

Harry Potter 991

Chapter 991: Woo woo woo

No matter how to look at it, that place was perfect for Grawp to use as his lair.

According to Hagrid's character and past practices, he might even find a mate for Grawp.

Fall in love, mate, reproduce, fall in love again, mate again, and reproduce again.

Just like this, in a few decades, a brand new tribe of giants would appear in the forest near Hogwarts...

Following this topic, Evan hoped Hagrid would help him find a few animals as fighting practice objects, including Acromantulas.

Hagrid agreed, saying that Aragog had always been thinking about Evan and would definitely be willing to help him with this small favor.

Without the support of the evil god's power, the old spider was close to the end, likely to die at any moment.

This might not be a bad thing for him; after all, the price paid for the extended life span was to be dominated by the evil god.

Looking at his descendants, the ordinary ones were okay, but the larger ones had been twisted into something else.

Things were going well here for Evan, and Hagrid was willing to provide them with animals for combat training.

But Hermione's suggestions to persuade Hagrid to give up showing dangerous animals in class and to help him plan lessons made little progress and received no response.

Hagrid always emphasized that he wanted to give them a surprise.

Hermione wanted to explain Umbridge's situation to him, but Hagrid just wouldn't listen.

He kept telling Hermione that no one in their right mind would be willing to study thorns instead of Chimaeras.

Of course, he was giving an example!

He didn't have a Chimaera, not because he didn't want to raise one, but because it was hard for him to get Chimaera eggs.

Soon, everyone knew what his so-called surprise was: Thestrals.

Umbridge did not inspect Evan's class, but she appeared in the fifth-year Care of Magical Creatures class, which was the class where Hagrid showed everyone the Thestral.

Evan later learned about the situation from Hermione and what she said about Hagrid.

In the forest, the students gathered around the Thestrals. They couldn't see them, but they could feel something moving.

“These Thestrals ... who can tell me why some o’ you can see them an’ some can’t?” Hagrid said.

Hermione immediately raised her hand. After learning about Thestrals with Evan’s help on the first day of school, she had researched a lot.

“Go on then,” said Hagrid, beaming at her.

“The only people who can see Thestrals,” she said, “are people who have seen death.”

“Tha’s exactly right,” said Hagrid solemnly, “ten points ter Gryffindor. Now, Thestrals have a kind of unique magical power...”

“*Hem, hem.*”

Professor Umbridge had arrived. She was standing a few feet away from Harry, wearing her green hat and cloak again, her clipboard at the ready.

Hagrid, who had never heard Umbridge’s fake cough before, was gazing in some concern at the closest Thestral, evidently under the impression that it had made the sound.

He felt a bit worried; could this Thestral be sick, making such strange sounds?

“*Hem, hem.*” Umbridge faked another cough.

“Oh hello!” Hagrid said, smiling, having located the source of the noise.

“You received the note I sent to your cabin this morning?” said Umbridge, in the same loud, slow voice she had used with him earlier, as though she was addressing somebody both foreign and very slow. “Telling you that I would be inspecting your lesson?”

“Oh yeah,” said Hagrid brightly. “Glad yeh found the place all righ’! Well, as you can see — or, I dunno — can you? We’re doin’ Thestrals today...”

“I’m sorry?” said Umbridge loudly, cupping her hand around her ear and frowning. “What did you say?”

Hagrid looked a little confused about Umbridge’s reaction.

“Er — Thestrals!” he said loudly. “Big — er — winged horses, yeh know!”

He flapped his gigantic arms hopefully twice, trying to show Umbridge what Thestrals looked like.

Professor Umbridge raised her eyebrows at him and muttered as she made a note on her clipboard, “has ... to ... resort ... to ... crude ... sign ... language ...”

She raised her head and smiled, “You continue with the class, don’t worry about me.”

“Well ... anyway ...” said Hagrid, turning back to the class and looking slightly flustered. “Erm ... what was I sayin’?”

“ ‘Appears ... to ... have ... poor ... short ... term ... memory ...’ ” muttered Umbridge, loudly enough for everyone to hear her.

The Slytherins looked as though Christmas had come two months early; Hermione, on the other hand, had turned scarlet with suppressed rage.

“Oh yeah,” said Hagrid, throwing an uneasy glance at Umbridge’s clipboard, but plowing on valiantly. “Yeah, I was gonna tell yeh how come we got a herd. Yeah, so, we started off with a male an’ five females. this one’s called Tenebrus...”

He patted the first horse to have appeared, even though many couldn’t see it.

“Woo, woo, woo!” Tenebrus made a series of calls, nuzzling affectionately against Hagrid.

“... he’s my special favorite, firs’ one born here in the forest. Everyone can come over and touch Tenebrus, or ride it!”

“Sorry, are you aware,” Umbridge said loudly, interrupting him, “that the Ministry of Magic has classified Thestrals as ‘dangerous’?”

“Thestrals aren’ dangerous! All righ, they might take a bite outta you if yeh really annoy them, just like dogs...”

“ ‘Shows ... signs ... of ... pleasure ... at ... idea ... of ... violence ...’ ” muttered Umbridge, scribbling on her clipboard again.

“No — come on!” said Hagrid, looking a little anxious now. “I mean, a dog’ll bite if yeh bait it, won’ it — but Thestrals have jus’ got a bad reputation because o’ the death thing — people used ter think they were bad omens, didn’ they? Jus’ didn’ understand, did they?”

Umbridge did not answer; she finished writing her last note, then looked up at Hagrid and said, again very loudly and slowly, “Please continue teaching as usual. I am going to walk among the students and ask them questions about your past performance.”

As she spoke, Umbridge gestured to make sure Hagrid understood. When she said “students,” she pointed around at individual members of the class, when saying “walk among,” she mimed walking, and for “ask questions,” she pointed at her mouth to indicate talking.

Clearly, Umbridge wasn’t evaluating Hagrid’s teaching abilities; she was questioning his intelligence, treating him as if he were an unintelligent giant with whom communication was impossible.

Hagrid stared at her, clearly at a complete loss to understand why she was acting as though he did not understand normal English.

Hermione had tears of fury in her eyes now, and she still hated her terribly when she told Evan about it later.

“You hag, you evil hag!” she said angrily, “you awful, twisted, vicious toad!”

Umbridge finally asked Pansy Parkinson, having figured out the situation at Hogwarts over the past few days. She knew whom to avoid, whom to rely on, and whom to suppress. Most Slytherin students were on her side.

“My dear, do you find,” said Professor Umbridge in a ringing voice to Pansy Parkinson, “that you are able to understand Professor Hagrid when he talks?”

Just like Hermione, Pansy had tears in her eyes, but these were tears of laughter.

Her answer was almost incoherent because she was trying to suppress her giggles.

“No, I can’t ... because ... well ... it sounds ... like grunting a lot of the time ... I don’t understand what he’s saying ... or what those sounds mean.” “

“Very well ... ‘Unable of correct expression ... can only make grunting sounds’.” Umbridge scribbled on her clipboard.

The few unbruised bits of Hagrid’s face flushed, but he tried to act as though he had not heard Pansy’s answer.

Chapter 992: Protective Measures and Confidentiality

“Er ... yeah ... good stuff abou’ Thestrals,” Hagrid was a little incoherent. “Well, once they’re tamed, like this lot, yeh’ll never be lost again. ‘Mazin’ senses o’ direction, jus’ tell ’em where yeh want ter go...”

“Assuming they can understand you, of course,” a burst of laughter broke out from the Slytherin crowd.

Umbridge smiled indulgently at them and then turned to Neville.

“You can see the Thestrals, Longbottom, can you?” she asked.

“Yeah!” Neville nodded.

“Whom did you see die?” she asked, her tone indifferent.

“My ... my grandad,” said Neville, his voice low.

“And what do you think of them? Tenebrus and his kind that Professor Hagrid mentioned?” she said, waving her stubby hand at the horses, who by now had stripped a great deal of the carcass, Hagrid had prepared, down to bone.

“Erm,” said Neville nervously, with a glance at Hagrid. “Well, they’re ... er ... okay...”

“ ‘Students ... are ... too ... intimidated ... to ... admit ... they ... are ... frightened...’ ” muttered Umbridge, making another note on her clipboard.

“No!” said Neville, looking upset, “no, I’m not scared of them!”

“It’s quite all right,” said Umbridge, patting Neville on the shoulder with what she evidently intended to be an understanding smile, though it looked more like a leer.

“Well, Hagrid,” she turned to look up at him again, speaking once more in that loud, slow voice, “I think I’ve got enough to be getting along with... You will receive the results of your inspection in ten days’ time. “

Same as before, she made gestures while talking. When she said “ten days”, she held up ten stubby fingers; when she said “receive”, she mimed taking something from the air in front of her, and finally for “the results of your inspection,” she pointed at the clipboard, as if Hagrid were mentally impaired.

Then, her smile wider and more toadlike than ever before beneath her green hat; she bustled from the midst of students.

She left all the Slytherins in fits of laughter, Hermione actually shaking with fury, and Neville looking confused and upset.

“That foul, lying, twisting old gargoyle!” stormed Hermione.

When she told Evan what happened in the Care of Magical Creatures class, she seemed a little unable to control her anger again!

“You see what she’s up to?” Hermione continued. “It’s her thing about half-breeds all over again — she’s trying to make out Hagrid’s some kind of dim-witted troll, just because he had a giantess for a mother — and oh, it’s not fair, that really wasn’t a bad lesson at all — I mean, all right, if it had been Blast-Ended Skrewts again or some other creature, but Thestrals are fine. I didn’t expect him to show us the Thestrals — in fact, for Hagrid, they’re really good!”

“Umbridge said they’re dangerous,” said Ron.

“Well, it’s like Hagrid said, they can look after themselves,” said Hermione impatiently. “They’ve been living in Hogwarts for many years; and I suppose a teacher like Grubbly-Plank wouldn’t usually show them to us before N.E.W.T. level, but, well, they are very interesting, aren’t they? The way some people can see them and some can’t! I wish I could...”

She stopped abruptly, realizing what she was saying, and suddenly looked horrorstruck.

“Oh— I’m sorry — no, of course I don’t wish that— that was a really stupid thing to say!” Hermione said hastily.

“Evan, can’t you find a way to give that woman a lesson, like you did last time?” said Harry gloomily.

“She’s not giving us a chance now, she even canceled detentions!” said Evan, finishing his History of Magic essay. “Actually, as long as we do a good job in D.A. and learn a few more spells, it’s the biggest counterattack against Umbridge. Think about what Sirius said, her main goal at Hogwarts is to prevent us from practicing combat, and now we’re training right under her nose, doing things she and the Ministry don’t want us to do.”

“You’re right!”

Time passed quickly, and the twice-weekly Dumbledore’s Army activities had become a part of many people’s lives.

For example, Harry felt as though he were carrying some kind of talisman inside his chest, a glowing secret that supported him through Umbridge’s classes and even made it possible for him to smile blandly as he looked into her horrible bulging eyes.

Evan was right, the D.A. was resisting her under her very nose, doing the very thing that she and the Ministry of Magic most feared.

Harry performed exceptionally well in the activities, always the first to master spells, showing real talent in practical magic.

This was his strength, something Evan had noticed a long time ago.

Now he could even teach others, helping a few slower learners, which relieved Evan of a significant burden.

After learning Expelliarmus, Protego and Petrificus Totalus, they now began to challenge more difficult spells, such as Stupefy, Impedimenta, Reducto, etc., and started practical training step by step, first a confrontation between two people, and then it was the Acromantulas and other creatures provided by Hagrid.

Except for Ron, who had not yet been able to overcome his fear of spiders, others no longer had the panic when facing these terrifying creatures, and could skillfully use various spells when fighting against the Acromantulas, even the first-years, which was a remarkable progress.

In addition, Evan used Transfiguration to create a variety of creatures for everyone to practice against.

The number of D.A. members continued to increase, and new members were introduced at almost every meeting.

After a Charms class, Astoria apologetically explained to Evan the reason why she did not join. She personally supported Evan and wanted to join them, but the main reason was her excessive concern about the judgment of others around her. She lacked the courage to take the first step and needed more time.

Although it was a pity that people from Slytherin House could not be recruited, Dumbledore’s Army was now beginning to take shape!

Evan cast tight protective spells and curses to prevent the secret from being revealed.

If it weren't for the inability to use the Fidelius Charm on the Room of Requirement, he would have considered completely hiding the address, just like the headquarters of the Order of the Phoenix.

Due to the increase in the number of members and the need to adjust training times due to Quidditch practices, they couldn't inform others of the activity times, study content, and preparations as they used to. It would look so suspicious if people from different Houses were seen crossing the Great Hall to talk to each other too often.

Hermione planned to give each member a fake galleon, and she cast a Protean Charm on it so that the numbers on it could change.

By then, everyone would know the time of the next meeting!

Chapter 993: The Two-Way Mirror on the Coin

Hermione's idea was fantastic, and Evan thought it could be further improved to make the functions of these "gold coins" more complete.

Using Galleons as props for communication was for the sake of concealment, to avoid being discovered. But if the only function was to "change the numerals on top," it was just too simple!

After Evan's improvements, only the person wearing it could enter the Room of Requirement.

Now, in addition to being able to communicate with each other through them, as long as one party had the original intention, they could also sense that person's location.

Moreover, each of these fake Galleons was unique; meaning only the person who owned it could use it.

If they fell into the hands of anyone else, the enchantment was lost, reinforcing the secrecy.

After the recent training session, Hermione distributed the gold coins she and Evan made to everyone.

Ron became very excited when he saw the basket at first, convinced that she was actually giving out gold.

"Hold on, Ron, don't take it randomly. These coins have numbers on them, corresponding to each person."

"Numbers?" Ron said blankly, "What's that? Isn't this a Galleon? Isn't it real?"

"Of course it's not!" Hermione said impatiently, "Have you ever thought why I would give you money?"

"These Galleons are our communication props for the future," Evan explained. "I left a spell inside to make them usable only by us. The order of the numbers corresponds to the order you signed on the list. I'm the first, Hermione is the second, then Fred, George, Harry, Ron, Colin..."

A few minutes later, everyone received their own coins, flipping them repeatedly in their hands.

"What's the use of this thing? It looks just like real Galleons."

“You see the numerals around the edge of the coins?” Hermione said, holding one up for examination. The coin gleamed fat and yellow in the light from the torches. “On real Galleons, that’s just a serial number referring to the goblin who cast the coin. On these fake coins, though, the numbers will change to reflect the time and date of the next meeting. The coins will grow hot when the date changes, so if you’re carrying them in a pocket you’ll be able to feel them. We take one each, and when Evan sets the date of the next meeting he’ll change the numbers on his coin, and because I’ve put a Protean Charm on them, they’ll all change to mimic his.”

A blank silence greeted Hermione’s words. She looked around at all the faces upturned to her, rather disconcerted.

“Well, what’s the matter with you? I thought it was a good idea,” she said uncertainly, “I’ve discussed it with Evan, and we both think we need such a communication prop. I think, even if Umbridge asked us to turn out our pockets, there’s nothing fishy about carrying a Galleon, is there? And Evan also has made changes to them, but ... well, if you don’t want to use them ...”

“You can do a Protean Charm?” said Terry Boot.

“Yes,” said Hermione.

“But that’s ... that’s N.E.W.T. standard, that is,” he said weakly.

“Oh!” Hermione understood what was going on, and she tried to look modest, “Oh ... well ... yes, I suppose it is...”

“How come you’re not in Ravenclaw?” he demanded, staring at Hermione with something close to wonder. “With brains like yours? I’ve never seen a student like you. Using such advanced spells in fifth year, very few people in the school can do that.”

“Well, the Sorting Hat did seriously consider putting me in Ravenclaw during my Sorting,” said Hermione brightly, “but it decided on Gryffindor in the end, and I think Evan is much smarter than me. He’s made more improvements to these Galleons.”

She turned to Evan, came up to him, and, when no one was paying attention, shook her little fist at him.

Then, Hermione pushed Evan out, letting this guy secretly laugh at himself at the back.

“Yeah, to enhance security, I cast a spell at the entrance of the Room. Only members carrying this Galleon can pass through, making it the symbol of the

D.A.," said Evan. "Besides that, you can also look at the back of the coin; the number there can also change. You just need to adjust it like this..."

Under everyone's gaze, Evan changed the number to number three, which was Fred's number.

With his movement, the back of the coin blurred, the patterns and designs disappeared, turning into a mirror-like reflective surface. Fred's face appeared on it, staring wide-eyed at Evan inside the coin.

"Blimey ... how did you do that?!"

"I was inspired by the Two-Way Mirror, so everyone can see each other using this coin for communication," said Evan. "But this feature is still in the experimental stage; it doesn't work if you're too far away, and it's only one-on-one.

If Hermione's Protean Charm just now made them feel very powerful and incredible, then Evan's current improvement had exceeded their imagination. They didn't even know how Evan did it...

This was not as simple as just a Protean Charm; the difficulty was definitely beyond what could be learned at school.

If they had some relevant knowledge, they would know the preciousness of the Two-Way Mirror.

But for Evan, it wasn't a big deal. He didn't use any magic; it was Alchemy.

The Two-Way Mirror itself was an Alchemy product. Evan simply made many coin-sized circular mirrors, then embedded them onto the Galleons, casting the Disillusionment Charm. When needed, they would come out.

Although it was not a big trouble for Evan, others were shocked and speechless.

Everyone had already become accustomed to Evan's formidable strength, accomplishing things that they considered miracles every now and then.

After everyone's amazement, they began to study the coins in their hands; this was quite a good thing.

In fact, Evan had many other functions he wanted to integrate into these Galleons, like Muggle smartphones, but in the end, he wasn't successful.

The wizarding world was lagging behind in this regard, and Muggle electronic communication devices were already developing rapidly.

In a few years, remote calling, video, and interactive features would be developed, and Muggles could use their phones for many things.

Evan didn't know if wizards would also eventually equip themselves with computers and phones like Muggles, spending most of their time on them, gradually reducing direct communication between people, canceling the old tradition of owl post, or if they would maintain the status quo, being left further and further behind by Muggles.

In terms of the integration of magic and technology, the wizarding world was definitely not fast in following up, but it was not unacceptable to wizards.

As long as someone introduced it, everyone was still willing to try new things, such as magic radio stations, some professional mechanical equipment, etc.

In Evan's shop in Diagon Alley, many wizards were also interested in Muggle-produced products.

However, most of them were more into window shopping than actual buying, and even if they did buy, they did so discreetly, not wanting to appear too peculiar.

He felt that after the matter of the Evil god and Voldemort was resolved, he could specialize in studying these things and use technology to change the wizarding world.

Chapter 994: The Forthcoming Game

Magic, as an ancient system, had evolved extensively from the era of the Titans to the peak of the divine age, through the fall of deities, the subversion of the Magic Era, and the darkness of the Middle Ages. It had developed comprehensively up to the present day, making it difficult to bring about improvements.

Moreover, the overall level of magic underwent a reverse development; the more modern the society, the lower the magical potency.

In contrast to magic, Muggle technology progressed in a positive direction and continued to prosper.

Especially in the next twenty years, Muggle science and technology would experience a rapid wave of development, fundamentally altering the current state of affairs.

In such a backdrop, regardless of perspective, the Wizarding world had no reason to reject embracing technology.

Even if Evan didn't do it, other wizards would. That was why Muggle-born wizards were rising in status, gradually becoming the mainstream in the wizarding world because they could bring about changes, which was a major trend in development.

With the introduction of technology, many ancient branches of magic would hasten their decline because the era no longer required them.

For example, demonology magic—just think, in this age, who would need dangerous demons for anything?

Unless one desired to keep a succubus locked in a small dark room, engaging in harmless activities every day.

However, there was no need to exert great effort to learn demon magic just for a succubus. Besides, succubi had a somewhat unique body structure, and in other aspects, they were just average. There was nothing particularly appealing about them. Evan believed that Animagus, complex potions like Polyjuice, and the like could fully meet the daily needs of most people. Having a pet cat was actually quite nice too...

If you don't believe it, you can compare a succubus or a small cat and see for yourself what the deal is!

There were also some branches of magic that should be completely controlled or even banned because they were too dangerous.

For example, time magic. Using a Time-Turner to go back in time and change the world would make everything on the timeline chaotic.

Just imagine, a mad wizard or Muggle with a wealth of modern technological knowledge returning to the Middle Ages, then imprisoning and enslaving a bunch of witches persecuted by the church, having them use magic to produce soap, silicone, abrasives, and such, driving technological development, and creating weapons to conquer the world.

If such a thing were to happen, it would be absolutely terrifying!

Now everything and everyone familiar would undergo a change, especially in that medieval background where the whole society was permeated with an air of extravagance, debauchery, and moral decay. Gathering so many witches around, no matter how to look at it, wouldn't be so simple, and the world would become unrecognizable.

Such things should be absolutely forbidden, and time and history should develop according to their original trajectories.

However, apart from the previous special Time-Turner, Evan didn't know of any Time-Turner with such great magical power that could go back to a thousand years ago.

Even if he were to obtain that Time-Turner in the future, Evan would absolutely not do such a thing.

But right now, he was not clear about the fact that some things were not as simple as whether you wanted them or not. Under the push of so-called "fate," many situations were often beyond one's control, including gathering witches for battle—a situation that now seemed quite absurd in retrospect.

In any case, with the introduction of technology, many aspects of magic would not only be abandoned or prohibited but would also undergo corresponding changes.

For example, in potions, machines could be used to monitor and brew, completely liberating wizards.

However, the change would be more in the lifestyle of the entire Wizarding world. The introduction of technology would make life more convenient. After all, apart from using magic, wizards and Muggles were not fundamentally different; they were all human.

This was a major development trend that was unstoppable.

Voldemort and pure-blood wizarding families were currently trying to prevent all this, propagating the ideals of pure-blood glory and the supremacy of power, hoping to return to that Dark Era. However, their ambitions were mixed with the desire to conquer the world. So, from any perspective, they would ultimately fail.

If it weren't for Voldemort and the evil god, Evan would probably have started to make changes in this area!

Everyone in the Room of Requirement was very satisfied with the communication prop made by Evan and Hermione.

“You know what?” Harry said, looking at the gold coin in his hand, “This reminds me of the Death Eaters’ scars. Voldemort touches one of them, and all their scars burn, and they know they’ve got to join him.”

“Well ... yes,” said Hermione quietly. “That is where I got the idea ... but the function of gold coins now goes far beyond the scars of the Death Eaters, and you’ll notice Evan and I decided to use bits of metal rather than our members’ skin!”

“Yeah ... I prefer your way; it’s a great idea,” said Harry, grinning, as he slipped his Galleon into his pocket. “I suppose the only danger with these is that we might accidentally spend them.”

“Fat chance,” said Ron, who was examining his own fake Galleon with a slightly mournful air. “I haven’t got any real Galleons to confuse it with.”

Along with these gold coins, Evan recently made two more Starcatchers.

Their progress had slowed down a bit, after all, after school started, everyone’s workload increased significantly. They also needed their own private time, and Evan, Hermione, and Ginny could no longer spend the whole day discussing length, thickness and various issues in the Room.

Angelina decided to give these two new brooms to Fred and George, and as the first Quidditch match of the season, Gryffindor versus Slytherin, drew nearer, their D.A. meetings were put on hold because Angelina insisted on almost daily practices.

The fact that the Quidditch Cup had not been held for so long added considerably to the interest and excitement surrounding the forthcoming game.

The Ravenclaws and Hufflepuffs were taking a lively interest in the outcome, for they, of course, would be playing both teams over the coming year.

In addition, everyone was eager to see the performance of the Starcatchers, considering that these were brooms developed by Hogwarts students themselves.

Considering that Evan made the brooms, if they proved to be fantastic, they might even be promoted to professional leagues, which would be a sensational event worldwide.

In this situation, the competitive atmosphere between the two Houses was growing.

Considering the past feud between Gryffindor and Slytherin, this game was very interesting to watch.

The friction between students continued. And Professor McGonagall and Snape, though they attempted to disguise it under a decent pretense of sportsmanship, were determined to see their side’s victory.

You could tell how much Professor McGonagall cared about beating Slytherin. In the week leading up to the match, she even abstained from giving homework to all classes with Gryffindor players, which was beyond imagination.

“I think you’ve got enough to be getting on with at the moment,” she said loftily. Nobody could quite believe their ears until she looked directly at Harry and Ron and said grimly, “I’ve become accustomed to seeing the Quidditch Cup in my study, boys, and I really don’t want to have to hand it over to Professor Snape, so please use the extra time to practice, won’t you? We must win the game!”

Chapter 995: The Game Begins

At the same time, Snape was no less obviously partisan: He had booked the Quidditch pitch for Slytherin practice so often that the Gryffindors had difficulty getting on it to play.

He was also turning a deaf ear to the many reports of Slytherin attempts to hex Gryffindor players in the corridors. When Alicia Spinnet turned up in the hospital wing with her eyebrows growing so thick and fast that they obscured her vision and obstructed her mouth, Snape insisted that she must have attempted a Hair-Thickening Charm on herself and refused to listen to the fourteen eyewitnesses who insisted that they had seen the Slytherin Keeper, Miles Bletchley, hit her from behind with a jinx while she worked in the library.

So much so that Dumbledore’s Army’s first external activity was to protect the members of the Gryffindor Quidditch team.

Gryffindor was getting better and better, and they had never lost to Slytherin since Harry joined the team.

They were full of confidence and believed that they would definitely win this forthcoming game.

The only change and weakness this term was probably Ron, but he had improved a lot compared to before. During one memorable practice, he had hung one-handed from his broom and kicked the Quaffle so hard away from the goal hoop that it soared the length of the pitch and through the center hoop at the other end.

Everyone who saw this scene thought that this save compared favorably with one made recently by Barry Ryan, the Irish International Keeper, against Poland’s top Chaser, Ladislaw Zamojski. It was a world-class level, the most exciting save at Hogwarts in recent years, a classic and dreamlike move.

Even Fred had said that Ron might yet make him and George proud, and that they were seriously considering admitting that he was related to them, something he assured Ron they had been trying to deny for over a decade.

But Ron had one problem: he was too easily nervous and cared too much about what others thought.

His greatest weakness was a tendency to lose confidence when he made a blunder; if he let in one goal he became flustered and was therefore likely to miss more.

The Slytherins quickly noticed this. After they could no longer attack the Gryffindor players at will, they changed their tactics and resorted to verbal attacks. In reality, this tactic had no effect on the older players.

Harry, for example, had endured their snide comments for more than four years, so whispers of, “Hey, Potty, I heard Warrington’s sworn to knock you off your broom on Saturday,” far from chilling his blood, made him laugh.

And, he would reply, “Warrington’s aim’s so pathetic I’d be more worried if he was aiming for the person next to me.”

And, he would laugh back loudly, to the displeasure of the person who was threatening him.

But Ron had never endured a relentless campaign of insults, jeers, and intimidation. When Slytherins, some of them seventh years and considerably larger than he was, muttered as they passed in the corridors, “Got your bed booked in the hospital wing, Weasley?” he did not laugh, but turned a delicate shade of green.

When Draco Malfoy and others imitated Ron’s previous mishandling of the Quaffle, direct collisions with the ground, and his poor performances from the past, Ron’s ears glowed red and his hands shook so badly that he was likely to drop whatever he was holding at the time too.

In summary, October extinguished itself in a rush of howling winds and driving rain and November arrived, cold as frozen iron, with hard frosts every morning and icy drafts that bit at exposed hands and faces.

The skies and the ceiling of the Great Hall turned a pale, pearly gray, the mountains around Hogwarts became snowcapped.

The temperature in the castle dropped so far that many students wore their thick protective dragon skin gloves in the corridors between lessons.

The morning of the match dawned bright and cold; and Ron entered his most nervous stage.

That morning, Ron had been sitting bolt upright on his bed, staring fixedly into space, looking pale, and sweaty; just like when he had accidentally put a slug-vomiting charm on himself a long time ago, except that he didn’t actually spit out slugs.

Facing the encouragement from Evan, Harry, Hermione and others, he just kept nodding numbly.

“Ron, you all right?”

Ron nodded but did not speak.

“Don’t be too nervous. Just show your performance during training.”

Ron nodded again and stared at the Starcatcher in his hand.

“You just need some breakfast!”

Ron nodded, stood up stiffly, and followed them outside.

They exchanged glances. This state wouldn’t do. They could only hope that he would perform better once on the pitch.

The Great Hall was filling up fast when they arrived, the talk louder and the mood more exuberant than usual.

As they passed the Slytherin table, there was an upsurge of noise.

Nearly everyone there was wearing, in addition to the usual green-and-silver scarves and hats, silver badges in the shape of what seemed to be crowns.

“What’s written on those badges?” Harry asked in confusion.

“I don’t know, can’t see. Probably imitating what we did before. Come on, let’s not stand here,” said Hermione.

In the previous year, during the decisive match between Gryffindor and Slytherin, Evan, Hermione and Sirius made nearly a thousand badges and slogans for free and distributed them to Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, and Ravenclaw students, as well as the hot air balloons and promotional posters floating outside the stadium. They turned the entire pitch into Gryffindor’s home ground, leaving a lasting impression.

In terms of momentum, the Slytherin team had already lost at that time.

They received a rousing welcome at the Gryffindor table, where everyone was wearing red and gold scarves and hats.

Angelina asked them to place the Firebolt and the Starcatchers in the center of the long table, where everyone could clearly see the three broomsticks.

This undoubtedly put a lot of pressure on Slytherin, but far from raising Ron’s spirits the cheers seemed to sap the last of his morale.

He collapsed onto the nearest bench looking as though he were facing his final meal.

“I must’ve been mental to do this,” he said in a croaky whisper. “Mental!”

“Don’t be thick,” said Harry firmly, passing him a choice of cereals. “You’re going to be fine. It’s normal to be nervous.”

“I’m rubbish,” croaked Ron. “I’m lousy. I can’t play to save my life. What was I thinking?”

“Get a grip,” said Harry sternly. “Look at that save you made with your foot the other day, even Fred and George said it was brilliant...”

Ron turned a tortured face to Harry, and then turned to the cheering people.

“That was an accident,” he whispered miserably, speaking his mind and the actual situation. “I didn’t mean to do it — I slipped off my broom when none of you were looking and I was trying to get back on and I kicked the Quaffle by accident.”

“Well,” said Harry, recovering quickly from this unpleasant surprise, “a few more accidents like that and the game’s in the bag, isn’t it?”

“Yeah, Ron, you can do it, you have no technical problems!”

Evan, Hermione and Ginny sat down opposite them, wearing gold and red scarves and gloves.

And Hermione and Ginny had rosettes on their clothes.

Chapter 996: Slytherin's Beaters

“How’re you feeling?” Ginny asked Ron. “Everything all right?”

He was now staring into the dregs of milk at the bottom of his empty cereal bowl as though seriously considering attempting to drown himself in them.

“He’s just a little nervous,” said Harry. “... Been nervous for quite a while.”

“Well, that’s a good sign, I never feel you perform as well in exams if you’re not a bit nervous,” said Hermione heartily.

“Dear, I’m looking forward to your performance later,” Lavender said, equally enthusiastic, as she walked over and sat next to Ron.

She didn’t go to see Ron’s previous training sessions, so she didn’t know much about Ron’s real situation.

Anyway, the times she did go, Ron performed quite well, like an excellent Keeper, with a fantastic broomstick to boot.

Ron smiled stiffly, but still said nothing. Lavender didn’t seem to mind and continued talking enthusiastically.

“Well, with everyone supporting you and the whole school coming to watch, all you need to do during the game is...”

Evan felt Lavender had better not continue talking. These words of encouragement did not have a good effect at all.

Ron became even more nervous, as he seemed to realize that there would be nearly a thousand pairs of eyes staring at him today.

Just then, he saw Luna drifting over from the Ravenclaw table.

“Hello,” she said in a vague and dreamy voice.

Everyone looked at her in surprise, and many people in the Great Hall were staring at Luna and a few openly laughing and pointing.

Just like the game between Gryffindor and Slytherin two years ago, she wore a hat in the shape of a lion’s head. However, this time, the hat was even more brightly colored, and was about the size of a real lion’s head, and precariously perched on her head.

It seemed that her Transfiguration had improved greatly compared to her second year.

“I’m supporting Gryffindor,” said Luna, pointing unnecessarily at her hat. “Look what it does...”

She reached up and tapped the hat with her wand. It opened its mouth wide and gave an extremely realistic roar that made everyone in the vicinity jump.

The sound was exactly like that of a real lion, incredibly lifelike.

“It’s good, isn’t it?” said Luna happily. “I wanted to have it chewing up a serpent to represent Slytherin, you know, but there wasn’t time.”

“It’s actually not too difficult!” said Evan, and he also took out his wand and tapped the sausage in front of him.

The sausage changed rapidly, becoming longer and larger, changing color to dark green, and finally turned into a Slytherin snake.

It flew towards Luna’s hat and landed between the lion’s jaws, its tail looped around its paws to hold it in place.

“That’s exactly what I wanted!” Luna nodded, and the hat wobbled.

“It’s still actually a sausage; if you get hungry during the game, you can just take it down and eat it,” said Evan.

“I know. Anyway ... good luck, Ronald!” She drifted away happily.

They had not quite recovered from the shock of Luna’s hat before Angelina came hurrying toward them, accompanied by Katie and Alicia.

“When you’re ready,” Angelina said, “we’re going to go straight down to the pitch, check out conditions and change. Ginny, you come too; put on your team robes. I just asked Madam Hooch, and she said we can have substitutes, but they can only play if someone else is genuinely unable to. In case of any mishap, you’ll be ready to step in. Coote and Demelza are still too young.”

“I see!” Ginny said, looking a bit excited, not as nervous as Ron.

In fact, considering the Weasley family’s upbringing, Ron and Ginny were only a year apart, and their environments were similar. However, their personalities were completely opposite; Ginny was much more optimistic than Ron. Could it be that the younger sister was more favored than the younger brother?!

That’s why Ginny was so confident?

Her only weakness was Harry, and after she decided to give up on Harry, this weakness was gone!

“You go ahead; we’ll be there in a bit,” Harry assured her. “Ron’s just got to have some breakfast.”

“Evan and I will go ahead and find seats in the stands,” Hermione said, pulling Evan to stand up, followed Angelina and walked outside.

Harry and Lavender stayed with Ron, hoping to spend their last moments cheering him up.

“We don’t have to find a seat today.”

“Lavender wants to kiss Ron, and there are so many people there; he’d feel embarrassed,” Hermione whispered.

“How do you know?” Evan asked.

“Because she told her plan in the dormitory last night and I haven’t slept yet,” Hermione replied.

“I’m suddenly curious, what do you usually talk about in the bedroom at night?”

“Definitely more open-minded than you imagine. We...” Hermione suddenly stopped as they reached the Slytherin table. She clearly saw the words on their crown-shaped badges:

WEASLEY

IS OUR KING

“How could they do this? Ron will collapse when he sees these badges!” Hermione said angrily, looking at the shining silver badges in disbelief, “No, we have to go back and warn Harry; we can’t let Ron see these badges.”

As expected, when they returned, they witnessed Lavender openly kissing Ron in front of many people.

Then, she left laughing, and Ron seemed to wake up a bit, touching the spot on his face where he’d been kissed.

Looking at Ron and the particularly bold Lavender, Evan thought it would be better to be more reserved.

He wouldn’t be able to stand it if Hermione was so enthusiastic.

More than ten minutes later, they left the castle, descended the stone steps and walked into the icy air.

The frosty grass crunched under their feet as Evan and Hermione hurried down the sloping lawns with the crowd toward the stadium.

There was no wind at all and the sky was a uniform pearly white, which meant that visibility would be good without the drawback of direct sunlight in the eyes.

These were relatively favorable conditions for the Keeper, and of course the same was true for the spectators below.

Just like Gryffindor, the Slytherin team had also recruited new players this year. Their Beaters, Derrick and Bole, had left, but it wasn’t until the last day that everyone found out who they had chosen as the new Beaters.

Perhaps due to Malfoy’s influence, Montague finally decided on Crabbe and Goyle.

In Angelina’s words, they were the usual gorillas, and not someone who could fly particularly well.

There was no need to worry; they didn’t look bright enough to tell one end of a broom from another.

However, Crabbe and Goyle continued the Slytherin team’s style as always, that was, robust, far beyond what a Quidditch player should be. They seemed to have given up on technique and fully planned to rely on their bodies to win.

To hell with Beaters, the bats in their hands were for hitting people.

Chapter 997: Weasley is Our King

A few minutes later, the stands were all full, and Hagrid also came to the stands to cheer for Gryffindor.

His inspection results had not yet come out. Although he had prepared for the worst, he still bravely stuck to his teaching plan. In the eyes of others, Umbridge was too bullying, but Hagrid didn't care.

He also persuaded Hermione to calm down. What Umbridge did that day was generally understood by people towards half-giants.

They were still at Hogwarts and were not aware of the overall atmosphere in the wizarding world.

Wizards had a natural distrust for creatures like vampires, werewolves, and half-giants. Incidents of persecution against them occurred frequently, seemingly involving more egregious things. If it weren't for Dumbledore's efforts over the years, the current situation would have been much worse.

Umbridge's behavior was not an individual phenomenon, but represented the ideas of a large group of people.

These wizards might not be as extreme as pure-blood wizards, and they might be friendly and kind in their daily lives, with inherently good natures. However, they still firmly believed that vampires, werewolves, and half-giants should all be locked up in Azkaban. This was the mainstream opinion in the Wizarding world.

Just like their habit of enslaving house-elves, they didn't see anything wrong with it; it was considered normal.

Changing this would not happen overnight; it was very difficult and could only be achieved through appeals from the Minister of Magic or someone with the status of Dumbledore. Gradual change could occur through subtle influences, and these communities themselves needed to make an effort.

Attacks, sacrifices, or biting children were becoming too frequent nowadays, and they seemed to want to make big news. This couldn't be allowed.

However, in reality, it was difficult to stop them from doing such things.

It could only be said that there were good and bad people in every class and population. They should be distinguished and not judged with a single stroke.

For example, Elaine, Lupin, and Hagrid were good people who wouldn't do anything harmful to others.

Although Elaine always said she wanted to drink Evan's blood, she never actually did it.

This poor child didn't even know how to bite people...

Evan and Hermione did not sit with Hagrid, Colin, and Neville, but came to the commentator's side.

Because of the Starcatcher, Lee Jordan wanted to interview them during the game.

Many people were curious about this broom and wanted to know how Evan and the others made it.

Although everyone participated, the main contributors were Evan, Hermione, Ginny, and the house-elf Dobby.

Ginny had to prepare for the game, and Dobby couldn't show up, so only Evan and Hermione were interviewed.

Lee Jordan first introduced the players from both sides, and then changed the subject and started talking about the Gryffindor team's new broom. He was not in a hurry to interview Evan and Hermione, but went through the list, listing the excellent performance of the broom, creating a suspenseful atmosphere.

Some people believed it, others thought he was making things up, but more people were skeptical.

Regardless, everyone was eagerly anticipating the upcoming match.

The same was true when Harry's Firebolt first appeared. Whenever the Firebolt was seen, there was a burst of cheers, but the significance of the Starcatcher was extraordinary. Jordan even said that this was an epoch-making product that could replace the Firebolt.

And more importantly, a crucial point was that the Starcatcher was made by Hogwarts in-school students, which was the biggest selling point.

Five minutes later, amid bursts of cheers, whistles and songs, the Gryffindor and Slytherin teams appeared!

"Captains shake hands," ordered the umpire, Madam Hooch, as Angelina and Montague reached each other.

It was obvious that Montague was trying to crush Angelina's fingers, though she did not wince.

"Alright ... mount your brooms!" Madam Hooch placed her whistle in her mouth and blew hard.

When the kickoff started, fourteen players shot upward, and Ron rode the Starcatcher straight toward the goal hoops.

The performance of the broom was indeed very good. Ron ascended rapidly, leaving a trail in the sky, and confidently stationed himself in front of the hoop.

"Not bad at all, don't you think?" Hermione anxiously watched Ron. "I hope he performs well."

"Okay, everyone, the game has begun!" Jordan started commentating. "Let's watch for Gryffindor's performance with the Starcatcher. And it's Johnson, Johnson with the Quaffle, what a player that girl is. This has nothing to do with the broom. It's entirely her personal skill. I've been saying it for years but she still won't go out with me..."

"JORDAN!" yelled Professor McGonagall.

“Just a fun fact, Professor, adds a bit of interest — and she’s ducked Warrington, she’s passed Montague, she’s — ouch — been hit from behind by a Bludger from Crabbe... Yeah, he doesn’t seem as dumb as he looks, does he?” Jordan shouted. “... Montague catches the Quaffle, Montague heading back up the pitch and — nice Bludger there from George Weasley, that’s a Bludger to the head for Montague; he drops the Quaffle, caught by Katie Bell. Warrington tries to stop her. This time it’s Fred ... he actually grabbed the Bludger again and stopped Warrington, Katie Bell of Gryffindor reverse passes to Alicia Spinnet...”

Lee Jordan’s commentary rang through the stadium, and the superior performance of the Starcatcher was quickly demonstrated by Fred and George.

While Ron didn’t have much to do, Fred and George, with their Starcatchers, had already taken control. Goyle and Crabbe were no match for them in terms of flying skills, batting skills, or cunningness.

Because of the impact design of the Starcatcher, even their physical advantage had completely disappeared.

Fred and George, with the Cleansweep Seven, could already be considered the best Beaters at Hogwarts. Now, with the Starcatcher, they were even more at home, turning the entire Quidditch field into their stage.

Below, waves of cheers from the audience continued, and Jordan kept commenting on their spectacular performance.

However, the Slytherins quickly launched a counterattack. Montague simply asked Goyle and Crabbe to give up on the Bludger, as they couldn’t grab it anyway. Instead, they fully focused on snatching the Quaffle. With their strong bodies, a few hard hits didn’t matter to them. They aimed to attack, forcing the Gryffindor team to defend.

In the stands, the Slytherins also began to sing, drowning out the noise on the field.

“Listen to that sound, what’s that they’re singing?” Jordan said in surprise.

And as Lee paused to listen, the song rose loud and clear from the sea of green and silver in the Slytherin section of the stands:

Weasley cannot save a thing,

He cannot block a single ring,

That’s why Slytherins all sing:

Weasley is our King.

Weasley was born in a bin,

He always lets the Quaffle in,

Weasley will make sure we win,

Weasley is our King.

Chapter 998: Win the game

Bletchley, the Slytherin Keeper, had saved the goal; he threw the Quaffle to Warrington who sped off with it, zigzagging in between Alicia and Katie; the singing from below grew louder and louder as he drew nearer and nearer Ron — *Weasley is our king*.

There were bursts of high-pitched screams and louder and louder singing, and the atmosphere reached its peak.

Weasley is our King,

He always lets the Quaffle in,

Weasley is our King.

At this moment, everyone stopped, even Harry and Malfoy.

Abandoning their search for the Snitch, they turned to look at Ron, where everyone was looking.

At the far end of the pitch, a lone figure was hovering before the three goal hoops while the massive Warrington pelted toward him...

“— and it’s Warrington with the Quaffle, Warrington heading for goal, he’s out of Bludger range with just the Keeper ahead...” Jordan shouted loudly, speaking very fast, “Without teamwork, it won’t succeed, but he seems to be going all-in. This is their only chance, and Slytherin can’t even intercept the Bludger now!”

A great swell of song rose from the Slytherin stands below:

Weasley cannot save a thing,

He cannot block a single ring...

“— so it’s the first test for new Gryffindor Keeper, Weasley, the younger brother of Gryffindor’s legendary captain Charlie Weasley and Beaters Fred and George, and a promising new talent on the team, inheriting a fine Quidditch tradition. Come on, Ron, stop him!”

But a few seconds later, the scream of delight came from the Slytherin end: Ron had dived wildly, his arms wide, and the Quaffle had soared between them, straight through Ron’s central hoop.

“Slytherin score!” came Lee’s voice amid the cheering and booing from the crowds below. “So that’s ten-nil to Slytherin. Ron’s reaction speed is pretty good, but ... bad luck, Ron.”

The Slytherins sang even louder:

WEASLEY WAS BORN IN A BIN,

HE ALWAYS LETS THE QUAFFLE IN...

The singing was now deafening, drowning out all other sounds on the pitch.

Gryffindor also wanted to respond, but they didn’t have a unified slogan, and it was too late for the current organization!

Weasley will make sure we win,

Weasley is our King.

The singing gradually resounded throughout the audience, and even many people from Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw started singing along.

It had to be admitted that this song was quite catchy, especially the part: *Weasley is our king*.

Slytherin fought more bravely; they abandoned the Bludgers and devoted themselves entirely to snatching the Quaffle, grabbing it at all costs.

Angelina, infuriated, screamed loudly across the entire field, urging the team to defend, but in doing so, they lost their balance and fell into Slytherin's rhythm.

Fred's Bludger hit Warrington hard, and he swayed but did not let go of the Quaffle in his hand.

Just like before, he went straight to Gryffindor's goal, the same position, the same actions, and even the surrender of the Quaffle was the same.

Ron stood there staggering, seemingly startled by the opponent, and dodged back.

The next second, there was a terrible groan from the Gryffindor end, coupled with fresh screams and applause from the Slytherins.

Slytherin scored, twenty-nil.

Next, Slytherin's captain, Montague, got hold of the Quaffle, followed by Pucey.

Thirty-nil! Forty-nil!

Their tactics now were ridiculously simple, abandoning control and maneuverability; everyone crowded in front of their own hoops, pouncing forward when they got the Quaffle.

Then fly to Ron, throw the Quaffle, score!

"It's over!" Hermione said painfully, and Ron seemed to have given up resistance or was completely bewildered.

Now, as long as someone from Slytherin came over with a Quaffle, he could easily score.

There was an edge of panic in Harry's desire to find the Snitch now. He just hoped he could just get it soon and finish the game quickly.

WEASLEY WAS BORN IN A BIN,

HE ALWAYS LETS THE QUAFFLE IN,

WEASLEY WILL MAKE SURE WE WIN,

WEASLEY IS OUR KING.

Harry zoomed around the end of the stadium. He dared not look at Ron, only hearing the continuous cheers from the Slytherins below. He also saw the pug-faced Pansy Parkinson conducting the Slytherin supporters who were roaring.

Then, fifty-nil, sixty-nil!

It was really bad. Gryffindor had never been beaten like this before.

Harry suddenly felt that maybe sending Ginny to play would be better than Ron's performance.

He reassured himself continuously, it was just a lead of sixty points, not too much, and there was still a chance.

He had to seize the time; it was up to him now to end this painful game, otherwise they would lose miserably. Harry thought this, and then he finally saw it: The tiny fluttering Golden Snitch was hovering feet from the ground at the Slytherin end of the pitch.

He dived and in a matter of seconds, Malfoy was streaking out of the sky on Harry's left, a green-and-silver blur lying flat on his broom...

The Snitch skirted the foot of one of the goal hoops and scooted off toward the other side of the stands; its change of direction suited Malfoy, who was nearer.

Harry pulled his Firebolt around, he and Malfoy were now neck and neck...

Feet from the ground, Harry lifted his right hand from his broom, stretching toward the Snitch ... to his right, Malfoy's arm extended too, reaching, groping...

Both of them had a chance, and it was over in two breathless, desperate, windswept seconds...

Harry's fingers closed around the tiny, struggling ball — Malfoy's fingernails scrabbled the back of Harry's hand hopelessly — Harry pulled his broom upward, holding the struggling ball in his hand and the Gryffindor spectators finally cheered loudly.

This was the first time they cheered in this game. Fortunately, Harry was there and they won the game.

Harry was also relieved; they were saved!

It did not matter that Ron had let in those goals, nobody would remember as long as Gryffindor had won...

WHAM!

A Bludger hit Harry in the small of the back and he flew forward off his broom; luckily he was only five or six feet above the ground.

Crabbe also got his second Bludger of the game. He and Goyle had been completely suppressed by Fred and George throughout the game, feeling frustrated. However, that didn't matter because they had the lead; but Harry catching the Snitch ended it all.

Gryffindor won, and this result made the Slytherins feel even more aggrieved. They clearly had an overall advantage.

"How could he do that? The game is over!" Hermione shouted angrily, waving her fist at Crabbe.

"Thank goodness, it didn't hit a vital spot; and Madam Hooch has passed!" Evan said angrily as well.

Just as angry as them were all the Gryffindors, and Lee Jordan had already begun to swear!

Harry fell from the sky. He heard Madam Hooch's shrill whistle, an uproar in the stands compounded of catcalls, angry yells and jeering, a thud, then Angelina's frantic voice.

"Are you all right?"

"Of course I am," said Harry grimly, taking her hand and allowing her to pull him to his feet.

"It was that thug, Crabbe," said Angelina angrily. "He whacked the Bludger at you the moment he saw you'd got the Snitch — but we won, Harry, we won! Thanks to you, otherwise, I don't know what we would have done!"

Chapter 999: Give her a few kicks

Just at that moment, Harry heard a snort from behind him and turned around, still holding the Snitch tightly in his hand.

Draco Malfoy had landed close by; white-faced with fury, he was still managing to sneer.

Because of his father's advice, since the beginning of this term, he had been very restrained and low-key compared to before, trying not to bother Evan and Harry, but now he didn't care. Harry catching the Snitch right in front of him infuriated him.

"Saved Weasley's neck, haven't you?" he said to Harry. "I've never seen a worse Keeper ... but then he was born in a bin... Did you like my lyrics, Potter?"

Harry did not answer; he turned away to meet the rest of the team who were now landing one by one, yelling and punching the air in triumph, all except Ron, who had dismounted from his broom over by the goalposts and was making his way slowly back to the changing rooms alone.

"We wanted to write another couple of verses!" Malfoy called persistently, as Katie and Alicia hugged Harry. "But we couldn't find rhymes for fat and ugly — we wanted to sing about his mother, see I..."

"Ignore him, just being sour," said Angelina, casting Malfoy a disgusted look. "Talk about sour grapes!"

"— we couldn't fit in useless loser either — for his father, you know... "

Just then, Fred and George, who had just landed, realized what Malfoy was talking about.

Halfway through shaking Harry's hand they stiffened, looking around at Malfoy.

"Leave it," said Angelina at once, taking Fred by the arm. She knew Fred too well and was afraid that he couldn't help it. "Leave it, Fred, let him yell, he's just sore he lost, the jumped-up little..."

"— but you like the Weasleys, don't you, Potter?" Malfoy continued, sneering, as if he wanted to spew out all the insults he had been holding back the entire semester. "Spend holidays there and everything, don't you? Can't see how you stand the stink, but I suppose when you've been dragged up by Muggles even the Weasleys' hovel smells okay!"

Harry grabbed hold of George; meanwhile it was taking the combined efforts of Angelina, Alicia, and Katie to stop Fred leaping on Malfoy, who was laughing openly.

Harry looked around for Madam Hooch, but she was still berating Crabbe for his illegal Bludger attack.

In the stands, everyone was cheering, and no one paid attention to the conflict that was about to break out here, and Evan and Hermione were nowhere to be seen.

“Or perhaps,” said Malfoy, leering as he backed away, “you can remember what your mother’s house stank like, Potter, and Weasley’s pigsty reminds you of it...”

Harry was not aware of releasing George; all he knew was that a second later both of them were sprinting at Malfoy.

He had completely forgotten the fact that they were still on the Quidditch pitch. All the students in the school were there and all the teachers were watching. All he wanted to do was cause Malfoy as much pain as possible, let him remember this lesson, and make him pay for what he said.

With no time to draw out his wand, Harry merely drew back the fist clutching the Snitch and sank it as hard as he could into Malfoy’s stomach.

“Harry! HARRY! GEORGE! NO!”

Harry could hear girls’ voices screaming, Malfoy yelling, George swearing, a whistle blowing, and the bellowing of the crowd around him, but he did not care.

Someone cast Impedimenta and they were separated, but Harry immediately pounced again.

Immediately, people from the Slytherin team rushed forward, and the entire Quidditch field turned chaotic.

“Oh my God, they’re fighting!” Hermione said in horror, looking at everything in front of her in disbelief.

“Hurry up, let’s go there!” said Evan immediately.

They had just come down from the stands and saw the chaos on the field.

Madam Hooch tried to intervene, but it was futile. Harry, Fred, and George seemed to have gone mad. Malfoy was curled up on the ground, whimpering and moaning, as they ruthlessly attacked and trampled him, leaving him covered in blood and bruises.

After a brief moment of consternation, the Slytherins immediately joined the fight without any hesitation.

Immediately, Harry was roughly pushed down, George was sporting a swollen lip, and Fred was being wrestled by three Chasers, while Crabbe was cackling in the background.

None of them had wands, and the other Gryffindor players were all girls, putting them at a disadvantage.

Fred and George wielded the Starcatchers as a weapon and fought back hard.

The advantage of the big and thick handle of the Starcatcher was fully reflected, and it was particularly painful when it hit someone, but the two brooms were also seriously damaged.

Even so, they were no match for those sturdy Slytherins, and the situation was reversed. No one cared about Madam Hooch anymore. If they waited for the professors on the stands to arrive, Harry, Fred and George would definitely be beaten as badly as Malfoy. At this moment, Evan ran to the edge of the field.

A ray of red light knocked Crabbe, who was chasing Harry, away.

Then, Evan waved his wand sharply, turning it half a circle in the air, pointing at the Slytherin players on the field.

Following his movements, they suddenly turned into rabbits that had shrunk many times, looking around blankly on the grass.

Malfoy was the only one who remained unchanged, and Harry pinned him down again.

“Well done, Evan!” Fred kicked the rabbit transformed from Goyle harshly.

He fled away in terror, but his speed was very slow and his movements were ridiculously funny.

“I want Malfoy to learn a lesson and know what not to say.”

“What are you hesitating for? Hit him hard!”

“Stop, stop, you disgusting fools!” The professors in the stands rushed over. Unexpectedly, the first one to arrive was Umbridge. Holding the very short wand in her hand, she ran over panting, “How dare you do this? Who used the magic, and who transfigured them? This is...”

Evan’s wand pointed directly at her—she was just too annoying! With her status, she dared to enter such a chaotic situation directly; it was almost as if she didn’t value her life.

With a bang, Umbridge’s body turned into a toad and hopped forward twice.

Evan kicked her hard and sent her flying, keeping her away from him.

The toad was placed at George’s feet, and he followed Evan’s lead, forcefully kicking her away, a smug smirk on his face.

Fred came next, and he too gave her a solid stomp.

Umbridge dodged desperately, jumping up and down, panicking, far less confident than she used to be.

Even Hermione followed up and kicked her, it was so satisfying!

The only one who was indifferent to her was Harry. Although he hated Umbridge as well, his main focus now was on Malfoy.

It was truly regrettable; after all, opportunities to step on Umbridge were rare...

Evan was hesitating, should he ask Harry to take a break and join in to give Umbridge a few kicks?!

Chapter 1000: Umbridge's Punishment

They didn't feel complacent for long. Soon, Professor McGonagall and Snape rushed over.

Professor McGonagall merely waved her wand and undid Evan's Transfiguration, but perhaps intentionally, she didn't lift the spell on Umbridge. Instead, like the others, she went up and stomped hard on Umbridge's foot, and Dolores hurriedly retreated.

Then, with Hermione's reminder, and looking as though surprised, she changed her back.

"Dolores, I didn't realize it was you!" Professor McGonagall said with pursed lips. "I thought it was just a toad."

Umbridge's body was in a very messy state, covered with dirt and dust, and her face was green. The tweed cloak was full of footprints, and the whole person's mental state was not very good. After all, she'd been turned into a toad and was trampled and kicked around under the feet of so many people.

Her body was shaking uncontrollably. No matter who it was, no one could accept such a nightmarish experience.

This was simply humiliating. The Senior Undersecretary to the Minister for Magic had probably never dreamed of such an experience in her life.

She panted violently, her chest heaving up and down, and she glared at Evan with resentment.

"Evan Mason, how dare you do this?!"

"Sorry, Professor, I just wanted to stop them from fighting, you know, it was a mistake. You happened to run in, and I hadn't fully mastered this magic. This Transfiguration is too difficult, not something a fourth-year student can handle."

"Yes, this is a level that only NEWTs students can master," Professor McGonagall agreed. "It's not easy for Evan to achieve this now, although it's untimely, I have to give Gryffindor ten points for his performance. As the Transfiguration Professor, I am proud to see lower-level students mastering this magic."

"Minerva, He did it on purpose!" Umbridge said angrily.

"No, you completely misunderstood me, Professor. I just wanted to change you back, but you know, you kept jumping around, and the target was so small, it wasn't easy to aim. I tried several times and didn't succeed."

If Umbridge hadn't been hopping around just now, she might have been trampled to death by them!

Despite this, she was still almost trampled to death. Apart from Malfoy, she was the most seriously injured on the scene.

"Absurd, he should be expelled..."

“I’ve never seen someone punished for stopping a fight. Expulsion is absurd,” Professor McGonagall retorted, then muttered in a low voice, “Who can be blamed for recklessly rushing in?!”

Umbridge was furious and was about to say something when Snape interrupted.

“Now is not the time to worry about Mason’s magic level,” he reminded. “This bad fight...”

“Oh, yes!” Professor McGonagall ignored Umbridge; she turned and looked at Harry, Fred and George and said seriously, “I have never seen behavior like it. Three onto one, it is really a disgraceful exhibition.”

“Malfoy provoked us,” said Harry stiffly.

Malfoy, lying on the ground, tried to respond but only managed a few grunts.

Snape forcefully waved his wand, conjuring a stretcher for the Slytherin students to lift Malfoy onto.

“I look forward to your handling of this matter, Minerva!” he said, glancing at Umbridge and then turned, taking Malfoy and some more seriously injured students back to the castle, not waiting for the resolution of the incident.

Because Umbridge was involved, Snape had no intention of engaging in internal conflicts at the moment.

Of course, he had his own ways; one could imagine Harry’s upcoming grades in Potions...

“Disappointing, Potter! He’d just lost, hadn’t he, of course he wanted to provoke you! Don’t you even understand that? But what on earth he can have said to make you three decide to showcase Muggle-style brawling...”

“He insulted my parents,” snarled George. “And Harry’s mother.”

People around expressed agreement; and many had gathered to figure out what had happened.

Professor McGonagall needed to handle this quickly; she had to give them detention and deduct points.

“All right, I’ve got a rough idea of what happened. You three had better listen closely. I do not care what provocation Malfoy offered you, I do not care if he insulted every family member you possess, your behavior was disgusting and I am giving each of you a week’s worth of detention! Do not look at me like that, Potter, you deserve it! And if either of you ever...”

“*Hem, hem!*”

After a brief loss of composure, Umbridge’s face bore a sinister smile again.

“This punishment is too light, Minerva, I think we need a little extra authority now!” she said in her most poisonously sweet voice.

“I’m sorry; I don’t understand what you mean.” Blood rushed into Professor McGonagall’s face.

“I mean, they deserve rather more than detentions,” said Umbridge.

Professor McGonagall’s eyes flew open. “But unfortunately,” she said, with an attempt at a reciprocal smile that made her look as though she had lockjaw, “it is what I think that counts, as they are in my House, Dolores!”

“But according to the ‘Educational Decree Number Twenty-five,’ I have the authority to modify your punishment suggestions and have the final decision-making power, so what I think does count,” Umbridge said with a smile and glanced at Evan. “I really think I will have to ban these three from playing Quidditch ever again. This sport is not suitable for them.”

“Ban us?” Harry was momentarily stunned, and his voice sounded strangely distant. “From playing Quidditch ever again?!”

“Yes, Mr. Potter, I think a lifelong ban ought to do the trick,” said Umbridge, her smile widening still further. “For the safety of other players, you really shouldn’t be playing Quidditch. In the meantime, I will want your broomsticks confiscated, of course; I shall keep them safely in my office, to make sure there is no infringement of my ban. I heard that these two black broomsticks were made by Mr. Mason, and I recommend banning students from using such privately and illegally assembled brooms because they haven’t been certified by the Ministry of Magic, undoubtedly posing a significant danger. So, you should hand them all over to me, including the ones in your hands.”

“You can’t...”

“I can, this is the authority given to me by the Ministry of Magic,” she turned around and said to Professor McGonagall, who was now standing as still as though carved from ice, staring at her. “The rest of the team can continue playing; I saw no signs of violence from any of them. But Mr. Mason undoubtedly possesses too much magic, much of which far exceeds what he should have learned at his current age, easily leading to accidents, as we just witnessed. While I don’t mind, I think he should surrender his wand until he can learn to control his power.”