

“Really, I think you’re all just getting a little worked up,” Skeeter said. “Harry, dear, it’ll only take a moment, we’ll just pop into the other room for some privacy, just a couple of questions.” The ‘other room’ she pointed at was a storage cupboard.

“Vat part of no are you not understanding?” Viktor Krum joined the fray now, staring down his hooked nose at Skeeter, eyes cold.

“I’m not going anywhere alone with you,” Harry declared firmly. “And I refuse to be interviewed unless it’s all of us. I shouldn’t be here, anyway. I’m not a real champion.” He squared his shoulders in a way that made the ‘*Support Cedric Diggory*’ badge even more obvious.

Skeeter opened her mouth to argue, but the door opened, and Dumbledore walked in followed by the other two heads, Mr Crouch, and Mr Ollivander. Dumbledore surveyed the situation curiously; all three of-age champions stood between Rita Skeeter and Harry, glaring at the blonde woman. “Is there a problem?”

“I was hoping to get a quick interview with Harry here, but it seems the poor dear’s being a little shy,” Rita cooed, squeezing past Cedric to rest a hand on Harry’s shoulder, her talons digging into his robes. He shook her off.

“Please don’t touch me,” he muttered.

“Well, it’s time for the Wand Weighing ceremony, but I’m sure you’ll have plenty of time to interview Mr Potter afterwards.” Dumbledore’s response was cheerful. Harry grimaced.

The five judges took the chairs behind the velvet-covered desks, while the four champions took seats on the other side. Cedric looked down at Harry and grinned. “Nice badge, Potter.”

“I thought so,” Harry replied with a wink.

Ollivander was introduced, and the Wand Weighing itself was a fairly painless process. The old man’s eyes lit up when he saw Harry flick his wand out of its holster, handing it over. Harry mentally begged him not to say anything about the wand’s... interesting history. Luckily, all the man did was describe it, looking it over carefully. He took far longer than any of the others. A stab of horror caught Harry unexpectedly — what if there was a curse on his wand, like there had been on his person?

No, surely Dumbledore wouldn’t allow the ceremony to go ahead if he knew there was something wrong with Harry’s wand, something Ollivander would pick up on. Eventually, the old wandmaker shot a fountain of wine into a conjured glass. “Very good, very good. All four wands are in perfect condition,” he announced. “The champions may proceed.”

“Excellent,” Dumbledore said, getting to his feet. “Thank you all for coming, you are now free to leave.”

“Not so fast, Dumbledore!” Bagman called, hopping out of his seat. “Ms Skeeter here would like some photos to go with her article!”