

Several familiar faces stopped in on them throughout the journey, and with each one Ron's retelling of the events of the Quidditch World Cup got more and more elaborate. While he gave Neville a fairly accurate recount, by the time Seamus and Dean reached them he was describing their narrow escape from a pack of Death Eaters, who apparently almost hexed him several times. Harry and Hermione merely shared an exasperated glance.

At one point, they managed to turn the conversation to the match itself rather than the chaos after it, Neville listening enviously as Harry and Ron described it all.

"Gran didn't want to go," Neville said miserably. "She's not into quidditch. It sounds amazing, though."

Ron jumped up to rifle through his trunk, pulling out his little figure of Viktor Krum. "Look at this! We saw him right up close, too. We were up in the top box—"

"For the first and last time in your life, Weasley." The familiar drawl made Harry's head snap up, and he was glad for his darker skin when he felt his cheeks heat ever so slightly. Draco's hair was a little longer than it had been at the Cup, falling into his silver-grey eyes. He looked good. Behind him were Crabbe and Goyle, looking appropriately menacing.

"Don't remember asking you to join us, Malfoy," Harry said coolly, hoping to head off any truly explosive argument before Ron could get a word in. They all had their roles to play, of course, but he didn't want to get into a fight before the term even began.

Sadly, it was not to be. As much as Draco and Harry were friends now, the same couldn't be said for him and Ron, and Draco took any chance to taunt the redhead. "Weasley, what is *that*?"

A sleeve of Ron's dress robes was sticking out of his trunk, obviously dislodged when Ron had grabbed the Krum figurine. It was swaying with the motion of the train, the lace cuff very obvious. Ron made to shove it out of sight, but Draco was too quick, and soon he was holding the robes out in front of him.

"Good Merlin!" he exclaimed. "Weasley, you weren't thinking about *wearing* these, were you?" He looked them over in consideration. "I'm sure they were the height of fashion in, oh, about 1890..." he trailed off with a laugh, Crabbe and Goyle laughing right along with him. Ron's face was burning bright red. Harry tried to bring himself to be offended on his friend's behalf, but he just couldn't do it; the robes *were* awful. Ron should've just taken Bill's old ones, pink or no pink.

"Shove off, Malfoy," Ron scowled, snatching the robes back and tossing them into the corner of the compartment. Even Neville was eyeing them with a grimace.

"Maybe you should think about entering. There's money involved, you know; you'd be able to buy some decent robes then." Harry knew that Draco knew underage wizards wouldn't be able to enter; he was just trying to get a rise out of the redhead. The Slytherin laughed at Ron's confusion. "You mean you don't know?" He chanced a look at Harry, who shook his head slightly. Draco's smirk widened. "Oh, that's just *precious*! My father told me ages ago. I suppose yours just isn't senior enough to have been told about it."