. She was more sober than Harry and Ron.

“I don’t know!” Sirius shook his head and continued. “Be careful of the strangers around you, especially the champion of Karkaroff and Durmstrang. If anything happens, you can go to Dumbledore or Moody.”

He gave Gabrielle a suspicious look and quickly turned his gaze away.

“Sirius, you should tell me how to deal with those fire dragons!” Ron suddenly said.

“Right ... these dragons,” said Sirius, “There is a way to deal with them. Don’t be tempted to try a Stunning Spell. Dragons are strong and too powerful magically to be knocked out by a single Stunner, you need about seven or eight wizards at a time to overcome a dragon.”

“Great!” said Ron, “How can I have the magic of seven or eight people!”

“Of course you can’t, but you can do it alone,” said Sirius, “There is a way, and a simple spell is all you need. Aim at their eyes and use the Conjunctivitis Curse, Ron, that’s their weakness.”

“Conjunctivitis Curse?! Ron hurriedly said, “Evan taught me that, but I haven’t learned it yet. The spell is very difficult. So if I master this spell, I can deal with the dragon?!”

“It will cause just a temporary loss of sight. Eyes are the most vulnerable part of the dragon’s body.” Sirius waved his hand. “It’s too far from completely defeating or killing them, but it’s enough for you to accomplish the tasks assigned to you.”

Next, they discussed the Conjunctivitis Curse for a while, and Evan personally demonstrated it several times.

Ron seemed to regard this as a life-saving straw, and he studied very seriously.

But the result was disastrous, as he had been unsuccessful. The magic was too difficult for him.

And Evan suspected that even if Ron learned the spell, it would be a question of whether he had the courage to use it.

In the face of the terrible dragon, he might be paralyzed by fear directly.

“Your movements are too stiff, Ron, and don’t read the spell fast enough.” Said Evan, pointing out Ron’s mistake, “The posture of waving the wand is not right, your right hand is a little low.”

While Evan, Hermione and Gabrielle urged Ron to practice the Conjunctivitis Curse, Sirius was also teaching Harry.

He believes that the ultimate goal of this incident was Harry, and of course, he should be made stronger as soon as possible.

Chapter 579: Late-Night Action

Sirius didn’t let them go back until it was getting dark.

Before leaving, Evan looked for an opportunity to talk to Sirius alone.

He also asked about the recent frequent activities of vampires, but Sirius did not know much.

“Obviously, according to the information we have, they must be looking for something in those ruins. But I think they have found nothing. The ruins of ancient warlocks are so old, and they have been explored countless times by wizards for thousands of years. There should be nothing valuable left. As for the relics where magic is still working, whoever rashly enters them is purely looking for death.”

“Well, apart from that, is there any progress with Barty Crouch?” asked Evan.

He suspected that Barty Crouch Jr. was impersonating his father, Mr. Crouch, an identity that was very beneficial to Voldemort.

Mr. Crouch had a high status in the Ministry of Magic and could use a lot of resources.

More importantly, he was responsible for planning all the tasks in the Triwizard Tournament, and thus it was much easier for him to prepare any traps.

“There is no progress with that, but he’s really abnormal. He hasn’t been in the Ministry of Magic for a while. You’d better be careful. I know what you mean, but again, considering Crouch’s identity, we can’t verify it at the moment, and if that man

impersonates Barty Crouch and he's not in Hogwarts, how can he ensure that things on this side of the school are as expected, once there is any accident.. "

That was precisely Caresius's role. He received a note from Barty Crouch Jr. asking him to do his best to help Ron.

Obviously, Barty Crouch Jr. did not intend to go all out from the beginning. He naturally did not want to let things go too far.

"I'll come to watch the tournament when it begins. Once something happens, don't rush in yourself." Sirius warned anxiously. "I know you're very strong, but in the face of Voldemort, you alone will certainly not be enough."

"I know, and this applies to you as well. Don't always think of rushing in alone." Evan sighed. How worrying both he and Sirius were, "By the way, do you have any acquaintances in the Department of Magical Transportation?"

"What for?!"

"Help me register in the Licence to Apparate test and cancel the Ministry's supervision on me," said Evan, "It's too much trouble not to use Apparition!"

"But you're not yet an adult..."

"I know, that's why I ask you to help me." Said Evan quickly, "I've mastered this magic completely, but because of the Ministry's monitoring, I can't use it at all."

This magic and related skills are not allowed without passing the Licence to Apparate test at the Department of Magical Transportation.

If one Apparated without a licence, they would get heavy fines, or he would even be locked into Azkaban.

After several centuries of exploration, the Ministry of Magic had established a perfected and complete Apparition monitoring system to ensure that wizards who failed to pass the test could not use this magic, or they would rush to the scene immediately for treatment in case of any accident after using it.

The principle of this monitoring system was roughly the same as that of wand monitoring for young wizards, but it was more effective.

Evan didn't want to have a bunch of Ministry's officials around him as soon as he Apparated; and only adult wizards could attend the corresponding exams, and he couldn't wait that long.

If he wanted to take part in the test, he could only ask Sirius to think of a solution.

"I'll try. I'll just erase your name. It shouldn't be too hard!" Sirius smiled bitterly. "But I suggest you be careful. For your first Apparition, you'd better look after me or Remus."

"Got it!" Evan waved.

At sunset, when the figures of Evan, Harry, Ron, Hermione and Gabrielle disappeared completely, Sirius Disapparated from the Shrieking Shack, leaving only the hideous old house standing there quietly.

At midnight that night, Evan, Harry, Ron, and Hermione snuck out of the Common Room.

When the two of them went to bed, everyone quietly left the Common Room.

Both Evan and Harry had accumulated considerable experience in wandering around the castle at night. They knew how to avoid Filch and his cat. Although Harry had an invisibility cloak, with the help of the Marauder's Map, they simply walked out of the castle without using it.

Evan had planned not to take part in peeking at the dragon, but Harry and Hermione insisted that everyone should go.

Now that it had been confirmed that the first task would be against a dragon, it might be helpful to have a look at the appearance and types of this creature.

As for Ron, he was already panicking, and all he could think about was the Conjunctivitis Curse.

He kept chanting all night, in fear of forgetting the spell.

He was too nervous. He couldn't go alone to Hagrid. He wished everyone would go out with him.

The grounds were very dark. They walked down the lawn toward the lights shining in Hagrid's cabin.

The inside of the enormous Beauxbatons carriage was also lit up, and they seemed to have not slept yet.

As Harry knocked on Hagrid's front door, they could hear Madame Maxime talking inside the carriage.

"You are here, Ron?!" Hagrid whispered, opening the door and looking around, his brows wrinkled tightly. "Why are all four of you here? That's a lot of people!"

"We all know, Hagrid, just show us!" Harry said directly.

"All right, all right, remember to put on the invisibility cloak, you shouldn't be seen!" said Hagrid, looking very excited.

He didn't dwell too much on this and agreed that all four of them would follow him to see the dragon.

Evan thought for a moment and tapped himself, Harry, Ron, and Hermione on the head with his wand.

"What have you done?" said Harry in surprise.

"I feel as though there is a cold liquid flowing down through my whole body from where your wand hit me!" said Hermione suspiciously, watching her body take on the exact color and texture of the background, and then exclaimed, "Oh my God, this is a Disillusionment Charm!"

"Yes, this can be a little more secure!" Evan nodded.

It might be a little difficult to hide all of them under Harry's invisibility cloak.

But with the use of the Disillusionment Charm, there would be no problem. This charm could make them completely hidden.

"What's the Disillusionment Charm?" Harry was still asking, and Hermione whispered to him and Ron to explain.

Chapter 580: The Dragons

"Good job, Evan, thus you won't be seen!" Hagrid said with admiration, pointing to the dark woods, "You four wait for me in the grass and don't make a noise! We won't take Fang, he won't like it..."

He walked out of the hut, and everyone saw clearly that Hagrid was wearing a flower that resembled an oversized artichoke in his buttonhole. It looked as though he had abandoned the use of axle grease, but he had certainly attempted to comb his hair and spent a lot of time on it. They could see the comb's broken teeth tangled in it.

"God, this is terrible. What's the matter with him?!"

"Shh, keep your voice down, it's Madame Maxime!" Hermione pointed to the carriage.

Sure enough, Hagrid strode into the darkness and headed for the Beauxbatons carriage.

A few seconds later, he walked over to the front of the carriage and knocked three times on the door bearing the crossed golden wands.

Madame Maxime opened it, her silky shawl wrapped around her massive shoulders.

When she saw Hagrid, she smiled slightly. "Ah, Hagrid, it is time?"

"Good evening!" said Hagrid, beaming at her with a smile, and holding out a hand to help her down the golden steps.

Madame Maxime turned back to close the door of the carriage, and Hagrid offered her his arm.

They set off around the edge of the temporary paddock containing Madame Maxime's giant winged horses.

"Hurry up, he forgot us again!" said Hermione unhappily.

The four people hurriedly ran to keep up with them, trying not to make a sound.

"Where do you say they hide the dragon?"

"I don't know. It's probably around here!"

Madame Maxime, who shared their doubts, looked around blankly.

By this time they were far away from the hut and the carriage, in the dead of night....

“Where is it you are taking me, Hagrid?” she asked playfully.

“Into the woods!” Hagrid said hoarsely. “You’ll enjoy this. It is worth seeing, trust me. But don’t tell anyone I showed you, right? You’re not supposed to know.”

“Of course not,” said Madame Maxime, fluttering her long black eyelashes.

They were still walking, and Evan and the three trotting behind.

They had walked so far around the perimeter of the forest that the castle and the lake were out of sight.

If they hadn’t known that Hagrid was taking them to see the dragon, this would look more like a date of Hagrid with Maxime, one where Hagrid could make an advance to her.

At the thought of the scene of Hagrid and Madame Maxime together, Evan couldn’t help shivering.

Just then, he heard something. Men were shouting up ahead... Then came a deafening, earsplitting roar...

The four of them stopped abruptly and looked at each other.

“Just ahead, go to the right and stay away from them!” said Evan in a low voice.

Hagrid led Madame Maxime around a clump of trees and came to a halt.

Everyone hurried alongside them. This was an open space, and it was suddenly clear.

For a split second, they thought they were seeing bonfires, and men darting around them. And then their mouths fell open.

Dragons!!!

They finally saw the dragons!!!

Four fully grown, enormous, vicious-looking dragons were rearing onto their hind legs inside an enclosure fenced with thick planks of wood, roaring and snorting, torrents of fire were shooting into the dark sky from their open, fanged mouths, fifty feet above the ground on their outstretched necks.

There was a silvery-blue one with long, pointed horns, snapping and snarling at the wizards on the ground.

Not far from it, a smooth-scaled green one was writhing and stamping with all its might.

There was also a red one with an odd fringe of fine spikes around its face, which was shooting mushroom-shaped fire clouds into the air.

And finally, there was a gigantic black dragon, more lizard-like than the others, which was nearest to them.

There are at least forty wizards on the field, and every ten people were responsible for dealing with a dragon and surrounding it. They were attempting to control them, pulling on the chains connected to heavy leather straps around their necks and legs.

These four dragons were slightly smaller than the black dragon Evan had seen in the illusion, but their shape was equally amazing.

Evan was secretly surprised and his heartbeat was speeding up. As for Harry, Ron and Hermione, they were completely mesmerized.

Harry stood there in a daze, while Ron opened his mouth wide, dumbfounded, and Hermione gripped Evan's shoulder tightly.

They all looked up, high above them, and saw the eyes of the black dragon, with vertical pupils like a cat's, bulging with either fear or rage, they couldn't tell which. It was making a horrible noise, a yowling, screeching scream...

"Be careful, keep back there, Hagrid!" yelled a wizard near the fence, straining on the chain he was holding. "They can shoot fire at a range of twenty feet, you know! I've seen this Horntail do forty!"

"How beautiful!" said Hagrid softly.

"It's no good!" yelled another wizard. "Stunning Spells, together, on the count of three!"

Each of the dragon keepers pulled out his wand and pointed it at the dragon in front of him.

"Stupefy!" They shouted in unison, and the Stunning Spells shot into the darkness like fiery rockets, bursting in showers of stars on the dragons' scaly hides.

After the dazzling flash, the dragon nearest to them teetered dangerously on its back legs; its jaws stretched wide in a silent howl; its nostrils were suddenly devoid of flame, though still smoking. Then, very slowly, it fell.

Several tons of sinewy, scaly-black dragon hit the ground with a thud that quaked the trees.

The dragon keepers lowered their wands and walked forward to their fallen charges, each of which was the size of a small hill.

They hurried to tighten the chains and fasten them securely to iron pegs, which they forced deep into the ground with their wands.

"Let's get closer!" said Harry.

They moved right up to the fence, and Hagrid and Madame Maxime followed.

The wizard who had warned Hagrid not to come any closer turned, Evan realized who it was: Charlie Weasley.