

Chapter 15

Two days before Harry's birthday, Snape came home from a meeting at the school, eyes filled with fury and magic making the windows rattle. "That foolish, idiotic, reckless, careless—"

"Calm yourself," Remus called, walking over and resting soothing hands on the man's shoulders, tipping his forehead against Snape's for the briefest moment. "What has Albus done now?"

"Not just Albus," the Slytherin snarled. "The whole *sodding* Ministry." Harry shared a glance with Sirius, alarmed.

"What's going on at the Ministry?" he asked. Snape took a deep breath, straightening up.

"The Department of International Magical Cooperation has decided to revive the Triwizard Tournament."

Both Sirius and Remus swore loudly. Remus' empty teacup exploded. Harry stared at them in blank confusion.

"What's the Triwizard Tournament?"

Seeing that Remus was a little preoccupied as Snape continued ranting about dunderheaded buffoons, Sirius turned to his godson. "It's a competition between three magical schools — Hogwarts, Durmstrang and Beauxbatons — that pits a champion from each school against each other in three tasks designed to test their magic, their courage, and their quick thinking."

"That doesn't sound so bad," Harry mused; it actually sounded quite fun. Sirius' face was grave.

"The tournament was discontinued in 1792 due to the exceedingly high death toll of both champions and spectators," he said flatly. Harry's stomach sank.

"Oh."

"Not only are they reviving the tournament, but *of course* Hogwarts is hosting," Snape continued. "As if we didn't have enough to deal with! The school is going to be swarming with foreigners, including bloody *Karkaroff*—"

"Karkaroff?" Sirius barked, head whipping around. "What the hell is he doing there?"

"He's headmaster of Durmstrang now," Snape replied, looking like he'd swallowed a lemon. "They do so enjoy their Dark Arts."

Harry didn't dare ask who Karkaroff was. He didn't think he'd like the answer.

"The students aren't supposed to know, but I'll bet anyone with a parent in the ministry is aware by the time school starts back up," Snape said. "They're limiting entry to only those