

Harry knew, when they wished him good luck outside the locker rooms the next afternoon, that Ron and Hermione were wondering whether they'd ever see him alive again. This wasn't what you'd call comforting. Harry hardly heard a word of Wood's pep talk as he pulled on his Quidditch robes and picked up his Nimbus Two Thousand.

Ron and Hermione, meanwhile, had found a place in the stands next to Neville, who couldn't understand why they looked so grim and worried, or why they had both brought their wands to the match. Little did Harry know that Ron and Hermione had been secretly practicing the Leg-Locker Curse. They'd gotten the idea from Malfoy using it on Neville, and were ready to use it on Snape if he showed any sign of wanting to hurt Harry.

"Now, don't forget, it's *Locomotor Mortis*," Hermione muttered as Ron slipped his wand up his sleeve.

"I *know*," Ron snapped. "Don't nag."

Back in the locker room, Wood had taken Harry aside.

"Don't want to pressure you, Potter, but if we ever need an early capture of the Snitch it's now. Finish the game before Snape can favor Hufflepuff too much."

"The whole school's out there!" said Fred Weasley, peering out of the door. "Even — blimey — Dumbledore's come to watch!"

Harry's heart did a somersault.

"*Dumbledore?*" he said, dashing to the door to make sure. Fred was right. There was no mistaking that silver beard.

Harry could have laughed out loud with relief. He was safe. There was simply no way that Snape would dare to try to hurt him if Dumbledore was watching.

Perhaps that was why Snape was looking so angry as the teams marched onto the field, something that Ron noticed, too.