



When Malfoy had gone, Ron and Harry looked at each other.

"What *is* a wizards duel?" said Harry. "And what do you mean, you're my second?"

"Well, a second's there to take over if you die," said Ron casually, getting started at last on his cold pie. Catching the look on Harry's face, he added quickly, "But people only die in proper duels, you know, with real wizards. The most you and Malfoy'll be able to do is send sparks at each other. Neither of you knows enough magic to do any real damage. I bet he expected you to refuse, anyway."

"And what if I wave my wand and nothing happens?"

"Throw it away and punch him on the nose," Ron suggested.

"Excuse me.

They both looked up. It was Hermione Granger.

"Can't a person eat in peace in this place?" said Ron.

Hermione ignored him and spoke to Harry.

"I couldn't help overhearing what you and Malfoy were saying —

"Bet you could," Ron muttered.

"— and you *mustn't* go wandering around the school at night, think of the points you'll lose Gryffindor if you're caught, and you're bound to be. It's really very selfish of you."

"And it's really none of your business," said Harry.

"Good-bye," said Ron.