"Look, forgive me if this sounds crazy, but even when all four of us knew what was happening we still almost died a few times," Cedric said. "I know it's supposed to be a competition and all, but… I like you. I don't want to see any of you dead. So call me a Hufflepuff if you will, but I say we should stick together on this. The competition is supposed to be about international cooperation, right? I'm not saying we need to work on our solutions together, but we could at least keep each other updated about the clues, and offer help if needed. The people running this tournament are insane. They sent a fourteen year-old alone against a full-grown *nesting mother dragon*."

"You haff a point, Diggory," Krum said slowly. "'ve all knew, and yet 've all came up vith different solutions. Perhaps if ve vork together, ve can survive this and still put on a show."

"I'm Cedric," Cedric said, holding out a hand. "To my friends, at least."

Krum eyed him for a minute, then shook it firmly. "Then I am Viktor, to all of you."

"So we're doing this, then?" Harry confirmed. "Together? Fuck what the judges say about competition?"

"Zey broke ze rules by making you compete," Fleur agreed, determination in her eyes. "We can break ze rules by 'elping each uzzer survive eet."

"That's settled, then," Cedric said, looking relieved. "We should all get back, I'm sure there's lots of celebrating to be done. But… meet in a week or so to see how everyone's doing on the egg?"

They agreed and parted ways, Harry and Cedric walking up to the castle together.

"That could've gone poorly," Harry commented. Cedric shrugged.

"They're reasonable people, and I don't think any of us expected the tasks to be quite that serious. Not when they said they'd changed things to try and lower the death toll. Any one of us could've been fried to a crisp today. It's like Fleur said; they want us to play by the rules, but we haven't been since your name came out of the Goblet. If we're all helping each other, we're all on the same level; if I win, I'd much rather I did so fairly, and made friends out of the whole thing." He paused, realising how that sounded. "Merlin, I'm *such* a Hufflepuff."

Harry laughed. "Yeah, but it's alright. We can't all be reckless Gryffindors." He winked, starting up the stairs. "Have a good night, Cedric."

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As expected, a party was raging in Gryffindor Tower. Harry made a good effort to get in the spirit of it, but after the adrenaline rush of flying against a dragon, he mostly just wanted to sleep.

"That was amazing!" the twins exclaimed, letting him down off their shoulders after a victory lap of the common room. "So wicked!"

"It really was brilliant, Harry," Neville agreed, beaming. Harry grinned.