

Harry led the way up the stairs, going over his mental checklist to be sure there was room in Gryffindor. “We’ll have to catch Fleur at dinner tonight, if she’s not too busy with wedding stuff,” he mused. “Cho’s around too, somewhere. We can have a proper little reunion.” His voice was sad; Cedric should have been there, preparing to fight with them. He would have loved to see everyone coming together again.

“We will raise a glass in Cedric’s honour,” Viktor suggested quietly, smile dimming at the corners.

“Yeah. I’d like that.”

Harry was glad, in a way, that Viktor had returned — this war had begun in the tournament, with the resurrection of Voldemort, the manipulation of the four champions. It was right that they be together again to end it.

“There are more waiting, at Durmstrang,” Viktor told him. “Word of your war has spread; many of your people have turned to Europe, as you know. We did not know if reinforcements were needed, but — you haff allies, should you need them.”

“That’s... that’s good to know. Thanks.” Harry wasn’t sure if there would be time, when the battle came, but he wouldn’t turn his nose up at more help.

And it would be good to have people in other countries ready to receive people, if the worst came to pass.

“However, I do also come bearing better news,” Viktor said, brightening up a little. “Let us call it an incentive for you to win this battle quickly.” Harry raised a curious eyebrow. “I was talking to a friend, the other day. A player for the Vratsa Vultures, but English. He knows the manager for the English national team, and mentioned to me that they have begun preparing for the World Cup next summer.”

Harry’s heart stuttered, and he stopped in his tracks. Viktor grinned at him. “You have a tryout for seeker, on August 23rd. If such things are possible by then.” He gripped Harry by the shoulders, pressing their foreheads together for a brief moment. “So survive this war, Harry Potter, so I can face you on the pitch once more and reclaim my pride. Yes?”

“You’re serious?” Harry asked incredulously. Viktor nodded. “Hell. I— that doesn’t give me much time, if I get injured in the fight.”

“Then do not get injured,” Viktor challenged, smirking. A snort escaped Harry.

“I’ll try my best.”

Seeker tryouts, for the England team. Draco was going to *lose his mind*. “I— don’t tell anyone, yeah?” He didn’t want that kind of pressure on top of everything else.

He didn’t want people mourning one more thing if he wasn’t there to make it happen.

Viktor mimed zipping his lips shut. “Our secret,” he promised.