

"All right, keep your hair on."

A whistle sounded.

"Hurry up!" their mother said, and the three boys clambered onto the train. They leaned out of the window for her to kiss them good-bye, and their younger sister began to cry.

"Don't, Ginny, we'll send you loads of owls."

"We'll send you a Hogwarts toilet seat."

"George!"

"Only joking, Mom."

The train began to move. Harry saw the boys' mother waving and their sister, half laughing, half crying, running to keep up with the train until it gathered too much speed, then she fell back and waved.

Harry watched the girl and her mother disappear as the train rounded the corner. Houses flashed past the window. Harry felt a great leap of excitement. He didn't know what he was going to — but it had to be better than what he was leaving behind.

The door of the compartment slid open and the youngest red-headed boy came in.

"Anyone sitting there?" he asked, pointing at the seat opposite Harry. "Everywhere else is full."

Harry shook his head and the boy sat down. He glanced at Harry and then looked quickly out of the window, pretending he hadn't looked. Harry saw he still had a black mark on his nose.

"Hey, Ron."

The twins were back.

"Listen, we're going down the middle of the train — Lee Jordan's got a giant tarantula down there."

"Right," mumbled Ron.



HOGWARTS EXPRESS