

Harry Potter 921

Chapter 921: The Performance of the Prefect

Evan gave Kate a brief explanation. He felt that the topic of the house-elves could be explained by Hermione. He believed she would be very willing to talk to the younger students about house-elves, how to deal with them, treat them, and how to help them...

A picture of all the first years sitting together honestly and Hermione giving them a lesson appeared in Evan's mind.

Following this train of thought, he felt it necessary to gather all the first-years and explain to them the school rules and the things that should be paid attention to.

There was a saying that it was necessary to develop from scratch to help these children establish a correct outlook on life, values and the world.

Hogwarts had no such tradition, but since he was the Head Boy, he could try to make changes.

While Evan was taking care of the cute first-year girl, the others were still discussing the Sorting Hat's warning.

"What were you saying before the Sorting?" Hermione asked Nearly Headless Nick, taking a Treacle tart and one for Evan. "About the hat giving warnings? What happened eight hundred years ago?"

"Oh, at that time, the relationship between the Centaurs in the Forbidden Forest and us was not as good as it is now, and their overall strength was much better than it is now. They suddenly launched an attack on Hogwarts, and we finally had to activate the defense magic of the castle..."

"We aeady no baozis." said Ron.

His mouth was so full it was quite an achievement for him to make any noise at all.

"I beg your pardon?" said Nick politely, while Ron was now eating roast potatoes with almost indecent enthusiasm.

"He said we already know about this." While obtaining the key to Gryffindor's secret treasure, Evan, Harry, Ron, and Hermione learned from the elder of the Centaurs' tribe and the illusion magic left by Gryffindor the ins and outs of the Centaurs' incident.

Hogwarts at that time was indeed in danger and faced an unprecedented crisis. Under the influence of the evil god, the crazy fallen Centaurs killed almost all the creatures in the woods, collected their flesh and blood to worship the evil god, and summoned it to descend into this world.

In the end, they even started attacking the school.

"Is there any other warning from that hat besides this?"

“Oh, there have been a few more times. Once, a group of powerful Dark wizards attacked Hogwarts...” Nick turned away from Ron, who was now eating chicken legs and ribs. “The hat always gives warnings when it detects periods of great danger for the school. And always, of course, its advice is the same: Stand together, be strong from within.”

As long as they stood together, Hogwarts would be able to overcome all dangers and difficulties.

“Ow kunnit nofe skusin danger ifzat?” Ron raised his head again and asked.

“Can you speak well?” Hermione said dissatisfied, looking revolted.

Ron gave an enormous swallow and said, “How can it know if the school’s in danger if it’s a hat?”

“I have no idea,” said Nearly Headless Nick. “Of course, it lives in the headmaster’s office, so I daresay it picks things up there. That hat is thoughtful, and it can talk to you all day if you like.”

Upon hearing this, the first-years sitting around them exclaimed again.

When Hermione, Ron, and the ghost were talking, they listened quietly, looking awed, not daring to interrupt.

Many of these freshmen came from Muggle families. They didn’t know anything about the wizarding world. They were amazed by whatever they saw. Some came from wizarding families. Though their parents told them about Hogwarts, they still didn’t know that much.

But in any case, the Head Boy, the prefects and Harry were all great figures for them.

The ghost in front of them seemed to be very familiar with them, and it had been floating around them in their vicinity, which was enough to prove this point.

There were a lot of people at the entire Gryffindor long table, but Nearly Headless Nick only talked to a few of them.

In the eyes of the first-years, this was probably a manifestation of authority and status.

However, the next topic left them stunned!

“And it wants all the Houses to be friends?” said Harry, looking over at the Slytherin table, where Draco Malfoy was holding court. “Fat chance.”

“Well, now, you shouldn’t take that attitude,” said Nick reprovingly. “Peaceful cooperation, that’s the key. We ghosts, though we belong to separate Houses, maintain links of friendship. In spite of the competitiveness between Gryffindor and Slytherin, I would never dream of seeking an argument with the Bloody Baron.”

“Only because you’re terrified of him,” said Ron.

Nearly Headless Nick looked highly affronted and glared at Ron angrily.

“Terrified? I hope I, Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Porpington, have never been guilty of cowardice in my life! The noble blood that runs in my veins...”

“What blood?” asked Ron. “Surely you haven’t still got...”

“It’s a figure of speech!” said Nearly Headless Nick, now so annoyed his head was trembling ominously on his partially severed neck. “I assume I am still allowed to enjoy the use of whichever words I like, even if the pleasures of eating and drinking are denied me! But I am quite used to students poking fun at my death, I assure you!”

“Nick, you know, he wasn’t really laughing at you!” said Hermione hastily, throwing a furious look at Ron.

There were many people around them; couldn’t he set a good example like Evan?!

Unfortunately, Ron’s mouth was packed to exploding point again and all he could manage was “node iddum eentup sechew,” which Nick did not seem to think constituted an adequate apology. Rising into the air, he straightened his feathered hat and swept away from them to the other end of the table, coming to rest among a group of second-years, who seemed to be telling a joke and laughing.

“Look what you’ve done, Ron,” snapped Hermione.

“What?” said Ron indignantly, having managed, finally, to swallow his food. “I’m not allowed to ask a simple question?”

“Oh forget it,” said Hermione irritably, turning around to join the conversation between Evan and Kate.

“Inexplicable!” Ron murmured, and began to chat with Lavender across from him.

Harry, sitting between them, chuckled helplessly and looked at the new students, who were equally bewildered and were looking up at him. So this was what it was like to be a prefect; it seemed they had no reservations at all...

Harry didn’t know what they were thinking, but these were definitely Ron and Hermione.

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Chapter 922: Umbridge's Speech

Harry was too used to their bickering to bother trying to reconcile them.

He felt it was a better use of his time to eat his way steadily through his steak-and-kidney pie, then a large plateful of his favorite treacle tart.

Yes, Harry and Ron didn’t care, but Evan had to take the responsibility of calming Hermione’s anger.

But it was easy, he was already very experienced, and he had just to divert Hermione’s attention.

It worked every time, whether it was a kiss, a new topic, or something else...

Evan told Hermione what he had just planned. She was really interested and began to discuss it with him.

They thought it should not be delayed, and were ready to take action this weekend.

In the name of the Head Boy, Evan would gather all the first-years for the reason that he would lead them to get acquainted with the campus.

If everything went well, this activity could be held for a long time...

Of course, enough time should be set aside to help Harry, Hermione and the others improve their strength and learn magic. Evan also thought that the number of people could be appropriately expanded, but this kind of thing was too sensitive, so it had to be approached carefully, starting from inside Gryffindor.

He would wait until everyone realized that they couldn't learn anything from Umbridge, and then expand the scale further.

Finally, all the students had finished eating, the noise level in the hall was starting to creep upward again, and everyone was feeling a little drowsy.

At this moment, Dumbledore got to his feet once more.

Talking ceased immediately as all turned to face the headmaster.

"Well, now that we are all digesting another magnificent feast, I beg a few moments of your attention for the usual start-of-term notices," said Dumbledore. "First years ought to know that the forest in the grounds is out of bounds to students ... and a few of our older students ought to know by now too.

"Mr. Filch, the caretaker, has asked me, for what he tells me is the four hundred and sixty-second time, to remind you all that magic is not permitted in corridors between classes, nor are a number of other things, all of which can be checked on the extensive list now fastened to Mr. Filch's office door."

Almost all the list was of prohibited items, and there were more than 30,000.

In recent years, almost all of the added products were Fred and George's joke products. Fortunately, Filch had not yet figured out that the new prank products were a brand, all made by the Weasley twins he hated the most.

When he knew this, he would probably include all Weasley jokes in the list of prohibited items.

"We have had two changes in staffing this year. We are very pleased to welcome back Professor Grubbly-Plank, who will be taking Care of Magical Creatures lessons; we are also delighted to introduce Professor Umbridge, our new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher."

There was a round of polite but fairly unenthusiastic applause in the hall, and everyone seemed to think Umbridge was terrible.

As for Professor Grubbly-Plank, she was already very old, and she certainly wouldn't be able to teach for long, but temporarily replaced Hagrid.

After the applause stopped, Dumbledore continued, "Tryouts for the House Quidditch teams will take place on the..."

He broke off, looking inquiringly at Professor Umbridge.

As she was not much taller standing than sitting, there was a moment when nobody understood why Dumbledore had stopped talking, but then Professor Umbridge said, "*Hem, hem,*" and it became clear that she had got to her feet and was intending to make a speech.

Dumbledore only looked taken aback for a moment, then he sat back down smartly and looked alertly at Professor Umbridge as though he desired nothing better than to listen to her talk. Other members of staff were not as adept at hiding their surprise.

Professor Sprout's eyebrows had disappeared into her flyaway hair, Professor McGonagall's mouth was as thin as ever seen before, and Snape also had a gloomy look. It was as though Umbridge owed him a lot of money.

In fact, no new teacher had ever interrupted Dumbledore before. This was something that had never happened.

Many of the students were smirking; this woman obviously did not know how things were done at Hogwarts.

Only those who knew Umbridge's background couldn't laugh.

"Thank you, Headmaster," Professor Umbridge simpered, "for those kind words of welcome."

Her voice was high-pitched, breathy, and little-girlish, which made people feel a rush of dislike.

Umbridge was not young anymore. Evan wanted to know how she made such a voice, was it false?

And her dressing style, that fluffy pink cardigan, was also very dislikable.

But the most unacceptable thing was her unspeakable temperament, which was annoying.

Taking into account her background and personality, it was even more annoying!

"*Hem, Hem!*" Umbridge gave another little throat-clearing cough, and continued:

"Well, it is lovely to be back at Hogwarts, I must say!" She smiled, revealing very pointed teeth. "And to see such happy little faces looking back at me!"

Evan could be sure that apart from her, none of the thousands of faces in the Great Hall looked happy. On the contrary, they all looked rather taken aback at being addressed as though they were five years old.

"I am very much looking forward to getting to know you all, and I'm sure we'll be very good friends!"

Students exchanged looks at this; some of them were barely concealing grins.

“I’ll be her friend as long as I don’t have to borrow that cardigan,” Parvati whispered to Lavender, and both of them lapsed into silent giggles.

Professor Umbridge cleared her throat again, but when she continued, some of the breathiness had vanished from her voice.

She sounded much more businesslike and now her words had a dull learned-by-heart sound to them.

“Let’s get to the point. The Ministry of Magic has always considered the education of young witches and wizards to be of vital importance. The rare gifts with which you were born may come to nothing if not nurtured and honed by careful instruction. The ancient skills unique to the Wizarding community must be passed down through the generations lest we lose them forever. The treasure trove of magical knowledge amassed by our ancestors must be guarded, replenished, and polished by those who have been called to the noble profession of teaching.”

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Chapter 923: The Ministry of Magic's Interference and Guidance

Professor Umbridge paused here and made a little bow to her fellow staff members, none of whom bowed back.

Professor McGonagall’s dark eyebrows had contracted so that she looked positively hawklike.

As Umbridge turned to continue her speech, Professor McGonagall and Professor Sprout exchanged a significant glance.

“Every headmaster and headmistress of Hogwarts has brought something new to the weighty task of governing this historic school, and that is as it should be, for without progress there will be stagnation and decay. There again, progress for progress’s sake must be discouraged, for our tried and tested traditions often require no tinkering. A balance, then, between old and new, between permanence and change, between tradition and innovation...”

Umbridge went on and on, and she probably regarded it as a report on the work of the Ministry of Magic.

Evan soon found his attentiveness ebbing. Putting aside those meaningless words, there was only one thing she wanted to convey, and that was that the Ministry of Magic was dissatisfied with the current state of Hogwarts and was ready to interfere with Hogwarts’s operation.

He had known this a long time ago, so naturally he was not interested in listening to her.

The young wizards had never seen such a scene, and were not interested in listening to her incessant speech.

Everyone’s attention gradually waned. They were unable to keep up with Umbridge’s thoughts. The quiet that always filled the Hall when Dumbledore was speaking was breaking up as students put their heads together, whispering and giggling.

To Evan's left, Kate was holding her chin with her hand, but her head kept sliding down; over at the Ravenclaw table, Cho Chang was chatting animatedly with her friends. A few seats along from Cho, Luna Lovegood had got out *The Quibbler* again.

Meanwhile at the Hufflepuff table, Ernie Macmillan was one of the few still staring at Professor Umbridge, but it was evident that he was only pretending to listen in an attempt to live up to the new prefect's badge gleaming on his chest.

Over the Slytherin table on the other side of the Great Hall, Astoria was talking to a girl.

It was Daphne Greengrass, Astoria's sister. In addition, they had an older brother who was a seventh-year Slytherin student.

At the staff table, Professor Umbridge did not seem to notice the restlessness of her audience.

She ignored everything below and continued to speak slowly in her goose-creepy voice.

She gave the impression that a full-scale riot could have broken out under her nose and she would have plowed on with her speech.

The teachers, however, were still listening very attentively, and Dumbledore kept staring at Umbridge.

To Evan's right, Hermione also seemed to be drinking in every word Umbridge spoke, though judging by her expression, they were not at all to her taste.

"... because some changes will be for the better, while others will come, in the fullness of time, to be recognized as errors of judgment. Meanwhile, some old habits will be retained, and rightly so, whereas others, outmoded and outworn, must be abandoned. Let us move forward, then, into a new era of openness, effectiveness, and accountability, intent on preserving what ought to be preserved, perfecting what needs to be perfected, and pruning wherever we find practices that ought to be prohibited."

Half an hour later, Umbridge finally sat down. Dumbledore clapped. The staff followed his lead, though several of them brought their hands together only once or twice before stopping.

A few students joined in, but most had been taken unawares by the end of the speech, not having listened to more than a few words of it, and before they could start applauding properly, Dumbledore had stood up again.

"Thank you very much, Professor Umbridge, that was most illuminating," he said, bowing to her. "Now ... as I was saying, Quidditch tryouts will be held..."

"Yes, it certainly was illuminating," said Hermione in a low voice.

"You're not telling me you enjoyed it?" Ron said quietly, turning a glazed face upon Hermione. "That was about the dullest speech I've ever heard, and I grew up with Percy."

"I said illuminating, not enjoyable," said Hermione. "It explained a lot."

“Did it?” said Ron in surprise. “Sounded like a load of waffle to me. By the way, Harry, you said I can sign up for the House Quidditch team tryouts?”

When it came to Quidditch, he suddenly perked up.

“Of course, it would be great if you could come!” Harry said, and then came back to his senses, “Wood’s gone, we need a new goalkeeper, I don’t know yet who the captain is. I’ll ask for you tomorrow.”

The first-years looked at both of them expectantly. Compared with Umbridge’s speech, everyone was very interested in Quidditch.

As the most popular sport in the wizarding world, Quidditch was more popular than imagined.

Quidditch was the first thing many Muggle born young wizards knew when they entered the wizarding world.

Everyone seemed to want to enter the Quidditch team. If there was an open and fair selection, Ron’s chances of being selected would be very low.

It was not that he was not flying well enough, but that he was too unstable and might not be able to show his strength...

“You heard what she said, ‘progress for progress’s sake must be discouraged’, and ‘pruning wherever we find practices that ought to be prohibited’. The Ministry’s interfering at Hogwarts.” Hermione turned her head and said to Evan, ignoring both of them.

“As expected, Fudge hopes to solve us from the inside,” said Evan. “Be careful with this woman, she’s not easy.”

Umbridge represented the Ministry of Magic, and until there was a complete break, Hogwarts clearly could not resist orders from the Ministry.

Hermione wanted to say something else, but there was a great clattering and banging all around them.

Dumbledore had obviously just dismissed the school, because everyone was standing up ready to leave the Hall.

Hermione jumped up, looking flustered.

“Evan, we’re supposed to show the first years where to go!” she said hurriedly, “Ron, hurry up!”

“I almost forgot!” Ron shouted loudly, “Hey ... you lot! Midgets!”

“Ron!”

“Well, they are, they’re titchy...”

"I know, but you can't call them midgets... *First years!*" Hermione called commandingly along the table. "This way, please!"

"Come on, it's time to take you back to the common room and dormitory," said Evan, standing up with Kate.

A group of new students walked shyly up the gap between the Gryffindor and Hufflepuff tables, all of them trying hard not to lead the group.

They looked at Evan, Harry, Ron, and Hermione with twinkling eyes.

There were more first years than usual this year, and they did indeed seem very small and very young.

"There are so many people. Don't these guys know how to make way for the first years?" Hermione said, dissatisfied.

The crowd was jammed at the doorway, because Umbridge had taken too much time, and everyone wanted to go back quickly now.

Compared with those strong senior students, the small spots around the prefects had no advantage at all.

"Don't worry, leave it to me!" said Evan, and he took out his wand.

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Chapter 924: Gryffindor in the Limelight

"What are you going to do?" Hermione asked cautiously, looking at his wand.

"Very simple, don't let other people get close to you, and you don't have to worry about pushing," said Evan, sparks appearing at the tip of his wand. "It's very necessary to protect the first years. These guys should realize this, and at least be polite."

As the Head Boy, it was Evan's responsibility to maintain order.

In this messy situation, it would not be useful to yell like the prefects, and Evan didn't plan to do that.

He raised his wand high, and an orange-red magical shield flashed from the end of his wand.

The shield expanded quickly, and its scope was getting wider and wider. In the blink of an eye, the first-years were surrounded in the middle, while the other students outside were gently pushed aside.

They pushed the magical shield with their hands, as though there was a layer of soft glass between them and the first-years.

After a certain degree of precise control of magic, Evan was more comfortable with such magic.

The noisy Great Hall suddenly became quiet. Everyone opened their eyes wide and looked at the magical shield and the crowd that suddenly appeared centered around the Gryffindor long table. What kind of magic was this?

It was amazing; it was totally out of everyone's knowledge.

In the blink of an eye, the calm Hall boiled again, and they began to talk once more, pointing at Evan.

As for the Gryffindor first-years in the shield, they were so excited and looked at Evan with admiration.

If it was because of Evan's status as Head Boy at first, now it was because of his strong magical power!

"It's really simple, but isn't it too high-profile to do this?" said Hermione, as they had become the center of focus in the Great Hall.

"That's precisely what I want!" Evan replied.

If he followed the practice of the former Head Boys, it was estimated that many people wouldn't know who he was.

Even if they knew it, they would not necessarily follow his orders. Just like Percy, no one took what he said seriously. On the contrary, Hogwarts students enjoyed constantly challenging the authority of the prefects and the Head Boy.

It didn't matter even if points were deducted or there was detention, who cared...

Only by showing a certain level of strength would everyone be truly convinced.

The reason why Dumbledore was called the greatest white wizard in the world was not because he was the Headmaster of Hogwarts, nor because of his other status and age, but because his magical power was the strongest in the world, and no one dared to take it lightly.

Unlike the rules of the Muggle world, although the Wizarding world had changed a lot, the strong were still respected.

Under the current circumstances, if he wanted unity within Hogwarts, there must be someone who could stand up and lead everyone.

Since Dumbledore made Evan the Head Boy, he hoped that he could take up this responsibility.

If he wanted to take on this responsibility, he had to show his strength and prove that he had this qualification.

Not surprisingly, Evan's performance today was enough to shock everyone, and his deeds would be told again.

Everyone already knew that Evan had the strength, but they didn't know how strong he was, and rarely saw him use magic.

According to their own judgment; or comparing it with themselves, everyone had a bottom line for their strength, and there were many people, like Gleeson, who might take chances. They would

have never imagined that a fourteen-year-old wizard would be so powerful. This was not logical or common sense, and it was impossible for this kind of thing to happen in their worldview.

But Evan broke common sense and told everyone with facts that he had no upper limit...

His performance today would leave a deep impression in everyone's minds. It was conceivable that after seeing his mighty power, many of the conspiracies planned secretly because he'd become the Head Boy should come to an abrupt end.

"Everybody back up and let the first-years go first!" Evan shouted.

Needless to say, in fact, everyone was backing away, trying to make room as much as possible. Following the guidance of Ron and Hermione, the team of first-years moved forward.

Even the students who were still standing at the door would be pushed aside by Evan's magical shield.

Under the gaze of the teachers and the students of the school, Gryffindor first-years excitedly followed Hermione and Ron out of the Hall.

Evan stood at the door, and then let the first-years from Ravenclaw, Hufflepuff, and Slytherin Houses over.

The others were blocked in the Hall by him alone, watching the first-years leave one by one with awe and shock.

The Houses, grudges, and interests aside, Evan was the only student who could do this in Hogwarts.

What he relied on was not being the Head Boy, but his personal strength.

At the staff table, Umbridge also looked at Evan in amazement, and the fake smile on her face gradually disappeared.

"Regarding the question, Dolores!" Dumbledore said calmly, "I think you've also seen it. Mr. Mason's current magical power may be the strongest among Hogwarts students. That's why I let him become the Head Boy. Although he is still a little young, I think he is good enough for this position."

"Excellent. Judging from my past experience, I don't doubt his strength!" said Umbridge slowly after a while. "However, the Head Boy is a very important position. We must make a rigorous and meticulous assessment of his qualities. You know what I mean, Professor Dumbledore ... the stronger the power, the more attention and guidance should be given. There can be no more You-Know-Who at Hogwarts..."

"Of course!" said Dumbledore, "he will pass your test, and so will Hogwarts."

Hermione and Ron led the first-years, all eyes in awe, back to the Gryffindor common room.

As usual, Gryffindor would have another party, and it would take a long time for everyone before going to bed.

It was the same almost every year. Since Evan, Harry, and Ron came to Hogwarts flying the Ford Anglia, the party after the school's Start-of-Term Feast had almost become a habit of Gryffindor House.

Compared with the other Houses, this cheerful atmosphere was quite good.

Indeed, Slytherin House would lead the first years to the cold basement, but they would fight each other until the first-year hidden prefect was selected; Ravenclaw House would lead the first years to the internal library and give everyone a long list of books; as for Hufflepuff House, they used to gather the first years in front of the round fireplace and listen to the seniors talking about all kinds of gossip in the school.

By comparison, the Gryffindor Party was good, and it was also conducive to quick integration of the first-years into the House.

However, when Evan and the others came back, there was no sign of the celebration, but...

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"Head Boy Evan, is this the Gryffindor Tower?" Euan Abercrombie asked, looking around curiously.

Along the way, he felt like he didn't have enough eyes. Hogwarts Castle was really big, and there were all kinds of weird things and magic in it, which were all new to him, as well as to the other first-years.

They gathered around Evan, and kept asking this and that, without stopping for a moment.

Ron was already impatient, and the noisy little kids gave him a headache.

The prefect not only had the right to punish others, but also a responsibility. He was not ready to take on this responsibility and needed to be honed.

Hermione did her best to answer, speaking very comprehensively, almost repeating the original words of the books.

However, she might have spoken too professionally; there were many things the first-years didn't quite understand, and they felt lost.

Only Evan's explanations were easy to understand. They were not deep or shallow, just right.

In fact, one could only understand the problems of depth if he had experienced them; otherwise they would be too ambiguous.

What Evan said was very simple, popularizing some basic common sense, but these were enough for new students.

They had a preconceived idea that Evan was very powerful, and they thought that these things he was talking about were also really great.

Besides, the first-years were so happy to get in touch with Evan.

What surprised Euan most was that Evan's temper was so good, he'd answered almost all the questions, and he was kind and friendly.

It was true that he'd been hearing bad things about Evan before he came and he had a very bad impression of him.

On the train, someone had shown him the previous edition of the *Daily Prophet*. It was full of articles about Evan and Harry, telling that he must be careful of Gryffindor, Evan and Harry, not to contact them, and try to stay away from them as far as possible.

They'd actually rumored that Voldemort had returned, trying to create chaos.

In Euan's mind, Evan had become a stupid, lying, and ignorant wizard studying Dark magic. He took pleasure in bullying others. But when he saw it with his own eyes, he found that this was not the case at all. It was completely the opposite.

Evan's attitude had said everything, and the short contact made everyone have a good impression of him.

Especially his powerful strength was even more admirable. Not to mention the magic he'd used in the Great Hall that they didn't understand, they'd met Peeves bullying other students on the fourth floor. They all knew that he was a difficult ghost that took pleasure in bullying the students with pranks, and was not afraid of anything.

But after seeing Evan, Peeves turned around and fled.

"Yeah, this is the Gryffindor Tower. This is the Fat Lady. She is the manager of the entrance of the Gryffindor common room. She has always done her duty and is very serious. You can only enter the common room by saying the correct password," said Evan cheerfully to the first-years around him, turned around and looked at the portrait of the Fat Lady, "Good evening, Fat Lady, these are the new first-years!"

"Hello, Evan, I heard them say they chose you as the Head Boy, congratulations!" said the Fat Lady cheerfully; smoothing the folds on her pink satin dress, as though talking to Evan was a very honorable thing.

It might be that Evan's dutiful words made her look particularly kind.

"Thank you, this is the headmaster's trust in me. By the way, the password is *Mimulus mibletonia*!" Evan continued.

"Correct," said the Fat Lady, and her portrait swung open toward them like a door, revealing a circular hole in the wall behind.

"You have to remember the password. If it's changed, the prefects will inform you as soon as possible." Hermione said.

"If you forget it, you can only spend the night in the corridor!" Evan took the lead in climbing the hole.

The Gryffindor common room looked as welcoming as ever, a cozy circular tower room full of dilapidated squashy armchairs and rickety old tables. A fire was crackling merrily in the grate.

Evan had thought that with his performance in the Great Hall, the energy of the whole Gryffindor would have soared. Fred and George would certainly not miss this opportunity to organize a school opening party; and he was just leading the first-years back to join them and get to know one another more.

But no, the atmosphere in the common room was particularly cold.

In this cold and cheerless atmosphere, with a hint of tension and uneasiness, Harry, Fred, George, Colin and Neville were standing on one side near the stairs to the boys' dormitories, while others stood on the other side, facing each other.

"What's going on?" Evan was startled for a moment. "What are you doing standing here?"

He looked around, and few people dared to look him in the eyes.

Evan's past experience, as well as the powerful magic that he'd just used in the Great Hall, were still fresh in everyone's memory.

"Nothing, Harry and Seamus had a little conflict," Fred said. "We persuaded them!"

"Not a big deal," George followed, waving his hand. "It's all over now."

"It's no small matter," Dean Thomas said immediately. "Seamus's Mum almost prevented him from returning to Hogwarts."

At his words, the atmosphere suddenly became extremely tense.

"But ... why?" said Hermione, surprised, and walked to Evan's side.

"The *Daily Prophet*, his mother believes all the nonsense it writes," said Harry angrily.

Dean and Seamus were both his roommates. He didn't want to make a scene with them in front of so many people, being laughed at and pointed at by others. Before tonight, he thought his relationship with them was pretty good. Even if it was not as good as that with Evan and Ron, they were still relatively close friends ... at least he thought they were.

But what happened just now overturned Harry's understanding.

They asked him aggressively about what happened that night half a year ago. Although Harry had told them the truth more than once, no one believed it. They just wanted to know what they wanted to happen.

Hermione once said that time would make them slowly accept the return of Voldemort, but it didn't.

Everyone had doubts about Voldemort's return. Although they had digested it for a long time last term, they still couldn't believe it. When they returned home during the summer vacation, they were influenced by their parents, people around them, and media such as the *Daily Prophet*, and they all felt that Evan and Harry were lying, and Voldemort could not be resurrected at all.

Distrust was brewing, and finally broke out in silence.

They didn't dare to ask Evan. They could only use Harry as a breakthrough....

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Chapter 926: The First Quarrel

Seamus's reasons seemed quite substantial. His mother believed the articles in the *Daily Prophet* and thought that Dumbledore was an old fool, and Evan and Harry were liars in an uproar, and Voldemort could never be coming back, it was like Arabian Nights.

Therefore, she did not intend to send Seamus to Hogwarts, and even wanted him to transfer, which was a serious matter.

In this case, as the source of everything, Harry was naturally responsible for explaining the matter completely.

Harry didn't know what else he needed to explain. He had said everything he could, but no one believed it.

He was sick of it; sick of being the person who was stared at and talked about all the time.

If any of them knew, if any of them had the faintest idea what it felt like to be the one all these things had happened to ... Seamus didn't know, his mother had no idea, neither of these people knew.

A bunch of stupid guys and a stupid woman, Harry thought savagely.

He directly rejected Seamus's request to repeat what had happened that night, and asked him to read the *Daily Prophet* like his mother. This lie-laden newspaper would tell him everything he needed to know.

Seamus thought that Harry had a go at his mother, and the two immediately quarreled...

"Seriously, what's going on with you two?" Ron said, hurriedly coming out of the crowd.

"He's having a go at my mother!" Seamus yelled.

"Harry wouldn't do that!"

"Yeah, we all met your mother and we all liked her," said Hermione hurriedly.

"That's before that stupid woman started believing every word the stinking *Daily Prophet*

writes about us!" said Harry at the top of his voice. He was fed up. The pressure accumulated in recent times exploded without reservation.

"Shut up, don't talk about my mother like that," snapped Seamus, pulling out his wand and pointing it back.

"I'll talk to you how I want, she calls me a liar; she's a complete fool!" said Harry, his temper rising so fast he snatched his wand, "You're all the same, regardless of the facts, you can't see the truth."

“Enough, you two!” said Evan hurriedly, really worried that they would start fighting with excitement.

He looked at Harry who was excited, with a headache.

Turning his head, seeing the panting Seamus with the same flushed face, he didn’t know what to say for a moment.

The report about himself and Harry seeing Voldemort’s resurrection had not been published, and it was not the time yet.

Evan suspected that even if the report were published or the whole thing that night were told to Seamus, he would not believe it, just like Dumbledore could not convince Fudge.

The more he talked about it, the more counterproductive it would be unless he put Voldemort in front of his eyes...

If Evan had this ability, he would let Fudge understand his mistake first.

“You two stop quarreling; it’s been so stiff on the first day of school.” Evan said thoughtfully, “About what happened to Harry and me that night, Dumbledore made it clear last term ... Voldemort is back!”

“Huh!” Hearing the name, everyone in the common room gasped and couldn’t help shivering.

“You’re with him. You’re all lying,” said Seamus stubbornly, shaking his wand in his hand.

“Whether we’re lying or not will be verified by time. We’ve told the truth, purely with good intentions. Believe it or not is your business and your freedom. In the same way, you have no right to deny those who know the truth,” said Evan. “Now, go back to bed!”

“No, you’re all crazy,” said Seamus heatedly. “I don’t want to share a dormitory with him anymore, my mother...”

“If you’ve got a problem sharing a dormitory with me, go and ask Professor McGonagall if you can be moved.” Harry shouted again, “I’ve had enough, stop talking about your mummy worrying about you.”

“You’re mad. I want to move out...”

“That’s out of order, Seamus,” said Ron immediately.

“Out of order, am I?” Seamus shouted, his face turning paler. “Ask everyone present in the room who believes the rubbish they’ve come out with about You-Know-Who, do you reckon they’re telling the truth? Ah, I forgot, you’re with them, you’re all mad, you actually believe in the kind of impossible things.”

In the silence, no one spoke. It was obvious that most people did not believe it.

But seeing Evan here, no one was willing to stand up, that was really stupid!

“I believe Evan!” said Colin, walking to Harry’s side.

“Then you’re mad too!”

“I also believe in what Head Boy Evan said!” Kate suddenly stood up and said.

Because she was in the spotlight for the first time, the little girl was very nervous, but she didn’t flinch. “Since Head Boy Evan said that You-Know-Who is back, then he must be back.”

“Huh, a first-year...”

“Stop making trouble, Seamus, we all believe what Evan and Harry said. That’s the truth,” said Hermione.

“You’re all mad!” said Seamus in disgust. “I see, a bunch of lunatics.”

“Yeah? Well unfortunately for you, pal, I’m also a prefect!” said Ron, jabbing himself in the chest with a finger. “So unless you want detention, watch your mouth!”

He wouldn’t reason with him like Evan, but this method was undoubtedly more effective.

Seamus seemed to realize that he was facing a Head Boy and two prefects, and it would be no good to offend them.

For a few seconds, he seemed to feel as though he could spit out what was going through his mind.

He didn’t even care to have a fight with Evan and Harry.

But in the end, with a noise of contempt he turned on his heel, not looking at Evan, Harry, Ron and the others.

“Well, anyone else’s parents got a problem?” Ron asked aggressively, seemingly pleased that the prefect had played a role.

“My parents are Muggles, mate,” said Dean, shrugging when he noticed Ron was looking at him. “They don’t even know who You-Know-Who is, because I’m not stupid enough to tell them. But like Seamus, I don’t believe you.”

“I just said it’s your freedom, and time will prove everything,” said Evan, taking a deep breath and looking at everyone in the common room, “This is just an opportunity, I’ll say it again. Regarding the things Harry and I said, whether you choose to believe is your own business, but please don’t impose your own ideas on others. If I know anyone who quarrels because of this kind of thing, I’ll definitely put them in detention. I mean it. Also, if you want to change the dormitory, you can come to me to apply.

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Chapter 927: The Seeds of Distrust

Gryffindor was facing internal division, and distrust was building up.

It was really bad enough for first-years to see this scene. In the past few years, Gryffindor had been the most united, glorious and belonging House, and had achieved impressive results.

But now, whether Evan wanted to admit it or not, they were on the verge of internal division.

This kind of thing could only be solved by time, and only when Voldemort appeared again could it be proved that they had not lied.

No matter how much he said now, it wouldn't help.

With this time, it was better to unite those who were willing to believe in them, or read more magic books to improve his strength.

"You don't know my mother, she'll weasel anything out of anyone," Seamus said with his back to them. "Many of you come from Muggle families. Your parents don't get the *Daily Prophet*; they don't know our headmaster's been sacked from the Wizengamot and the International Confederation of Wizards because he's losing his marbles..."

Evan frowned. If Seamus continued to say this, he would really have to be in detention, otherwise it would be endless.

He didn't want to discuss this kind of thing with them here; it didn't make any sense at all.

"My gran says that's rubbish," piped up Neville. "She says it's the *Daily Prophet* that's going downhill, not Dumbledore. She's canceled our subscription. We are now subscribing to *Hogwarts Magic*, which tells the facts. My gran's always said You-Know-Who would come back one day. She says if Dumbledore says he's back, he's back, and we must be prepared for the battle."

"Thank you, Neville," said Evan decisively. "Now, I'll say it again for the last time. Go back to sleep."

Under his gaze, the crowd gradually dispersed, and the Gryffindor common room was filled with this kind of distrust for the first time.

To Evan's delight and surprise, many first-years clearly expressed their support for him. Although many of these people didn't even know what Voldemort meant, it was still a good start.

At the same time, it also verified his ideas. These young boys and girls still had to develop from scratch...

After everyone left, Evan and Hermione stayed for more than half an hour.

They drafted a notice together and copied more than a dozen copies. Evan planned to have the prefects post it on the notice boards of the Houses tomorrow. It was mainly about organizing the first-years to visit the school this weekend. By the way, he would tell them something else.

When Evan returned to the bedroom, it was obvious that there was talking inside, but it stopped immediately after he went in.

They were talking about what had happened just now, about Evan and Harry.

Only Colin said goodnight to Evan, and then the whole bedroom fell into a death-like silence along with the darkness.

The quarrel between Harry and Seamus upset many people, and now everyone in Gryffindor found themselves in a dilemma.

For a long time, they had trusted Dumbledore and Evan very much, but it was hard to believe the fact that Voldemort had returned, because to admit this required not only great courage, but also preparations to meet the deepest fears in the soul.

Everyone was thinking, wanting to draw a conclusion of both ends, but the more they thought about it, the more confused they were...

At the same time, Harry was rolling around on the sheets, tossing and turning.

In fact, he had always liked Seamus very much before, but he didn't expect such a thing to happen tonight.

This was just the beginning, how many more people were going to suggest that he was lying or unhinged?

Although time would prove everything, how many attacks like Seamus's would he have to endure before that time came?

Early the next morning, Evan and Hermione went to the school to post notices.

The notices for the common rooms of the other three Houses could be given to their prefects during breakfast later.

"I've been thinking about last night for a long time, Harry and Seamus..." Hermione stopped abruptly.

She was staring at the common room notice board, where a large new sign had been put up.

GALLONS OF GALLEONS!

Pocket money failing to keep pace with your outgoings?

Like to earn a little extra gold?

Contact Fred and George Weasley,

Gryffindor common room,

for simple, part-time, virtually painless jobs

(WE REGRET THAT ALL WORK IS UNDERTAKEN AT APPLICANT'S OWN RISK).

Their prank products, especially the newly improved Skiving Snackboxes, had entered the human experimental stage. The test on their own body could no longer meet the requirements. They needed

to start looking for experimenters on a large scale and record various adverse reactions after taking them.

Evan had heard Fred and George talk about this before, and they needed a lot of “lab rats.”

Obviously, this work was dangerous and very unsanitary. Except for them, no one knew how many poisonous tentacle seeds, bug corpses and the like Fred and George added to those skipping candy.

“They can’t do this, they’ve gone too far,” said Hermione grimly, taking down the sign, which Fred and George had pinned up over a poster giving the date of the first Hogsmeade weekend in October.

“Did you know about it?” Hermione said, staring at Evan suspiciously, crumpling the sign into a ball.

“I didn’t know!” said Evan hurriedly.

“We’ll have to talk to them; we can’t let them go on like this,” said Hermione. “Yeah, call Ron too.”

Like Mrs. Weasley, Hermione could not understand Fred and George’s prank products.

Now as prefect, she thought she had a responsibility to prevent such things, and it was up to them to do it.

“I’ll talk to Fred and George about this, so that they don’t...” Evan paused, “Well, don’t post signs so publicly, but if others volunteer to test their new products, it’s none of our business.”

As long as the amount of Gold Galleons as a reward was considerable, there would always be applicants to Fred and George’s experiments.

“You’re right; we really don’t have this right,” Hermione said angrily, taking the lead to walk out of the common room. “And I’m not in the mood to care about them either, you know? Back to my bedroom last night, I heard Lavender and Parvati also discussing the quarrel between Harry and Seamus, and they didn’t want to believe me.”

“Oh, I thought Ron told Lavender everything?” Evan said.

“I thought so, too. She knows more than the others, but she still seems to stubbornly believe that Harry is a lying, attention-seeking prat, and you and Ron are both blinded by him!” Hermione said. “This is ridiculous, what’s wrong with these people?”

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Chapter 928: Unity and the New Captain

“Because of fear!” Evan whispered, “You see, acceptance is a form of courage, especially when admitting such unfathomable things exist.”

At that moment, they walked down a flight of stairs lined with portraits of old witches and wizards, all of whom ignored them, being engrossed in their own conversation.

“What did you say to Lavender? You didn’t just stand there while they discussed such matters, did you?”

“Of course not!” said Hermione calmly. “I told her to keep her big fat mouth shut and stop gossiping.”

Evan chuckled. It was indeed typical of Hermione to react that way!

“However, I still have some concerns about this matter. I thought about it for a long time last night.” Hermione continued, “We can prevent them from openly discussing this, but people will still talk in secret. Dumbledore once said, Voldemort’s gift for spreading discord and enmity is very great. We can fight it only by showing an equally strong bond of friendship and trust.”

“You’re right. Unity is the key to overcoming all difficulties,” Evan nodded in agreement.

Behind Voldemort and the Second Wizarding War, there were even more terrible evil gods, and it was crucial to unite.

“But You-Know-Who’s only been back for less than half a year; he hasn’t taken action yet, and we’ve started fighting among ourselves!” said Hermione, feeling disheartened. But she quickly regained her composure and continued, “Evan, I think we should make efforts to unite Gryffindor internally and with the other Houses.”

“Well, that’s indeed the most important thing at present.” Evan agreed, “What do you have in mind?”

“We have to make full use of the status of Head Boy and prefect. This time, organizing the first-years together is an opportunity and a good start. We can instill the concept of unity in them. We can also help them familiarize with the school, get used to their homework, and so on. This kind of activity can be carried out on a long-term basis. With more interaction, friendships will naturally form,” Hermione proposed.

Hermione’s idea seemed somewhat presumptuous, but it was better than doing nothing. It should yield some results.

Last night, many first-years stood up to support them, which left a deep impression on Evan.

In addition, he planned to unite those who were willing to be united and help those who believed in them to enhance their abilities.

It was obviously unrealistic to make everyone stronger, but it was feasible to train a small number of elites, just like what was known as “Dumbledore’s Army”.

As they walked, Evan shared this idea with Hermione.

When they arrived at the Great Hall, Evan handed the notice to the prefects of the other three Houses, asking them to go back and post it. They were to gather the first-year students of their respective Houses at the gate of the castle on the weekend.

Draco Malfoy seemed hesitant, but finally accepted the notice and agreed to cooperate with Evan.

Regardless of public opinion, as long as Evan demonstrated sufficient strength, at least no one would dare oppose him openly.

What happened in the Gryffindor Common Room spread quickly throughout Hogwarts. The Great Hall was filled with hushed whispers as usual. Many people stole glances at Evan, quickly averting their gaze when he looked their way.

It was indeed frustrating, but Evan remained unfazed.

For these gazes and discussions, just ignore them, and treat these people as non-existent.

To do that, no doubt required a strong heart.

Until now, Harry had not been able to do that like Evan, and the enchanted ceiling above them echoed Harry’s mood; it was a miserable rain-cloud gray.

This morning, before Harry even got up, Seamus had left the dormitory early.

Everyone was avoiding him along the way, and a line of sixth-year Ravenclaws was crossing the entrance hall; they caught sight of Harry and hurried to form a tighter group, as though frightened he might attack stragglers.

The current situation was worse than when the Basilisk was wreaking havoc inside the castle. At least back then, the students from pure-blood families didn’t have to worry about Harry; everyone knew that the Slytherin’s Heir wouldn’t harm pure-blood opponents...

But now, judging by the way these people were acting, it was unclear whether they feared Voldemort or Evan and Harry.

“Look at them, do they think I’m going to cast a Killing Curse, or they’ll turn into nutters if they stay with me too long?” Harry grumbled, sitting opposite Evan and Hermione, with Ron and Colin beside him.

“Don’t let it bother you. As long as we know we’re in the right, it’s enough,” Evan reassured.

“Ron, Evan and I discussed it just now, and decided to lead all the first-years to visit the school this weekend, and the prefects must participate.” Hermione followed, pulling a plate of toast toward her, “Harry, will you join us?”

Before Harry could answer, a tall black girl with long, braided hair had marched up to him.

“Hi, Angelina.” Everyone hurriedly greeted.

“Hi... good summer?” she said briskly. And without waiting for an answer, “Listen, I’ve been made Gryffindor Quidditch Captain!”

“Nice one,” said Harry, grinning at her. That was the best news he’d heard since returning to Hogwarts.

He suspected Angelina’s pep talks might not be as long-winded as Oliver Wood’s had been, which could only be an improvement.

Ron and Colin also stopped to look at her. The captain of the Quidditch team was always one of the most popular figures in the House, especially as the tryouts for the team were just around the corner. Angelina had full authority in such matters.

“We need a new Keeper now Oliver’s left.” Angelina lived up to everyone’s expectations and said directly, “Tryouts are on Friday at five o’clock and I want the whole team there, all right, Harry? Then we can see how the new person will fit in.”

“No problem!” Harry quickly agreed.

“Can we come and watch?” Colin asked.

“Of course, those who want to visit can gather at the pitch; or even sign up for the selection directly.” Angelina said, eyeing the slender Colin. “But your build might not be suitable for a Keeper. By the way, Evan, will you be joining us?”

“I’d rather not. You know I’m afraid of heights!” Evan replied. “But I’ll definitely come to watch!”

“Alright then!” Angelina waved and turned to leave.

“I’d almost forgotten Wood had left,” said Hermione, finishing her bread.

“Hermione, Harry and I discussed it last night, sitting here with you right next to me,” said Ron, “I didn’t expect Angelina to replace Wood as captain, but she’s definitely the most qualified.”

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Chapter 929: The O.W.L.s Year of the Fifth Year

“Really? Have you discussed it already?” Hermione said casually. Like Evan, she was not particularly interested in Quidditch. “I may not have noticed, but, well, Wood leaving will have a significant impact on the team, right?”

“I suppose so,” said Harry, picking up a piece of bread. “He was an excellent Keeper.”

“Still, it won’t hurt to have some new blood, will it?” said Ron. “By the way, Evan, your new broom?”

“Not much of an issue. I can have one made before the selection, but it will take some time for mass production.”

Just then, with a whoosh and a clatter, hundreds of owls came soaring in through the upper windows. They descended all over the Hall, bringing letters and packages to their owners and showering the breakfasters with droplets of water; it was clearly raining hard outside.

Evan received today’s *Hogwarts Magic News*, he glanced at it and handed the newspaper to Hermione.

After a while, Hedwig brought back the reply letter from Evan’s parents, along with a large bag of sweets.

Evan’s mother had prepared plenty, enough for Evan to share with everyone and establish good relations. These Muggle sweets were very popular, and from what she wrote in the letter, she was proud of Evan becoming the Head Boy.

“I like this Muggle brand of chocolate!” said Ron, stuffing the candy into his mouth.

“Well, then take a few more!”

While Evan was reading the letter, Hermione had to move her orange juice aside quickly to make way for a large damp barn owl bearing a sodden *Daily Prophet* in its beak.

“What are you still getting that for?” said Harry irritably, thinking of Seamus, as Hermione placed a Knut in the leather pouch on the owl’s leg and it took off again. “I’m not bothering ... load of rubbish.”

“It’s best to know what the enemy are saying,” said Hermione darkly.

She unfurled the newspaper and disappeared behind it, not emerging until everyone had finished eating.

“Nothing!” she said simply. “Nothing was said.”

“There’s nothing new about Rita either!” Evan said, putting down the *Hogwarts Magic News*.

Professor McGonagall was now moving along the table handing out schedules.

Evan hurriedly stood up and took the opportunity to tell her that he was going to organize activities over the weekend to familiarize the first-years with the campus.

Besides being the Head of Gryffindor House, Professor McGonagall was also the Deputy Headmistress of the school, responsible for such daily affairs.

“I think it should be fine. Although the school doesn’t have such a precedent, your idea is good. It’s necessary to help the new students get acquainted with the campus, and it falls within the responsibilities of the Head Boy,” Professor McGonagall said, lowering her voice. “By the way, Professor Umbridge didn’t talk to you, did she?”

“No!” Evan shook his head, but it was only a matter of time.

Considering Evan's identity and the strength he displayed last night, Professor Umbridge couldn't simply ignore him.

Regardless of whether it was to show off or win over, she would talk to Evan alone.

"Alright, Evan, although it's not appropriate for me as a professor to say this, I have to warn you..."

While Evan was talking with Professor McGonagall, Harry, Hermione, Ron, and Colin were studying their newly received schedule.

"Too bad our first class is Defense Against the Dark Arts with that scary woman," Colin said.

"That's nothing. Compared to what we have in the fifth year today, you are pretty lucky. Just endure one class and you're done," Ron sighed, waving his schedule in his hand. "History of Magic, double Potions, Divination, and double Defense Against the Dark Arts ... Binns, Snape, Trelawney, and that Umbridge woman all in one day! I wish Fred and George could hurry up and get those Skiving Snackboxes sorted..."

"Do mine ears deceive me?" said Fred, arriving with George and squeezing onto the bench beside Harry. "Hogwarts prefects surely don't wish to skive off lessons?"

"Look what we've got today," said Ron grumpily, shoving his schedule under Fred's nose. "That's the worst Monday I've ever seen."

"Fair point, little bro," said Fred, scanning the column; this is the worst schedule I've ever seen. "You can have a bit of Nosebleed Nougat cheap if you like."

"Why's it cheap?" said Ron suspiciously. Fred and George's products were very popular and came with a price tag.

Except for Evan, who got a lot of freebies every year, no one else could get their hands on their pranks for free, not even a discount. This included Ron, their own younger brother.

"Because you'll keep bleeding till you shrivel up, we haven't got an antidote yet," said George, helping himself to a kipper. "I suspect we put too many Devil's Snare seeds in them!"

"Cheers," said Ron moodily, pocketing his schedule, "but I think I'll take the lessons."

"And speaking of your Skiving Snackboxes," said Hermione, eyeing Fred and George beadily, "you can't advertise for testers on the Gryffindor notice board."

"Says who?" said George, looking astonished.

"Evan and I decided on it." Hermione glared at him; then added, "And Ron."

"Leave me out of it," said Ron hastily.

Hermione turned her head and glared at him. Fred and George sniggered.

“You’re going to change your tune before long, Hermione!” said Fred, slathering butter on a piece of toast. “Know why we’ve even thought about making Skiving Snackboxes? The two of us have vivid memories of fifth year..”

“Yeah, you’re starting your fifth year, you’ll be begging us for a Snackbox before long,” George said.

“And why would starting fifth year mean I want a Skiving Snackbox?” asked Hermione.

“Fifth year’s O.W.L. year,” said George waving his hand dismissively, as though he thought it was something that didn’t need to be explained.

“So?”

“So you’ve got your exams coming up, haven’t you? They’ll be keeping your noses so hard to that grindstone they’ll be rubbed raw,” said Fred with satisfaction.

“Half our year had minor breakdowns coming up to O.W.L.s,” said George happily. “Tears and tantrums... Patricia Stimpson kept coming over faint...”

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Chapter 930: Future Plans

The annual O.W.L.s tests held in June were of significant importance. This exam had a crucial impact on future employment and could even determine a student’s destiny to some extent. To pass the exam, fifth-year students must endure a year that felt like a nightmare.

The intense academic pressure and the fear brought about by the exam were not much different from the terrifying news of Voldemort’s return.

The fear of being dominated by the O.W.L.s could cause all kinds of situations among fifth-year students.

Year after year, the nightmare repeated itself, and George was by no means exaggerating.

“That’s nothing. Kenneth Towler came out in boils, remember?” said Fred reminiscently, wearing the same mischievous smile as George.

“That’s because you put Bulbadox Powder in his pajamas,” said George.

“Oh yeah,” said Fred, grinning. “I’d forgotten... Hard to keep track sometimes, isn’t it?”

“Anyway, it’s a nightmare of a year, the fifth,” said George. “Believe me, if you care about exam results anyway; you’re going to be nervous and on the verge of breaking down. Fred and I managed to keep our spirits up somehow.”

“Yeah ... you got, what was it, three O.W.L.s each?” said Ron, “It’s too few, and the results were not satisfactory. Percy got twelve certificates back then. When Mum found out about your results, she raged for the entire summer. Luckily, the Quidditch World Cup that followed saved you.”

“Yep,” said Fred unconcernedly. “But we feel our futures lie outside the world of academic achievement.”

“Yeah... we seriously debated whether we were going to bother coming back for our seventh year,” said George brightly, “now that we’ve got enough funds with the help of Evan, we’re planning to open a joke shop in Diagon Alley.”

“Mrs. Weasley won’t agree,” Evan said, as he came back just to hear their conversation.

“It’s really hard to talk about it with Mum, but it’s not impossible. At the beginning of last summer, we showed her the money we earned over these years, and she seemed to agree a bit. But, thanks to Percy, turning out to be the world’s biggest prat, Mum directly refused our request to leave school early,” said George sarcastically. “I don’t understand, now that we’ve got our O.W.L.s, what’s the use of N.E.W.T.s? To become prats like Percy?”

“We’re not going to waste our last year here, though,” said Fred, looking affectionately around at the Great Hall. “We’re going to use it to do a bit of market research, find out exactly what the average Hogwarts student requires from his joke shop, carefully evaluate the results of our research, and then produce the products to fit the demand.”

It was not just about prank products; Fred and George had a flair for business and entrepreneurship. They were willing to succeed.

If they had enough time, they could even sell their products abroad and build a vast business empire.

That was also the main reason why Evan had been cooperating with them. He had funds and enough magic to support the research of various new products. He could even find sales channels in the Muggle world from his home. Yet there was still one problem.

He was unwilling to do such a thing, nor was he willing to waste his time on it. Even the *Hogwarts Magic News* was mainly supported by Hermione and the house elves at the beginning, but now it was almost all handed over to Lupin and other managers, and Evan rarely intervened.

But he also needed the influence brought by commercial expansion, such as this time, researching and producing a new broom was precisely because of this.

In this case, daily management and operation required someone to take over, and Fred and George were the best candidates.

“Seriously, buddy, I think it’s a complete waste of time for you to stay at school,” Fred said, turning to look at Evan. “You should come with us to Diagon Alley, that’s where you showcase your talents. We’ll definitely achieve something great.”

Evan had once described the relevant prospects to them, and Fred and George wholeheartedly agreed.

“You want Evan to go to Diagon Alley with you to open a joke shop?!” Hermione frowned at him, “I hope Evan can do something more promising after Hogwarts, such as running a newspaper or entering the Ministry of Magic... ..”

“Oh, Hermione, you sound like Mum!” said Fred.

“Almost exactly the same!” George nodded, “You want Evan to be a prat like Percy?”

“Isn’t it too early to discuss all this? I haven’t even figured out what I want to do myself!” said Evan.

He actually planned to travel around the world after defeating Voldemort, in search of ancient magic relics.

But that was all for later, and no one knew what the future would bring.

“You know, I haven’t passed my O.W.L.s yet, and I still have time to think about it.”

“By the way, can Evan take the O.W.L.s directly?” Hermione asked suddenly, “I mean... There seems to be no age requirement for the O.W.L.s.”

“Others definitely can’t, but Evan is a different story!” said Fred. “Because he’s Evan!”

“Yeah, the creator of miracles!” George grinned. “Okay, we have to go to class now. If we get there early we might be able to sell a few Extendable Ears before Herbology.”

After Fred and George left, the topic continued. Hermione seemed to want Evan to take the O.W.L.s early since his abilities were more than sufficient.

She disagreed with most of what Fred and George had said, except for one point; there was really no need for Evan to stay in Hogwarts according to the normal trajectory; that would be purely a waste of time. His current level far surpassed others, and even graduating students couldn’t match his practical skills.

If possible, he could directly pass the O.W.L.s and get into the N.E.W.T.s courses...

Regarding this matter, they still needed to ask Dumbledore. If the Headmaster agreed, Evan wouldn’t mind either.

There wouldn’t be any issues in practical combat; and he had just to pay a bit more attention to theoretical knowledge.

“Do you reckon it’s true this year’s going to be really tough? Because of the exams?” Harry hesitated, seemingly frightened by the scenes depicted by Fred and George.

“Oh yeah,” said Ron. “Bound to be, isn’t it? O.W.L.s are really important, affect the jobs you can apply for and everything. We get career advice too, later this year, Bill told me. So you can choose what N.E.W.T.s you want to do next year.”

“Well, do you know what you want to do after Hogwarts?” Harry continued.

That was a crucial question, one that Harry had thought about many times before.

For a while, Harry had even entertained the idea of becoming a professional Quidditch player like Wood.