

Harry Potter 91

Chapter 91: Strange thoughts

After breakfast, Evan walked out of the castle under the heavy rain.

The cold rain made him shiver. He saw Hermione, Colin, and Ginny beside him trembling.

Even so, they did not lose their enthusiasm.

As a pseudo-fan with a severe fear of heights and not much enthusiasm about Quidditch, Evan did not understand why the sport was so popular.

The weather outside the castle was raging with winds and heavy rain, but in order to watch this game, the teachers and students of the school rushed outside as usual. They ran across the lawn to the Quidditch pitch, sat down in the wet stands, and lowered their heads to resist the strong winds.

He felt bad. Half an hour earlier, Evan intended to spend the day in the comfortable, warm library.

He had already made up his mind that no matter what Colin would say, he would never take a step outside of the castle under such weather conditions, it was out of the question!

But Colin did not even come to call him; he actually went to Hermione and Ginny directly. Evan was pulled out by both of them, saying that he should go out to support the team, because this game was very important to Gryffindor.

Looking at their faces, Evan felt that if he would not agree to come out, and Gryffindor lost, then he would be held responsible by the two of them.

With no way out, he sighed and followed them out of the castle.

Unlike him, Colin, Hermione and Ginny were all smiling.

Needless to say, Colin's smile was honest. Over the past two years, he knew Evan well enough to know how to pressure him.

Ginny smiled because she found Evan's appearance funny. After all, his usual image, that of one who's too mature, calm, and omniscient, is nothing like the twelve-year-old boy that he looks like now.

As for Hermione's smile, it was relatively more complex. Sure, she shared the same reasons as Colin and Ginny, but that wasn't the main factor that created her smile. Pulling Evan out of the castle, she felt like laughing. She didn't know the source of that laughter, but deep down in her heart, she felt happy. Could it be "that kind of laughter"?

The four of them had different expressions as they went to the stands.

Ron had already kept places for them. Evan didn't know if this was just in his mind, but he felt that Ron was staring strangely at his eyes. It's hard to say, but it actually reminded him of the way Snape stares at him.

Evan shook his head. It must've been a wrong impression!

In fact, Evan's conjecture was right. Looking at Hermione and Ginny, who were laughing and walking with Evan behind them, Ron didn't know why he had a weird feeling; constituted mostly out of envy and jealousy.

These two emotions, he has been very familiar with, in the past few years, he had this feeling for his brother, and for his best friend Harry.

But he is now looking at Evan. Apart from jealousy; there was a strange sense of distaste in his heart that he had never felt before.

Ron suddenly remembered the dream he had been repeatedly having in the few past nights and the girl who appeared frequently in them. She looked a bit like Hermione... He shook his head ruthlessly. Hermione appeared in his dreams. Could it be just a coincidence?

Besides, why did he dream of doing that kind of thing with Hermione...?

Hermione was just his friend, but when he saw her with Evan sitting together, Ron felt very uncomfortable inside.

Intuition told him that there must be something he did not know between the two of them.

These things make up the main source of this unfamiliar hatred in his heart.

Under the influence of this sentiment, Ron's attention shifted from the Quidditch match to people beside him.

He found that the more he looked at Evan, the worse he felt.

He was obviously one year younger than him. What makes him any better?

Ron forced himself to not think about it. After all Evan managed to save him last year. The thoughts in his mind were definitely bad. He took a deep breath and suddenly it came back to his mind: what happened last year, the black diary, and what was written in it for him by Tom Riddle.

Although it was the incarnation of Voldemort as a Student, although he was evil, deep down inside, Ron had to admit that he found some truth in his words. Against Malfoy's bad treatment, he stepped up to protect her, causing him to spend a week vomiting disgusting slugs. In face of Snape's unreasonable manners, he stood up for her, and was punished by being obliged to spend full night cleaning urinals. Faced with...

He clearly, did all of this for her. But now, the one by her side, is Evan. It's really like Tom Riddle said.

No, no! There must something wrong with him to have such dangerous ideas.

Ron forced his eyes away from Evan and Hermione, looking in the center of the court. Gryffindor and Hufflepuff Quidditch teams began to appear.

Under the cheers of the audience, Evan saw the Gryffindor Quidditch players walking out of the locker room; the wind blew badly, and when they walked into the stadium, they all staggered. He could not even see clearly Harry's thin silhouette.

It was the same for Hufflepuff, and Evan could only vaguely see seven people dressed in canary yellow robes standing on the court. The guy who was shaking hands with Wood was supposed to be Cedric Diggory.

Although he had never met him, Evan was very impressed by the name.

In addition to remembering that he was in the next year's Triwizard Tournament, which ended up by getting him killed by Voldemort, Diggory made many contributions to the Hogwarts Magical News this year.

From his submissions, it could be seen that Diggory was an excellent Wizard, and had very in-depth research on Metamorphosis.

But Evan didn't know how good he would be in Quidditch, especially in such a bad weather. If he and Harry couldn't see the Snitch, it would be very bad for everyone to sit all day in the cold rain.

A few seconds later, with the whistle of Mrs. Hooch, the game began!

A blur of red and yellow figures leaped up and down the pitch. Evan couldn't know how the game was progressing, and couldn't even hear the commentary in the wind.

Although he had a raincoat on, he became soaked in water. He felt like he was freezing. Through the intensive rain, he saw Harry moving at top of the pitch, and his condition was much worse than his.

Evan saw Hermione sitting beside him cold and shivering, but she seemed to be in high spirits, as if someone had given her a Potion of Happiness!

It was strange to him that Hermione liked Quidditch so much. How did it not show before? He remembered that when Gryffindor played against Hufflepuff last year, Hermione chose to not come see the game in order to speed up the making of the Polyjuice potion.

If there was any difference between this year and the previous one, it was that Cedric Diggory became Hufflepuff's captain.

He also remembered that Angelina said yesterday that the guy was very handsome. Evan suddenly became inexplicably nervous, and he unconsciously looked up and searched for Diggory's presence. Then he saw that Ron was still looking at him and his expression was becoming more and more bizarre.

What's going on today? What is it with these two?

Chapter 92: Dementors' Feast

Evan saw Ron panicking and turning as if he wanted to avoid eye contact.

"That's not good. Is he hiding something from me?!" He looked at Ron thoughtfully.

Does it have anything to do with Peter Pettigrew? But from Ron's expression, that doesn't seem to be the case, it looks like...

A moment later, thunder roared in the air, and Evan turned his head as a fork-shaped lightning bolt crossed the sky. He saw Harry flying over his head.

In the air, Harry was so cold and numb that he had to press himself down on his broom, directing it through the turbulent airstream and looking for the Snitch everywhere. As he avoided a Bludger coming from his right, he saw Diggory sneak down under him. Diggory was flying in the opposite direction. Did he spot the Snitch?!

They could no longer go on like this and the situation was becoming more and more dangerous.

Harry turned quickly and wanted to go back to the middle of the pitch. But just then, a flash of lightning lit up the stands. Harry saw something that completely distracted him: the silhouette of a huge black dog, which was clearly reflected in the sky above the empty seats of the Slytherin stand.

Harry's numb hands slid on the broomstick, and his Nimbus 2000 fell several feet.

He moved his wet hair away from his eyes, and squinted to look up. The dog had disappeared.

"Harry!" Wood's distressed cry came from Gryffindor's goal. "Harry, behind you!"

Harry panicked and Diggory went down to the field. A small Golden Snitch flashed between them in the rain. Harry panicked on the broomstick and rushed towards it.

Everyone stopped straight away and looked at the two seekers who were approaching the Snitch. Diggory was closer to the snitch, but Harry was faster.

On the stands, Hermione's cold little hand suddenly gripped Evan's left arm and she screamed in horror. "Look, look!".

Turning to where she was looking, Evan's heart shook fiercely as he saw the sky behind Harry and Diggory turning pitch black.

Like ink spreading out in the water, more than a hundred Dementors were attracted by the cheerful atmosphere on the Quidditch pitch, and they came quickly with the terrible cold currents.

The Dementors seemed to be invited to a feast. They were dressed in dark gray, tattered cloaks, floating in the air. A pair of hand rotting with pus slowly shook both sides of their hoods, and the air got filled with the smell of rotten meat.

Along the strings of Ice being formed around the Dementors, Evan saw something flying out of the stands to be taken away by the Dementors above. It was their happiness.

The whole world instantly became black and white, and there was nothing left but silence on the stepped stands around the runway. Although the wind was still as strong as before, he couldn't hear it howling anymore, as if someone had turned off the sound.

Evan saw Hermione shouting at him, but he couldn't hear anything.

He yanked his wand out and aimed at the Dementors in the center of the field.

"Expecto Patronum!" he shouted, but he couldn't hear his own voice.

His wand emitted a silver light, swaying like a flame in the wind and rain, bringing a moment of color to this black and white world of savagery.

But no, this filament dissipated instantly and turned into a faint green smoke.

"Damn, there are too many Dementors!" Evan uttered the spell again, and kept thinking about happy memories.

The surprise of receiving Hogwarts' letter, the joy of learning his first spell, the happy times he had with his friends, and the light of the tip of his wand grew stronger and stronger.

A complete animal was gradually being formed.

But this wasn't enough, and the dark fear brought by the Dementors came from all sides.

Evan tightened his wand and remembered the scene when he first released the complete patronus on the train. At the time, he also couldn't hold on. Hermione gave him hope and he tried to recall that feeling.

Evan suddenly felt a quivering, weak body clinging to him; he turned to see Hermione staring at him nervously.

Yeah, that was the feeling!

The next second, a dazzling silver-white animal emerged from Evan's wand.

The power of the Patronus Charm comes from the positive energy of one's heart. Apart from the happy moments that one can remember, it comes also from hope, the desire to live and from the desire to protect.

When you want deep down in your heart to protect someone, you become able to send out a complete corporeal guardian.

The Patronus released is stronger as long as the determination to defend is stronger.

It was not a happy memory; it's Evan's determination to protect Hermione that inspired the spell.

His Patronus was a cat, but one that's much stronger and more ferocious than an ordinary one. It was dotted with silver bands and it was like a tiger.

"Is that a cat or a tiger?"

All the young wizards in the stands exclaimed loudly, they have never seen such a strange, rare creature.

But Evan knew that his Patronus and Animagus had the same image and were all black cats.

Because at that moment, his desire to guard Hermione was deep inside, it made this guardian really powerful.

The Patronus represents that which is hidden, unknown but necessary within the personality. It is the awakened secret self that lies dormant until needed. Evan's Patronus majestically took his determination to protect Hermione, fiercely rushing over to the Dementors in the center of the field, and chasing them away.

In the air, Harry quickly approached the Snitch.

He was only a little bit behind, but was faster than Diggory. But then, it seemed like time froze.

Harry felt like he had entered a black hole from which he could never fly out. He helplessly tried moving forward. The surrounding temperatures were getting lower and lower. His breathing began slowing down as if his lungs were freezing, and the frozen Rain drilled into his body cutting him up from the inside out.

He heard the voice that he heard that time on the train. Someone was screaming in his head. It was the voice of a woman.

"Not Harry, Not Harry, Please, Not Harry!"

"Stand aside you silly girl, stand aside now..."

“Not Harry, please no! Take me! Kill me instead!”

Harry’s brain got numb. He didn’t what was going on or what he was doing; he didn’t know why he was flying. He getting closer and closer to the snitch, but his attention was focused on the woman in his mind.

He must help her. She’s going to die. No, she’s going to be murdered!

“Not harrY, please! Have mercy! Have mercy!”

Answering her, there was only a sharp cold laughter. In face of her pleading voice, it sounded extremely cruel.

Harry felt lost. He couldn’t help the woman. He felt like he’s about to slide down from his broom. Just as he thought he was going to fall like this, a silver-white animal suddenly flew over from below.

It was Evan’s Patronus that was, just like his Animagus, a black cat.

As harrY regained some vague awareness, he found himself surrounded by Dementors. Their faces hidden under their headscarfs were all facing him.

Behind their headscarves, the darkness looked like it had nothing within it.

No, Harry saw something in it. It was...

His eyes went wide open and he was full of horror. He wanted to pull out his wand, but he found himself falling off his broomstick. His Nimbus 2000 flew towards Forbidden Forest along its original trajectory.

The cold rain fell rapidly and slammed Harry’s pale face. He could not reach out to his broom with his right hand.

His efforts were in vain. More and more Dementors were approaching the place. The light of Evan’s Patronus was getting weaker and weaker. The woman’s plea and the harsh laughter were re-emerging in Harry’s mind. They are still talking, and the man seemed to have said something terrible.

Harry tried to recall what the man just said, but he couldn’t remember anything.

He was trying to withstand this, but his eyelids get heavier and heavier.

Then, all he saw was darkness.

Chapter 93: The Young Wizards’ Patronuses

Endless darkness completely filled the Quidditch pitch, and the young wizards silently watched the Dementors floating over them, with terrible things flooding their minds.

They felt depressed, powerless, and terrified, as if the end of the world had come.

“Expecto Patronum!”

Just when everyone was in despair, a slightly young but firm voice rang from the Gryffindor stand.

Like a ray of dawn in the darkness, a silver-white animal popped up, becoming the only source of color and light to that black and white dark world.

The little wizards turned their heads together. They saw a thin boy with his wand standing up to over a hundred hideous Dementors. The light from the tip of his wand formed a strong wall in front of the Dementors, just like the light of dawn ends the darkness.

This picture is to be printed in their memories for many years to come.

“It’s Evan Mason, that’s his Patronus.”

Nobody knew who shouted that, but everyone suddenly remembered that they saw an article on the Dementors in the “Hogwarts Magic New”, and how “Patronus Charm” was the only thing that can resist them.

The little wizards hurriedly pulled out their wands and casted the spell at the sky.

Like little stars in the night’s sky, silver-white lights shined on the stands.

Soon, Evan knew how many people secretly practiced the Patronus Charm. About 600 silver-white lights appeared in the grandstand.

The thick fog of light made by all of their wands blew away the fear and coldness of the moment.

Many of them began to condense a corporeal Patronus.

Percy’s Patronus took the lead in rushing out of the fog. It was like a weasel. Behind it were more than a dozen patronuses of all kinds.

Evan also saw an otter on the tip of Hermione’s wand. It circled around twice then flew to the Dementors.

Following those complete ones, the white light fog floated upwards and countless Auras began to emerge.

Like a sharp arrow, the light fog hit the Dementors under its caster’s will.

The Dementors never seemed to have encountered such a situation. Faced with so many Patronuses and a large amount of smoke made out of happy emotions, they panicked and retreated. These creatures that have always brought fear and despair to others, felt for the first time the taste of fear themselves and they instinctively wanted to run away.

A moment later, a beautiful voice came from the top of the castle.

That was the Phoenix’s voice. Evan once heard it in the secret room in the previous semester. He turned back and saw a giant silver-white phoenix flying out of the Headmaster’s office. It was the Patronus of Dumbledore, a very rare and powerful magical creature.

It moved closer to the Quidditch pitch with a huge white Aura more dazzling than all the other Patronuses. Under its illumination, the Dementors, who were slow to escape, turned into a cloud of smoke under the sight of everyone present and completely vanished.

Common Patronuses can only chase away the Dementors, but Dumbledore’s Phoenix can actually kill them.

The Dementors who broke into the castle, made the greatest White Wizard of modern Times really angry.

Next to the path of the Phoenix flight, Evan saw Harry falling from high altitude and hurried to the center of the Quidditch pitch.

Ron and Hermione were stunned for a moment and hurried to follow.

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“Luckily the ground is so soft.”

“I thought he would die, but he didn’t even break his glasses.”

Harry heard their whispers, but he couldn’t understand what they were talking about.

He didn’t know where he was, nor did he know how he came there, or what he was doing before he got there.

All he knew was that he was feeling pain all over his body, as if he had taken a beating.

“Fortunately, Evan and his Patronus woke us up from fear and despair!”

“A hundred Dementors, this is the most terrible thing I have ever seen in my life.”

Yeah, the most terrible and scariest thing! Harry remembered the dark shadows of the scarfs and the terror underneath it...

And also he remembered the chilling screams that constantly slammed his mind, and the man who seemed to say something in the end.

The next time Harry opened his eyes he was lying in the hospital’s bed.

Gryffindor’s Quidditch team members were splashed with mud from head to toe, and they were surrounding his bed. Evan, Ron, and Hermione were also there, looking like they just climbed up from the swimming pool.

“Harry, Harry! How do you feel?” Ron’s face looked pale.

“What happened?” Harry’s consciousness came back quickly; he suddenly sat up and saw several people around him startled.

“You fell down from above fifty feet.” said Ron.

“We thought you were dead!” Alicia followed. She was standing there trembling.

When she heard her, Hermione uttered a shrill, low-pitched voice, and her eyes went red.

“But the game...” Harry said. “What happened? Can we play again?”

No one spoke, and Harry started realizing the horrible truth.

“We haven’t... lost?”

“Diggory caught the Snitch!” said Fred. “Just after you fell, he didn’t understand what was going on. When he looked down and saw you fall to the ground, he planned to interrupt the game to replay it later.”

“But they won with fair play, and even Wood admitted this.” George followed.

“Where’s Wood?” Harry looked around and suddenly realized that Wood wasn’t there.

“He’s still in the rain!” Fred said. “We think he’s going to drown himself.”

Harry buried his face between his knees and grabbed his hair with both hands.

“Well, Harry, you used to always catch the Snitch,” Fred said.

“You’re going to miss so of them!” Said George. “The tournament is not over yet!”

“We lost a hundred points, didn’t we? So if Hufflepuff loses against Ravenclaw and we defeat Ravenclaw and Slytherin...”

“Hufflepuff must lose at least two hundred points,” said George. “But if they beat Ravenclaw...”

“No way, Ravenclaw is great. But if Slytherin loses against Hufflepuff...”

“It all depends on their scores; whoever wins gets a hundred points.”

Harry laid in his bed and listened to the discussion between Fred and George. He didn’t say a word.

They lost because of him. He lost for the first time in Quidditch.

About ten minutes later, Madam Poppy Pomfrey came to tell the team members to let Harry rest.

“We’ll see you later.” Fred told Harry, “Don’t blame yourself, Harry! You’re still our best Seeker.”

The team went out leaving a trail of mud behind them. Madam Pomfrey closed the door behind them and looked unhappy.

Evan, Ron, and Hermione looked at each other and stayed.

Chapter 94: Filch’s Office

“He needs to rest. You three don’t stay too long.”

Madam Pomfrey looked at Evan, Ron, and Hermione with dissatisfaction; and she drew their attention to the water stains and mud falling down from their clothes.

“Besides, I need one of you to come to get his nutritional supplements. This will help him regain his strength!”

“I’ll come.”

Evan saw that Ron had something to say to Harry and that he shouldn’t make a girl do madam Pomfrey’s task. He rose and followed her out of the ward.

“Did I actually see many Dementors?” Harry whispered, but in his mind, he was thinking about the dog’s appearance once again.

“It was more than a hundred Dementors, Harry!” said Hermione in a trembling voice. “I was scared and I didn’t know what to do. All I could think about was terrible things. But thanks to Evan and His Patronus, we were able to wake up...”

She suddenly thought of Evan’s Patronus which was exactly the same as the strange black cat she met at the Leaky Cauldron that night before the school started.

Would there be any connection between the two? Hermione remembered that Evan had told her himself, he learned Animagus in the summer vacation, but he always refused to tell her what his deformation form was. She was a little skeptical when she first met Evan’s Patronus on the train. It was too similar to the black cat she had seen before, and Evan was obstinate at the time. Is that strange black cat his Animagus form?!

Hermione’s face instantly turned red as she remembered holding the cat in her arms.

God, if it is really true, that means she got undressed in front of Evan...

“OK, Hermione!” Ron looked furious as he watched Hermione. He shouted, “Evan’s Patronus was useless. It was Dumbledore who saved Harry and drove the Dementors away.”

“What...” Hermione yelled.

“Everyone saw it, Evan’s Patronus rushed to those Monsters and they escaped and couldn’t take it for more than seconds.” Ron didn’t look at Hermione and said to her, “His Patronus was of no use at all. Harry finally fainted and we lost the game!”

“But it was Evan’s Patronus that brought courage and hope to everyone. All the others could release their Patronuses. I also released my complete Patronus for the first time, it was like an otter.”

“Don’t you still understand?!” Ron gasped. “There were so many Dementors out there. If there weren’t Evan’s Patronus, maybe Diggory would have fainted too. If that happened, Gryffindor wouldn’t have lost.”

“What are you talking about, Ron!” Hermione said in surprise. “If Evan did not gain time for Dumbledore, Harry would have fallen earlier from a higher distance!”

When he saw Hermione’s look, Ron became more and more irritated.

There was an inexplicable anger within his heart that he wanted to let go. He was at the Quidditch pitch as well and wand glow for a little while, then the light immediately disappeared.

It was far from being comparable to the complete Patronus of Evan, or even to that of Hermione.

This made him feel very uncomfortable. He shouted, “He was more of a hindrance than a help, and nothing of all this would have happened if it was not for him. Percy was just slower than him...”

“Okay, you two can’t let me have some quiet for a bit!” Harry whispered.

Ron’s voice went low and the room was embarrassingly silent.

Harry did not understand what happened between Ron and Hermione. It was weird that they did not care about his physical condition. Instead, they were discussing whether Evan's Patronus played a role in saving him or not. In particular, the fact that they were talking in Evan's back, made Harry feel bad.

"Forget those damn Dementors. Did anyone get my Nimbus2000?"

When they heard him, Ron and Hermione quickly glanced at each other.

"Oh....."

"What?!" Harry suddenly had a bad feeling.

"Oh, when you fell down, it was blown away." Hermione said hesitantly. "Then it crashed and hit the Whomping Willow."

Harry felt anguish in his heart. He saw the Whomping Willow the last semester. It even shattered Mr. Weasley's car.

"And then?" Harry whispered, afraid to hear the answer.

"Harry, you know that Whomping Willow," said Ron. "It doesn't like anything bumping into it."

"Professor Flitwick has just brought it back before you awoke." said Hermione in a low voice.

She slowly reached for her schoolbag at her feet and turned it upside down.

A dozen pieces of wood and debris from the broom's tail landed on the bed. That was the wreckage of Harry's defeated loyal Broomstick.

When Evan returned to the ward with nutrients, he saw that none of them was speaking. The atmosphere was terrible.

Harry sat in bed and stared at his broomstick fragments in a daze. Ron and Hermione also sat silently on the chairs as though they had just quarreled.

"Don't be sad, Harry!" said Evan, putting the potion on the table aside, comforting him and saying, "You can use my Nimbus 2001. I'll give it to you. You know that thing is of no use to me."

After receiving the broomstick, Evan threw it under the bed. It hadn't been moved except for a few times when it was borrowed by Ron.

"Thank you, Evan! I just..." Harry looked at the fragments of his Nimbus 2000 and didn't know what to say.

This broomstick was beyond repair. He should throw it. But Harry did not want to do that. He felt like he had lost one of his best friends.

By nine o'clock in the evening, Evan, Ron, and Hermione left Harry.

They just came out of the school hospital, and Evan saw that Ron walked alone in the common room, without waiting for him and Hermione.

“What’s the matter with him?” Evan said.

“Maybe the Dementors had an impact on him!” Hermione didn’t know what to say, nor did she know if she should tell him about what Ron said.

Then, when she thought of the black cat, Hermione’s face suddenly turned red. She did not know whether to confirm it with Evan.

In case there was a misunderstanding, there should not necessarily be a link between the Patronus and the Animagus, and if so, wouldn’t it be too embarrassing to ask?

Hermione thought for a moment that this matter should be a secret for a while, at least until she would find out the truth.

Wait, if the black cat is really Evan, what should she do?

Evan and Hermione walked back in silence. They had just turned the corner of the stairs on the second floor, and they saw Nearly Headless Nick suddenly coming in through the wall. His long hair was curled with a very stylish, plumed hat, wearing a knee-length tunic, with a wheel-shaped wrinkled collar.

Just like he was made out of thin cigarette smoke, Evan could look at the dark sky and heavy rain outside through his body.

Because Nick had often provided articles to the “Hogwarts Magic News” over the past year, Evan and Hermione became very familiar with him.

“You are good!” Nick said in a melancholy voice. “I just heard what happened at the Quidditch pitch. It’s terrible. There’s nothing wrong with Harry, is it?”

“He is fine. He has no choice but to accept reality,” Hermione whispered. “You know, this is his first Quidditch loss.”

“Yes, yes, Gryffindor is clearly the most powerful, but we always lose the game for a variety of reasons.” Nick took a deep breath. “This time it was because of Dementors. I had already been...”

Nick’s words were not finished yet, and Evan saw a cat with yellow lamp-like eyes that suddenly came out from behind him and screeched.

It was Mrs. Norris, the dust-colored cat that was raised by the caretaker Filch and that served as his deputy in the never-ending battle between him and the students.

“You’d better get out of here!” Nick quickly said. “Filch is not in a good mood. He caught a cold. When he was on the Quidditch pitch, someone turned his office upside down. Things were thrown everywhere. He is looking for the assailant in the castle.”

“You’re right!” Evan pulled Hermione hurriedly up the stairs and was about to go to bed. He didn’t want to be stopped by Filch and interrogated again.

But it was strange, who would go to Filch's office to make trouble?!

Fred and George may do this, but they've just been in the Quidditch game and obviously didn't have time; Peeves is also possible, but it shouldn't be him, and it's not his style to run away without bragging about his deeds.

In addition to them, who else would it be?!

Nick said that Filch's office has been turned upside down. Maybe someone wanted to find something in it. Filch had confiscated a lot of things from the students.

Chapter 95: Scabbers' Death

Evan pulled Hermione and hurried back into Gryffindor's Common room.

Although it was late, the Common room was very lively.

None of students went to sleep. They were all discussing the Dementors attack.

Gryffindor lost the game, which have really saddened them. But excluding the Quidditch players and some die-hard fans, most of them have put this matter behind already.

Anyway, as long as they didn't lose against Slytherin, losing against Ravenclaw or Hufflepuff was not particularly difficult to take.

Now, they are more interested in talking about the way to cast a Patronus Charm. Several students who were able cast a Corporeal Patronus got surrounded by their peers. Percy, for example, was proudly showing off his Patronus to more than a dozen junior students.

Evan and Hermione just entered, and they were warmly welcomed.

The atmosphere at the scene reached its peak. They were both in the center surrounded by their friends. Everybody was asking for advice about the Patronus charm.

Many girls wanted especially to see Evan's Patronus again.

Everyone was excited, except for Ron.

He seemed to become even less happy when he saw Evan and Hermione being welcomed. He stared at them for a while before turning back to the dormitory with a sly face.

Just a moment later, everyone heard a muffled scream coming from the Boys' Dormitory.

The atmosphere became so heavy that no one spoke in the Common room. They all stared at the door with fear. The hurried footsteps rang louder and louder, and then Ron jumped out under everyone's eyes carrying a bed sheet with him.

"Look, look at this, look at it!" he growled, striding to Hermione and shaking the sheet in front of her.

"Ron, look at what?" Hermione said confusedly.

"It's Scabbers, look!" Ron rudely stretched out his sheet to Hermione's eyes.

Hermione avoided Ron's sheet and was completely at a loss.

Evan looked at the sheet that Ron was holding and there was something red on it. It looked terrible, like...

“Blood!” Ron shouted panicked under the silence of everyone. “It’s dead! Do you know what else was on the floor?”

“No, I don’t know.” Hermione’s voice was trembling.

Ron threw something at Hermione, and everyone leaned forward. They saw long ginger hair scattered on the floor.

“Ron, a few cat hairs don’t mean anything. You should go to all the boys’ beds and look for stains. It might be...” Hermione said palely.

“Enough!” Ron shouted, shocking everyone. “I’ve had enough of you, Hermione! You’ve always been like this and never took Crookshanks intentions to eat Scabbers seriously. You never bothered to carefully watch Crookshanks. Now Scabbers is dead, and you are still pretending that your cat is innocent!”

“This cat’s hair may have been there since the beginning of the school term. You have been prejudiced against Crookshanks since he jumped on your head in that Magical Menagerie” Hermione said stubbornly.

“Prejudice?!” Ron waved his arm madly. “That monster, it jumped over my head. It ate Scabbers. Am I expected to praise it for doing it?!”

“You know I didn’t mean that...” Hermione’s voice dropped again, and tears fell from her eyes.

“Don’t think I don’t know what you’re thinking!” Ron had no mercy at all for Hermione, he went shouting. “You’ve always treated me as a fool or an idiot who didn’t understand anything. I protected you in front of Malfoy, I helped you with Snape in class, it was me...”

The more Ron talked, the more he saw Hermione’s fear and sadness. He felt pain in his heart, but along with the pain, there was an unusual sense of happiness creeping into his heart.

Revenge does bring some pleasure.

Immediately afterwards, he remembered the dream he’s been having recently, and Hermione, who had been in the dream all the time.

He didn’t know why, but he suddenly felt that his nose was sour and he had to force himself not to cry.

“All right, Ron!” Seeing that something was wrong, Fred hurried over and said in a hurry “weren’t you always talking about how disgusting it was? Moreover, this was going to happen soon or later with the way it’s been eating for a long time now. Dying fast is probably better for it. It probably didn’t feel that...”

“Yeah, it’s just sleeping all day long. This is what you said, Ron” said George.

“It had once bitten Gore for us!” said Ron sadly.

“That was its most glorious moment.” Fred couldn’t help laughing. “It made a scar on Gore’s finger as a permanent reminder of it. Oh, OK, Ron! Reconcile with Hermione, and buy another rat, what’s the use of lamenting?”

“But...” Ron lowered his head and wiped his tears with his sleeves.

“Actually, I think Hermione’s right. Scabbers may not be dead. It’s just hiding somewhere.”

Peter Pettigrew could not have died like this, and it was even less likely that he would be killed by Crookshanks.

He was just scared of Sirius Black and wanted to escape by faking his death again.

With the help of the tracing potion, Evan could feel that the Rat was hiding in the right corner of the common room and following the scene with his eyes.

He was going to pull him out. He just took two steps and Ron stopped him. What he just said seemed to have angered Ron again.

“Do you think Scabbers is not dead?!” Ron looked angry at Evan, gasping, as if ready to rush over. “I knew you would stand on the Hermione’s side. It’s your fault. If you didn’t suggest that Hermione should buy Crookshanks, Scabbers wouldn’t have died!”

“What?!” Evan was surprised. All day long, he felt that Ron had something wrong with him.

“Yeah, it was all your fault. It was you who killed it!” Ron clenched his fists and his tearful eyes were red. “It was just the same at the Quidditch pitch, if it wasn’t for your ridiculous Patronus, Gryffindor wouldn’t have lost.”

Evan was frozen in his place. He did not know how Ron came to that conclusion.

Ron must’ve gone mad. This is so ridiculous that Gryffindor lost the game because of his Patronus!

“Ron, it was Evan’s Patronus who saved everyone!” Colin, who had been standing aside, whispered.

“Of course you think so. You’re just a ridiculous commuter for this guy.” Ron shouted to Colin and quickly turned to look at Evan, as if he was hypnotized, his mouth was murmuring. “Tom Riddle said so, you killed Scabbers. Gryffindor lost the game because of you. You took Hermione. She should’ve been mine..... .”

There was nothing but silence in the Common room, and the young students were afraid and shrank back. Everyone looked at Ron silently. No one could accept what he was saying.

Evan took another step forward. He wanted to bring out the Rat. Maybe seeing it would calm Ron down.

As soon as he moved, he saw Ron rush towards him!

Chapter 96: The Imperius Curse Reappears

The scene was confusing and nobody knew what was going on.

They saw Ron scurry into Evan's body with his eyes all red. Both of them fell to the ground beating each other.

"Stop it, stop it, Ron!" Hermione shrieked loudly, trying to separate them.

Evan hadn't reacted yet, and he took a bad punch to the stomach. He used his knees to hold Ron back, while his right hand subconsciously reached for his wand.

A bright red light flashed and Ron flew away.

His body smashed the table and he fell to the ground, struggling twice to stand up and continue to rush toward Evan. Fred and George pulled him quickly.

"Ron, what do you have with Evan?!" Fred said with surprise.

"Yes, do you really realize what you were doing?!" George said.

Ron gasped and looked at Evan with his eyes all red.

Everyone held their breaths and stared at Ron. The whole Common room was stunned by what happened.

Evan's clothes got all messed up. His right hand was holding his wand tight, pointing against Ron. His left hand was gently patting Hermione's shoulder. She was standing by his side sobbing uncontrollably.

"What the hell are you doing guys?!" Percy walked through the crowd and stared at Ron, he looked like Mrs. Weasley. "Ron, I know you're sad to lose the rat, but it's not Evan who killed it."

"It's him, it's him!" Ron shouted. "It was him who asked Hermione to buy the cat. If it wasn't for that damn cat, Scabbers wouldn't have died."

"It was not Crookshanks who killed Scabbers..." Hermione argued weakly, and her eyes were full of tears.

"Ron, you're crazy! For a rat, you..." Ginny, who came over to comfort Hermione, whispered. She turned to Ron and stared at him angrily.

"Rat? Scabbers is my friend!" Ron interrupted Ginny, and he roared angrily. "My best friend is dead. Both of them and that damn cat killed it. You've been supporting them all the time. Has anyone ever thought about my feelings?!"

Aside from Ron's roars, there was no sound, only dead silence in the Common room.

“In fact, your rat is not dead at all, and nobody touched it!”

Evan let Ginny take care of Hermione and rushed to the corner of the lounge to pull a struggling rat out of the gap, and then he threw it to Ron.

Watching the trembling Scabbers in his hands, Ron suddenly quieted down.

He looked stunned. He wanted to say something, but he could not find anything to say. He could not explain it to others. The rat was just a fuse. When he exploded out of anger and rushed at Evan, the only thing he had on his mind was Evan image as he had Hermione’s arm in his hand when entering the common room.

“Well, Ron, things have been cleared up, and your rat is actually not dead.” Percy said with a tight voice “Apologize to Evan and Hermione at once.”

Ron was annoyed by Percy’s words.

He gasped and stared coldly at Evan and Hermione.

Reason told him that he should apologize, but there was a voice in his heart that kept whispering that if someone needed to apologize, it would be them. It was clearly their fault.

He suddenly remembered what Tom Riddle had told him last year. His fists got tighter and all his body shivered.

If he could choose, he would rather rush over and fight Evan again.

“Say sorry, Ron!” Ginny whispered anxiously to remind him.

Ron woke up suddenly and he saw everyone looking at him. He took a deep breath and vaguely said: “Yes, I’m sorry!”

After that, he turned and ran back to his Dormitory.

In the dark bedroom, Ron was alone.

He laid on his four-poster bed and pressed his head against the pillow. Tears flowed out uncontrollably.

He must have lost his mind a moment ago. He unexpectedly yelled at Hermione and fought Evan...

Ron couldn’t tell why he wanted to do that; maybe it was too hard to suddenly lose Scabbers. Perhaps Tom Riddle’s words from last year played a role, or maybe it was the feeling he had during the day that was a mix of envy, jealousy, and unsavory hatred.

In a word, the more he looked at Evan, the worse he felt.

Thinking of what everyone had just done to support Evan, Ron felt really lonely.

If it was just everybody else, he could’ve let it go easily; but with them were Percy, Fred, George, and Ginny. These are all his family. None of them stood on his side.

And Hermione... Ron became more distressed just by thinking about her.

Ron tried not to think about her. He thought of Harry, his best friend. If Harry was here this evening, would he support him?!

Ron hesitated. At first he believed that Harry would support him. He did it against Malfoy, but that was different. Harry and Evan's relationship was also very good. He might also be like the others and support Evan.

He had already lost Hermione, and when he thought he could lose Harry, Ron was indescribably upset.

He always treated Harry as his best friend, but does Harry think the same way of him?!

Harry is not only a famous savior but also the Seeker for the Quidditch team. Harry has always been surrounded by the elite. Ron was on the other hand just a normal guy. What would make Harry pick him as his best friend?!

Perhaps, in Harry's eyes, he's just a follower.

"I'm all alone!" Ron murmured. "No one will support me. I'm a downright loser. Everyone looks down upon me."

His body curled up in pain, and a moment later, he felt something shivering in his coat's pocket. It was Scabbers!

Ron wiped his tears and got up to take the rat out.

It looked terrified, its body kept shivering and its small eyes were filled with fear.

In fact, Peter Pettigrew was really frightened. He hid according to his plan. This certainly would not fool Sirius, but it could buy him some time.

However, the plan did not go smoothly. He benefited from the opportunity of the Quidditch match when all the students were out and searched Filch's office but found nothing. The Marauder's Map was not there.

When he graduated, the map was certainly confiscated by Filch, and the latter would have certainly kept it. It shouldn't be lost. But, after all, that was twenty years ago. That's a long time in which anything could happen.

Pettigrew returned to the Gryffindor Common room. He wanted to redress a plan to lure Sirius out and let the people inside the castle find him.

Since Sirius thought he was close to Ron, he'd better stay around and wait for the opportunity.

However, Peter Pettigrew did not expect that he would be found by Evan.

That was impossible. How did he find him?!

When he hid in that gap, there was obviously no one in the Common room.

It stands to reason that the boy should not be able to find him.

Peter Pettigrew was scared, and Evan surely had some way he didn't know. If Sirius Black knew the same method, Peter's life would certainly come to...

"Scabbers, you're the only left for me. You are definitely supporting me, aren't you?"
Ron put the rat on the pillow.

When he heard Ron, Peter Pettigrew woke up of his daze. He felt that there were too many variables in the plan he had thought of before. He couldn't fight against Sirius Black and Evan alone. He needed a helper, one hidden in the dark.

"Those people think of me as a footman, as a joke!" Ron said bitterly. His expression was slightly grim. "Those who despise me, I will make them regret it. I want to make them pay the price."

"Yes, I will help you!" A sharp man's voice suddenly could be heard in the room. "I will make those who look down upon us pay the price."

"Imperio!"

A strange light flashed across the bedroom which was quickly restored to peace. Only Ron was alone in the bed with tears. His eyes were full of confusion and emptiness.

Chapter 97: Hagrid and Buckbeak

A few days later, Harry was discharged from the school hospital and his life seemed to return to its daily routine.

But losing the Quidditch match and what happened in the Common room still had an effect.

Gryffindor Tower's students looked less energetic, and everyone was really depressed.

Because of what happened with Ron, Hermione was crying all the time. It was a big blow to her. Harry often looked at his Nimbus 2000's wreckage dumbfounded. Although everyone tried many things to make him happy, it did not work. Wood looked completely unemotional, as if he had lost his life's purpose. Fred and George were no longer keen on pranks; they were working less and less on new tricks and goods.

However, nobody has changed as much as Ron.

Ron's behavior became increasingly bizarre. Aside Harry, he hardly spoke to anyone. His temper became really bad and he was unfriendly to all.

He was like an active volcano that had been repressed for a long time and that was ready to erupt at any time.

In Monday's Potions class, because Malfoy imitated the Dementors to mock Harry, Ron immediately threw a large, gooey crocodile heart at him, right on his face. Snape therefore deducted fifty points from Gryffindor.

Evan did not know if it was just a wrong impression, but he always felt like Ron was someone else.

His eyes were often empty and sluggish, but every time he saw him, he was full of vigilance and hostility, as if he would rush to clash with him at any time.

Evan was not against the idea of a fight if it could solve all problems.

In short, the unexpected failure made the atmosphere in the entire Gryffindor Tower become heavy.

The only thing worth being happy about that happened recently was Professor Lupin's return to class

In Wednesday's Defence Against the Dark Arts class, Evan saw Professor Lupin.

It was noticeable that he had been sick. His old robe was worn loose on his body. There were dark shadows underneath his eyes. The Werewolf's transformation must be a very heavy burden for his body.

Everyone was concerned about Lupin's physical condition and complained about Snape's actions during his illness. According to Evan's knowledge, Snape's teaching of the Defence Against the Dark Arts classes for all grades when he substituted professor Lupin was the same, revolving around how to identify and kill Werewolves.

Of course, almost none of them took it seriously.

For the young Wizards, in this day and age, Werewolves were like mythical creatures. They thought that they would never come into contact with them in real life.

Apart from Hermione, Evan was not sure who else would have discovered Lupin's true identity.

Expectedly, Snape was disappointed, as his efforts did not have any effect besides doubling their annoyance.

Professor Lupin has returned, making the Defence Against the Dark Arts class enjoyable again.

In that class, Evan saw Hinkypunk, a new dark creature brought by Lupin. It was a one- legged creature with the appearance of wispy blue, grey-white smoke. It was very frail and looked pretty harmless.

But in reality, it often lured travelers into bogs.

It had a proclivity for luring travelers off of their paths at night, into treacherous bogs or wetlands under the guise of a helpful, lamp-bearing being. When the travelers followed it, they fell into the bogs and died. Hinkypunk made a living from the dead carrions.

Seeing it through the tank, you would never guess that this creature could be so terrible.

The pleasant atmosphere brought about by Professor Lupin's return only lasted for two hours. When Evan went downstairs to the Common Room for lunch, he saw Hagrid standing in the hall surrounded by Harry, Ron and Hermione.

Hagrid had just returned from the Owlery. He stood there, with his eyes red and swollen, and his tears falling down on the front placket of his leather vest.

"Hagrid, What's wrong?" Evan walked over and was surprised to see Harry, Ron, and Hermione looking at an official letter.

Evan glanced over and read:

"Dear Mr. Hagrid, further to our inquiry into the attack by a hippogriff on a student in your class, we have accepted the assurances of Professor Dumbledore that you bear no responsibility for the regrettable incident.

However, we must register our concern about the hippogriff in question. We have decided to uphold the official complaint of Mr. Lucius Malfoy, and this matter will therefore be taken to the Committee for the Disposal of Dangerous Creatures.

The hearing will take place on January 25th, and we ask you to present yourself and your hippogriff at the Committee's offices in London on that date. In the meanwhile, the hippogriff should be kept tethered and isolated. Yours in fellowship..." There followed a list of the school Governors.

"They want to kill Buckbeak!" Hagrid couldn't help sobbing. His face was full of tears that went on to fall on his tangled beard.

"But Buckbeak isn't a bad hippogriff!" Harry said with a bit of doubt. "Hagrid, I bet he'll get off."

"No, you don't know those gargoyles at the Committee for the Disposal of Dangerous Creatures." Hagrid wiped his tears with his sleeves. "They've got it in for interesting creatures!"

Hagrid's words made them look at each other not knowing how to answer.

Hippogriffs, which Hagrid called "interesting animals", were in the eyes of others absolute "terrifying monsters."

Even if Buckbeak didn't hurt anyone, no one would like it.

In fact, by Hagrid's usual standards, it was actually cute.

However, Evan knew that it had nothing to do with whether or not Buckbeak was cute. Behind all of this was Lucius Malfoy's mischief.

After failing to remove the Headmaster Dumbledore last year, he was dismissed from the Board of Governors. The reputation of the Malfoy family was worse than ever. In the headmaster's office there was a discussion about the opening of the Chamber of Secrets, and how a student was able to get Tom Riddle's diary. Now, rumor has it in the upper classes of the magic world that Lucius Malfoy is giving students Voldemort's childhood items.

That was not a good reputation. Lucius Malfoy urgently needed something to divert everyone's attention and restore his family's prestige.

Hagrid provided him with such an opportunity and he is now strangling him with Buckbeak tightly. That attack had become a rivalry between him and Dumbledore. As long as he is able to keep Hagrid from teaching or to kill the hippogriff, he can regain his lost pride.

Needless to say, the politicians in the Ministry of Magic and the Governors must have made some tradeoffs between the two. They were not willing to offend Dumbledore, nor did they want to abandon the large amount of gold sent by Malfoy.

They could support Dumbledore to allow Hagrid to stay at school to teach. The corresponding exchange condition was to agree that Lucius Malfoy could get Buckbeak killed.

Apart from Hagrid, no one would care about the life or death of a Hippogriff.

The hearing was just a formality. The committee was almost under the control of Malfoy. No matter what Hagrid said, it would not be useful.

In other words, the outcome of this incident was already predetermined.

Regardless of Hagrid's wishes and whether or not Buckbeak was really mischievous, it was no longer important.

Buckbeak was bound to die. Although cruel, it was a fact!

Perhaps, this is what politics is all about!

Chapter 98: Defending Buckbeak

Looking at Hagrid's pitiful look, Evan sighed.

He didn't know much about politics, but he knew exactly what he had to do. He could not keep watching while Buckbeak was going to be beheaded. Hagrid would certainly collapse.

"Listen, Hagrid!" said Evan. "You can't give up. You need to prepare your speech for the defence. Harry, Ron, and Hermione can prove that Buckbeak is innocent. I can help you advertise it in the newspaper."

"Evan is right; I definitely have read a case of a Griffin's attack on a Hippogriff." Hermione mused. "In that case, the hippogriff had nothing to do with it. We can find something useful if we go back on the matter and make a good research."

"Yes, we will help, too." Harry and Ron hurriedly followed.

Although everyone said so, the work eventually fell on just Evan and Hermione.

After holding on for some time, Harry and Ron seemed to have completely forgotten about that matter.

However, they were not to blame. First of all, Harry has been very busy recently.

In late November, Ravenclaw defeated the Hufflepuff team which breathed life into Wood's carcass. After all, Gryffindor still had the chance to compete even though they could not afford more losses.

He then asked the players to train day and night. Evan saw Harry several times training in the cold and biting snow of December.

Fortunately, since the last incident, no Dementors were seen on the campus. The lessons they had been given last time and the anger of Dumbledore seemed to have completely confined them to their posts at the school entrance.

In addition to busy Quidditch training, Harry needed to learn the Patronus Charm from Professor Lupin.

He must be able to release the complete patronus as soon as possible to ensure that no more accidents would occur in the next match.

As for Ron, his status has become more and more abnormal recently.

He hardly communicated with most people and was not close to neither Evan nor Hermione. When Harry was training, he wandered around the castle alone.

In order to protect Scabbers from Crookshanks, he put it in his shirt's pocket wherever he went.

On several occasions, they were beyond the scope of the Tracing Potion so Evan couldn't figure out where they went.

But he didn't have the mind to think about Ron and Peter Pettigrew. He and Hermione spent almost all their time in the library and could not care about anything else.

Let Peter Pettigrew be for a few days. In twenty days, it will be Christmas. At that time, the castle will have the fewest number of people in it, so Evan will be able to draw out Sirius black and solve this whole dilemma.

Now what's more urgent is to think of ways to save Buckbeak. He and Hermione found a lot of information and files in the library referring to the famous case cited above. He prepared the defense arguments for Buckbeak. The titles of these dossiers were: "Summary of the Magical Animal Cases", "Handbook of Hippogriff Psychology", "The Poultry of Hippogriffs," and "A study on Griffin's Barbarism". Each of them was very thick...

"Evan, you should look at this!" Hermione put a dusty volume in front of Evan and whispered, "This is a case of a Manticore in 1926. It killed a human being, but was eventually acquitted."

"That was because everyone was scared and no one dared to approach it." Evan frowned and looked at the small number of words on the file.

"Yeah, you're right," said Hermione disappointedly and threw the thick volume aside.

Evan picked up the file and continued to read it. The following was a brief introduction to the magical creature: the Manticore.

The Manticore is an incredibly dangerous animal with a human head, a lion's body, and a scorpion's tail. It is very rare and it is reputed to croon softly to its victims as it devours them.

According to reliable documents, the Manticore skin repels almost all known spells. Anyone stung by its tail will die immediately.

This horrible creature was created by wizards and goblins. They were used to guard properties or important forbidden places and were once all the rage. However, since the "Ban on Experimental Breeding" decree was enacted, the numbers of Manticores had been gradually reduced.

In recent decades, it has even disappeared.

Evan put the dossier aside. From the text above, the danger level of the Hippogriff is nothing compared to that of the Manticore.

If Buckbeak had half the power of the Manticore, they wouldn't have to sit there and worry about it.

In the following two weeks, in addition to assisting Hermione in perfecting the defense speech, Evan also wrote several articles defending Buckbeak.

He intended to put pressure on Lucius Malfoy and the Committee for the Disposal of Dangerous Creatures through public opinion, but things were not as smooth as originally envisaged.

The Daily Prophet refused to publish these articles written by Evan. They considered that the matter didn't have much importance. The whole incident was at best a minor event at Hogwarts that couldn't arouse people's interest to read it.

Although Evan eventually published these articles in the Hogwarts Magic News, their effect was limited.

Mr. Barnabas Cuffe, the editor-in-chief of The Daily Prophet, was right. Most readers did not care about the life and death of a Hippogriff, and the young Wizards already knew about the matter.

In contrast, they were more interested in Black's connection to the Dementors.

Evan was not completely without supporters. Colin, Ginny, and Luna all expressed their support for his point of view. Luna even persuaded her father to publish those articles written by Evan in "The Quibbler" instead of the original headline about the Crumple-Horned Snorkacks.

However, that didn't make much difference. The current prints of "The Quibbler" were not selling even as much as the Hogwarts Magic News.

As time passed, it was getting closer to Christmas, but Evan and Hermione were not making much progress.

Although they wrote a full ten parchments of defenses, Evan was very skeptical about the effect that it could have apart from being drowsiness-inducing and lethargic.

Not to mention whether those officials who deal with the Committee for the Disposal of Dangerous Creatures would adopt that defense. It was doubtful that Hagrid could write down all these things. With his ability, it might be difficult for him to read the arguments in conjunction. The whole thing was strenuous.

"It's useless, Hermione!" looking at Hermione sitting across from him, Evan sighed heavily.

Hermione was still struggling with the boring files. She was often the last to leave the Common room at night. She was the first to go to the library the following morning. She was burdened with heavy school work, Ron's intangible pressure, and the preparation for Buckbeak's defense argument. Those things were superimposed on one another, which had caused her to have dark shadows under her eyes like Lupin.

"What did you say?!" Hermione raised her head from the data.

"Our thinking seems to be wrong. Whatever the reason, Buckbeak really hurt Draco Malfoy, didn't he?" Evan said slowly. "We can't defend Buckbeak's innocence, as long as Lucius Malfoy focuses on this fact, Hagrid's hope of winning is rather minimal."

"Then what shall we do? nothing? Like Harry and Ron?!" Hermione looked annoyed.

"We just watch Buckbeak being beheaded and wait for Hagrid to collapse!"

"No, I mean, we should change our thinking." Evan's eyes fell upon a Newt Scamander's book entitled "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them", and the author's experience gave him Great inspiration.

Chapter 99: Marauder's Map

"Think about it, Hermione. It is the duty of the Committee for the Disposal of Dangerous Creatures to deal with and to punish them." Evan continued, "We can't prove that Buckbeak is innocent, it did attack Malfoy, even if it had justifiable reasons. But what we can prove, is that Hippogriffs are not dangerous."

"You mean..." Hermione was immersed into thinking.

"According to the classification of dangerous creatures in the book "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them", Hippogriffs are not that risky. They can be tamed by Wizards. Such docile animals should not be within the scope of the Committee for the Disposal of Dangerous Creatures." Evan opened the book and turned to the page of the author's introduction." Moreover, we can go around this problem from the perspective of protecting rare species. Mr. Scamander may give us some help."

"Mr. Scamander?!"

Hermione took the book. She frowned as she saw the author's introduction:

The author of the book, Mr. Newt Scamander, is currently the most prestigious Magizoologist in the Magic World. He graduated from the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in 1915, and served as an office clerk of the Ministry of Magic, a researcher at the Ministry's Dragon Research and Restraint Bureau and in the Office for House-Elf Relocation, the Director and inceptor of the Werewolf Registry, and the Director of the Department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures.

Mr. Newt Scamander spent 30 years traveling around the world and recorded the forms and habits of the 75 magical creatures currently known in the Magic World. This is his best-selling work world-wide, "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them", the book has been revised to print fifty-two times.

Under his leadership, the Ministry of Magic established the Werewolf Registry in 1947; in 1965 it amended the "Ban on Experimental Breeding" Act, which effectively suppressed the prevalence of new untamable animals in British territory.

Thanks to his contributions to magical animal research and Magizoology, Newt Scamander was awarded the Order of Merlin, Second Class in 1979. Later on that year, he founded an organization for the conservation of magical species and was engaged in the protection of magical creatures.

"As the former Director of the Department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures, Mr. Scamander's influence on the Committee for the Disposal of Dangerous Creatures is very large, and is definitely much larger than that of Lucius Malfoy." Evan explained, "And he is The President of the Magical Creatures Protection Association, we just need to write him a letter to tell him about Buckbeak, and I believe he would help us."

Evan's idea sounded great. He and Hermione sent a letter to Mr. Newt Scamander on the same evening and received a reply the following morning.

"Evan, see what's written." said Hermione excitedly. "Mr. Scamander said in his reply that he was very supportive of our ideas. He was willing to save Buckbeak. He said his mother was once a hippogriffs' breeder, so he was often exposed to these animals when he was a child."

Evan took the letter and saw that Newt Scamander wrote that he had been worried about the sharp decrease in the number of hippogriffs over the last hundred years due to excessive hunting. Therefore, he promised to modify and perfect the article written by Evan to protect the hippogriff. In addition to that, he also promised to contact the Committee for the Disposal of Dangerous Creatures to get them to handle the case as carefully as possible.

After that, things started to look brighter.

Thanks to the ties of Mr. Newt Scamander, the Daily Prophet finally published the articles on the introduction and protection of Hippogriffs that were written by Evan and Hermione.

They provided detailed description of the habits of hippogriffs, their current living conditions, and the people's comprehension of this animal, etc.

They also told the whole story about Buckbeak's attack on Malfoy.

In the following days, many readers wrote to them and Hagrid and expressed willingness to support them. They even launched a "Save Buckbeak" campaign, officially making a petition to the Ministry of Magic on this incident, asking them to pardon the hippogriff. Many people participated.

Public opinion continued to develop, making great pressure on the Ministry of Magic.

The governors and the Committee for the Disposal of Dangerous Creatures wrote three letters to Hagrid. They stated that they were cautious. Before the hearing was held, the incident of attacking students by Buckbeak will be re-investigated.

The way things were developing, there was a high probability that Buckbeak would be spared.

With so much attention, Lucius Malfoy was looking like the bad guy, and for that he felt concerned.

Hagrid gradually recovered, he appeared more and more in the castle, feeling more cheerful every day.

Evan and Hermione felt more at ease. With the continuous efforts of Harry, the tension between them and Ron was also a bit relieved.

At the very least, Ron went back to sitting down with them, rather than just wondering around the castle with Scabbers.

Two weeks before the semester's end, the sky cleared up suddenly, showing a dazzling opalescence. The muddy grounds were covered by a thin beautiful layer frost.

As Christmas approached, the festive atmosphere in the castle was getting stronger.

The Charms Master, Professor Flitwick, decorated his classroom with glimmering light sources. Those light sources were actually real fairies constantly fluttering their wings.

The students were happily discussing their vacation plans. Most of them were getting ready to go home for Christmas because of the presence Sirius Black.

In fact, with the exception of Evan, Harry, Ron, and Hermione, all other Gryffindor students were about ready to go home.

Evan was preparing to implement his plan. Ron said that he could not stand spending two weeks with Percy. Hermione wanted to spend more time in the library.

Although all three of them had their own reasons, it really made Harry feel moved. He thought that they wanted to stay at Hogwarts for Christmas to be with him.

In the last week of the semester, students from the third years and above could go to Hogsmeade again.

Everyone was happy. The whole chat around the breakfast table revolved about buying Christmas gifts.

“Ron, where is Harry? Why hasn’t he come to breakfast yet?” asked Hermione.

“He’s still in his bedroom. You know, he can’t go to Hogsmeade.” Ron said to her, his voice was a bit dull. “He borrowed a “Cleansweep Broom” from Wood and he’s spending all his time on it.”

“That’s a shame!” Evan remembered Harry’s disappointment in the Common room before going to bed last night. He wasn’t sure. “Maybe I could take Harry to Hogsmeade through the secret passage. I have went through it many times last year, and there should be no problem.”

“It won’t work, Evan!” Hermione put jam on her bread, and said firmly, “This year is not the same as last year. There are so many Dementors at the entrance. Besides, what if Sirius Black knew the secret passage?”

“But...”

“Relax, Ron and I will buy you Christmas gifts. Which kind of sweets did you like last time?” Hermione said with a smile, “My dad and mom loved Toothflossing Stringmints from Honeydukes!”

“If it’s possible, you can bring me some Orange...”

Evan had not finished his words yet, when he saw Harry hurrying into the Common room with his schoolbag. He ignored Malfoy in the doorway as he fell from his broomstick and didn’t laugh at him. He walked straight toward them looking very happy.

“Guys, look at this, Fred and George have just given it to me...”

Harry cautiously pulled out a large, square-looking, old parchment from under the cloak with nothing written on it.

“Harry, what is this?” asked Hermione oddly.

Before Harry could answer, he heard Ron whispering, "Marauder's Map!"

Evan wasn't sure, but despite his dull and monotonous voice, Ron seemed to be pleasantly surprised.

Chapter 100: I Solemnly Swear That I Am Up To No Good

Evan suddenly raised his head. Harry hadn't mentioned it yet. How could Ron know that this old parchment was the Marauder's Map? This sounded really suspicious.

"How did you know, Ron?" Harry looked surprised, and said, "Oh, Fred and George told you, didn't they?!"

Ron nodded hastily looking a bit strange.

"Well, you two, who can explain to me and Evan what this tattered parchment is?" said Hermione impatiently.

"Hermione, this Marauder's Map was found by Fred and George in Filch's office. It can reveal all the details of Hogwarts Castle and all its venues, including every secret passage. It can also identify the location of every person in the grounds." Harry looked up cautiously, checked out the surroundings, and then whispered, "As long as I have its help, I can wear the invisibility cloak and avoid other people to join you in Hogsmeade."

"What?!" Hermione stood up in surprise.

"Don't get too excited, Hermione!" Harry hurriedly pulled her down.

"If it's really like you said, you should give this map to Professor McGonagall, Harry!" Hermione said with an anxious voice.

"No, I won't hand it to her!" Harry said sharply. "If I do that, I'll have to explain where I got it from, and Filch will know Fred and George took it!"

"But, what about Black?!" Hermione said, biting her teeth. "With this Map, the Professors will know if he uses any of these secret passages to enter the castle..."

"He can't come in from these passages." Harry said quickly. "Fred and George said that Filch knew most of them, and the remaining entrances and exits are also well hidden. It's impossible for Black to know them."

"You are taking a risk. What if he knew them? "

"Black can't go to Hogsmeade, Hermione!" said Harry stubbornly. "You told me when you came back last time that there were Dementors patrolling in the evening. If Black appeared, they would discover him."

"But..." Hermione bit her lip and looked worried.

“Ok, Hermione, are you going to report me?” Harry asked, grinning.

“Oh, of course not! But honestly, Harry...”

“It’s almost Christmas Herm, let me relax.” Harry took out his wand from underneath the cloak and looked excited. “I’ll show you the map later. If Black appears on it, we’ll be the first to discover him.”

Hearing his words, Evan had a sudden realization!

Will it just be Sirius Black? He didn’t want to say it, but Peter Pettigrew was still in the pocket of Ron’s coat. If Harry uses the Marauder’s Map at this time, he will find Peter’s name among them. .

Evan’s first intention was to stop Harry, but it immediately came to his mind. This doesn’t seem like a bad idea. Why should he stop him?!

He had been tangled and unable to solve this year’s problem. The main reason that he could not hand Peter Pettigrew to Dumbledore was that he couldn’t explain, without causing doubts, how he knew Peter was an Animagus.

After all, this matter is not known to outsiders.

If he recognized that the rat was no else but Peter Pettigrew, it would be too suspicious.

That was the case for Tom Riddle’s diary last year. He actually told Dumbledore unintentionally that he knew it was a Horcrux. Fortunately, he did return to Hogwarts a thousand years before that, so he can always claim that he’s been told about that by the Four Founders.

Dumbledore is so terrible. In addition to being the greatest white wizard in the world today, he is also a thorough conspiracist.

Evan didn’t want to reveal his own cards, and then wait foolishly to be countered.

His stubbornness didn’t give him much progress, so he must be very careful this year. This is why he had not dared to get involved until he got in touch with Sirius Black.

But now with the help of Marauder’s maps, this problem can be solved perfectly.

If the four of them found out that Peter Pettigrew was still alive, then he could easily turn him over to Dumbledore.

After the whole truth is revealed, he’ll go to the forest to look for Sirius Black and things will probably go smoothly.

“So stupid, why didn’t I think of this idea before?”

Evan looked at the teachers’ table and Snape and Professor Lupin were there.

He nodded happily and reached with his right hand for the wand on his waist, with his eyes locked tightly on Ron’s pocket. He focused on his mind and prepared himself to cast Petrificus Totalus right when Peter’s name appears on the map.

“I solemnly swear that I am up to no good.” Harry gently raised his wand, ready to point to the parchment.

“Wait a minute, we’d better not show it here.” Ron hurriedly stopped Harry and said in a frantic voice. “There are too many people around us, so if we get caught...”

“It doesn’t matter. Just be careful and it will be fine. I want to see if this map is as magical as Harry said.” Evan looked at Ron with some insight.

Ron turned his head and looked at Evan’s face. He could not dissect the weird look in his eyes, and he quickly looked away from them and focused again on the map.

“Just like Evan said, we only need to be careful and we won’t be discovered,” said Harry, tapping his wand on the parchment. “I solemnly swear that I am up to no good.”

“Oh, my God!” Hermione exclaimed, covering her mouth with her hands

Everyone’s eyes were glued to the parchment, and Evan saw thin ink lines began to spread like a spider’s web from the point that Harry’s wand had touched. They joined each other, they crisscrossed, they fanned into every corner of the parchment; then words began to blossom across the top, great, curly green words, that proclaimed:

Messrs. Moony, Wormtail, Padfoot, and Prongs Purveyors of Aids to Magical Mischief-Makers are proud to present:

THE MARAUDER’S MAP

Although he already knew this, Evan was stunned by the transformation on the parchment.

Back in his previous life, he didn’t know how Harry’s father had made such a map. Now with his current knowledge, he speculated that its creation required on top of a great knowledge of Hogwarts’ terrain, an extremely advanced knowledge of magic spells, Transfiguration, ancient magic literature and other magic mechanics.

And this theoretical knowledge is just a required basis for its creation. The more critical thing is that they need a source that provides a great deal of magical power. That’s the only way to implement such fine magic into a simple parchment, and breathe life into it just like it was the case for the Sorting Hat.

Needless to say, the makers of the Sorting hat had enough magical power to make such a thing.

Although making the Marauder’s Map doesn’t require as much magical power, it still requires a good amount that ordinary wizards shouldn’t be able to provide.

However, when remembering that James Potter, Sirius Black, and Peter Pettigrew all learned Animagus during their school days, having such a map being made by them becomes something that’s much less strange. Evan, who has mastered Animagus himself, knows how much magical power it requires during the first transforming; hence he relied on magical potions to complete it.

What did James Potter, Sirius Black, and Peter Pettigrew rely on?

Especially Peter Pettigrew, that man is by no means a talented magician. But still; he completed Animagus, and was able to become a Rat with no problems.

Evan initially thought that they had completed this spell by relying on a large amount of potions to supplement their magical power, but now it seems that wasn't the case. Simply relying on potions is not enough to make living items like the Marauder's map.

They must have found other ways. Maybe he can later ask Sirius Black.