

look surprised to see him. The next thing Harry knew, Karkaroff was convinced it was all some sort of plot to have Hogwarts win the tournament, Moody was off into the woods in search of Crouch, and Snape was escorting Harry up to Gryffindor Tower.

Harry didn't dare talk to the Potions Master, not with so many portraits on the walls. Heart still pounding, he followed the man through the corridors, still trying to process the events of the last half hour. "Stay in the tower," Snape instructed once they reached the portrait entrance. "Tell no one what you saw tonight. There's enough trouble as it is without rumours spreading. Perhaps it's best if you go to bed early." He gave Harry a pointed look, making it very clear that while he shouldn't tell any of his fellow students, there were two people who definitely needed to know what had just happened.

"Yes, sir." Harry gave the password and stepped inside the common room, blinking at the number of people still up and about. It felt like it had been hours since he'd gone down to the quidditch pitch, but it wasn't even ten yet.

"Alright, Harry?" Fred called from the sofa by the fire, grinning. "What's the third task, then?"

"It's a maze," Harry replied, trying to keep his voice from shaking. "Big hedge maze, over on the quidditch pitch. I guess they're gonna fill it with creatures and spells and stuff. The Cup'll be in the middle, and whoever gets there first wins."

"Wicked," the twins murmured.

"You okay? You're looking a bit pale." That was Ginny, her brown eyes concerned. Harry forced a smile.

"Yeah, just a long day. Lots to think about. Think I'll just go up to bed."

The three Weasleys were clearly concerned about him, but didn't question it when he went up to his dorm, kicking off his shoes and squirrelling himself away in bed behind heavily warded drapes. He pulled out the mirror, speaking Sirius' name.

"Hiya, pup! What's wrong?" Sirius' grin dropped when he got a proper look at Harry's face, and Remus squeezed in beside him, looking worried.

Harry told them all about Crouch and Viktor, watching them grow graver and graver. When he was finished, Sirius swore.

"This just gets better and better," he muttered.

"I don't understand," Harry said helplessly. "How does Crouch know Voldemort's getting stronger? And why did he keep talking about his son? Who is his son, anyway?"

"Crouch's son was a convicted Death Eater," Remus explained patiently. "Sent to Azkaban at the end of the first war by Crouch himself. He died, about a year or so in; couldn't handle the dementors, I suppose."