

Chapter 7: The Champions

Ginny practically tackled Harry as he headed out of the common room. "Hey Ginny."

"Look!" Ginny said happily handing him the camera. "I got some film for the camera."

"That's great! When did you get it?"

"An hour ago, I had mum send it to me." Harry pulled Ginny in front of him and held the camera up quickly snapping the picture. "Harry! Stop doing that!"

Harry laughed and handed her the camera. "Alright I won't do it again. Come on we better get to dinner." In the hall they found Ron and Hermione waiting for them. After eating a very delicious meal the golden plates.

"Well, the goblet is almost ready. When you are chosen please come to the front of the hall and proceed down the passageway before you."

Ginny squeezed Harry's hand in silent anticipation. Everyone waited nervously for the goblet to make its choice. Suddenly the goblet began to shine more brightly than anything in the hall. The sparkling bright, blue-whiteness of the flames almost painful to watch. The flames inside the goblet turned suddenly red again. The next moment, a tongue of flame shot into the air, a charred piece of parchment fluttered out of it. Ginny's hand tightened as the parchment came forward.

Dumbledore caught the piece of parchment and held it at arm's length. "The champion for Durmstrang will be Viktor Krum!"

"Not surprising," both Ginny and Ron said at once. Viktor Krum rose from where he had sat and headed up to the staff table where he then turned and disappeared through the door into the next chamber.

The clapping died away as everyone's attention was turned to the goblet as the flames turned red again.

"The champion of Beauxbaton is Fleur Delacour!"

"Its her!" Ron shouted as he looked at the girl with silvery blonde hair.

When Fleur had vanished the whole school waited to see who their Hogwarts champion would be. The flames turned red again as a piece of parchment shot out of goblet. "The Hogwarts champion is Cedric Diggory!" The whole hall burst into cheers and applause as Cedric headed up to the table and disappeared. "Excellent! I am sure the rest of the Durmstrang and Beauxbatons' students will be staying to watch the rest of the tournament. By being here to support our champions we will-"

Suddenly Dumbledore stopped what he was saying and everyone turned to look at the goblet, which had turned red once more. A long flame shot suddenly into the air and a piece of parchment fluttered down towards the ground. Dumbledore quickly snatched the piece of parchment. He read the paper and then cleared his throat. "Harry Potter!"

Harry turned instantly to Ginny who had almost broken his hand at the sound of his name. Her eyes had gone wide with fear and anger. There was no applause at all. "I didn't I swear," he whispered to her as he got to his feet. He turned and headed up to the table. Harry saw the whole Gryffindor table all watching him open-mouthed. As he reached Dumbledore he lowered his head. "As it is, through the door Harry."

He went through the door out of the Great Hall and found himself in a smaller room lined with paintings. The portraits all turned to face him as he entered the room. Viktor Krum, Cedric Diggory, and Fleur Delacour were grouped around the fire. Fleur looked up when Harry entered.

"What is it?" She asked. "Do zey want us back in ze Hall?"

Before Harry could reply Bagman had his arm and was pulling him forward. "Extraordinary! May I introduce you all to the *fourth* Triwizard champion?"

They all straightened up suddenly but Harry avoided their gaze. "Oh, vairy funny joke, Meester Bagman."

"Joke? No, no, not at all his name just came out of the Goblet of Fire!"

"But evidently zair 'as been a mistake. 'E cannot compete, 'E is too young."

"I am sorry to say that his name did come out of the goblet and he is now in the tournament.

The door behind them opened again and a large group of people came in: Professor Dumbledore, Professor McGonagall, Madam Maxime, Professor Karkaroff, Mr. Crouch, and Professor Snape.

"Madame Maxime! Zey are saying zat ziz little boy is to compete also!" Fleur cried as she strode over to her headmistress.

"What is ze meaning of zis, Dumbly-dorr?"

"I would also like to know," Professor Karkaroff said. "*Two* Hogwarts champions? I don't remember anyone saying the host school could have two!"

"C'est impossible! 'Ogwarts cannot 'ave two champions. It is most unjust."

"Your Age Line should have kept the younger students out Dumbledore."

Dumbledore raised his hands silencing all of them. "Did you put your name into the Goblet of Fire, Harry?"

"No."

"Did you ask an older student to put it into the goblet?"

"No," Harry shot back.

"He could not have crossed the Age Line," McGonagall put in.

"It is possible, of course, that I made a mistake."

"Dumbledore you know perfectly well that you did not make a mistake!" Professor McGonagall cried annoyed. "Harry could not have crossed the line himself and I doubt he did not persuade an older student to do it."

"We must follow the rules and the rules clearly state that those people chosen by the goblet are bound to compete in the tournament," Mr. Crouch said slowly.

"That is not fair!" Professor Karkaroff said. "I insist that we be allowed to put more names in."

"It doesn't work like that Karkaroff, it won't reignite until the start of the next tournament."

"Enough!" Dumbledore cried. "There is nothing left we can do. What's done is done and that is the end of it! Cedric, Harry, I believe your houses are waiting to celebrate. We all need a nights rest."

Cedric and Harry nodded and headed out of the room. "Looks like we are competing together."

"Sure looks like it."

"So how did you get your name in?"

"I didn't put my name in that cup," Harry shot back.

"Alright, night Harry." Cedric said as they headed off in their own directions. He wasn't far away when he came face-to-face with Ginny. They both gazed at each other. Harry could see a look of pain in her eyes as well as blazing fury.

"Y-you p-p-promised me!" Ginny said her voice shaking with anger.

"I didn't break my promise! I didn't put my name in that cup I swear it!" Harry pleaded taking a step towards her. "I don't want to be in this competition! Ginny please you have to believe me!" Harry begged as he moved to stand in front of her.

"Then who did Harry? Who put your name in the cup?"

"I don't know but I think someone is out to kill me," Harry mumbled.

"I'm sorry," she said before hugging him tightly. Harry held her tightly hiding his face in her hair.

"No one is going to believe me. How am I going to explain this to Ron? Hermione will understand but not Ron," he mumbled in her hair.

"Ron will come to understand everything in time. I knew this was going to happen to you. If only I could have stopped it." Ginny whispered.

"There wasn't anything you could do Gin."

"I could have at least tried *something*, it wouldn't have been that hard. I just can never tell what is exactly going to happen to you."

"As long as I get some sort of warning I really don't mind." He nuzzled her neck and Ginny couldn't help but smile. She snuggled closer to his chest and he held her closer. "He's going to be furious with me."

"He shouldn't, you didn't do this on purpose."

In the common room everyone was celebrating, everyone that is except for Ron. The two fought just before Harry dozed off into sleep.

The next few days was pure torture for Harry. Harry spent much of his time with Ginny and Hermione, since Ron didn't talk to them. After a nasty battle between Malfoy's group and his. Harry and Ron got detention. Bagman then called him out of class to have his wand checked and photos taken. When he returned to his room he had received a letter from Sirius. Detention with Snape was almost just as bad as he thought it would be.