

## Chapter 7

The morning of the first task, Harry, Fleur, and Hermione were having breakfast when Professor McGonagall approached them.

“Mr. Potter, Ms. Delacour,” she said. “If you’ll come with me?”

“But, professor, I thought the task wasn’t until tonight,” Harry said worriedly.

“Indeed it is,” Professor McGonagall said.

Breathing out a sigh of relief, Harry looked over at Fleur, who shrugged. Standing up, they followed McGonagall over to the Slytherin table, where she called over Krum.

“Vhat is dis about?” he asked.

“Professor Dumbledore has arranged for a surprised for the Champions before the first task,” McGonagall said. “Now, if you’ll follow me.”

Professor McGonagall led them over to the side of the Great Hall and through the door to the antechamber. Inside, Apolline was talking to a dark haired, bearded wizard and a thin, dark hair witch while Gabrielle looked around curiously.

“Arry!” Gabrielle yelled excitedly.

Taking off at a sprint, she hugged him around the stomach and smiled up at him. She started speaking rapidly in French, leaving him to look helplessly over at Fleur. Giggling, Fleur knelt down next to her sister and spoke to her. Smiling sheepishly, Gabrielle let go of him and hugged her sister.

As Krum walked over to what Harry presumed were his parents, Apolline walked over and hugged Harry softly.

"It's good to see you again, 'Arry," she said.

"You too," Harry replied.

Letting go of him, she turned to Fleur and hugged her as well.

"I'm so glad you're 'ere," Fleur said, smiling at her mother.

"Mr. Potter," McGonagall said. "Professor Dumbledore invited your family, but they couldn't make it."

"That's alright," Harry shrugged. "It's probably for the best."

McGonagall's lips thinned unhappily as she nodded.

"Then you'll just 'ave to spend the day with us," Apolline said firmly as a smile came over her face. "It seems we'll be a lot of each other, non?"

"Oui," Fleur smiled while Harry blushed.

"I certainly hope so," he said.

Taking Harry's hand, Gabrielle looked up at him and asked something in French.

"She wasn't to know if you can show us around the castle," Apolline translated.

"Of course," Harry said. "How about a tour?"

When Apolline translated what he said for Gabrielle, she rushed over to him excitedly and pulled him out of the room. Laughing, Apolline and Fleur followed after him.

"Aunt Apolline!" Aurora exclaimed happily.

"Hello, Aurora," Apolline smiled, hugging her niece.

"What are you doing here?" Aurora asked.

"Professor Dumbledore invited us to spend the day with Fleur and 'Arry before the first task," Apolline said. "'Arry is going to show us around the castle. Do you want to come with us?"

"Sure!" Aurora said. "Can Hermione and Nadine come?"

"Of course," Apolline smiled.

"Your English has gotten a lot better since the last time we met," Hermione said.

It took Harry a moment to realize he hadn't actually heard Apolline speak in English when he met her at the World Cup.

"With Fleur staying in England, and being so close to Harry, I thought it would be good to learn," Apolline said, smiling at Hermione.

"You learned fast," Hermione noted.

“There are spells that can help,” Apolline said.

“Really?” Harry asked.

“Oui, but they are usually controlled by the Ministry,” Apolline said.

“You could ask Professor Dumbledore,” Hermione told him.

“Yeah,” Harry said, nodding.

Smiling softly, Fleur took his hand in hers and kissed his cheek. The joy of him wanting to learn her native language was so palpable that her Allure began affecting the boys around her.

“Why don’t we start that tour,” Harry said, noticing the leering looks directed at his girlfriend.

Gabrielle took his hand as he led them out into the Entrance Hall and turned left toward the Grand Staircase.

“Apolline, do you know why Harry isn’t affected by Veela as much as the other boys?” Hermione asked.

“Some wizards are too mentally strong for the Allure to affect them,” Apolline said. “Normally, you see this in older wizards who are very in tune with their magic or deeply in love with someone else. It’s a bit unusual for a wizard of Harry’s age to be so resistant.”

“Harry does ‘ave better control of ‘is magic zhan most,” Fleur said.

“He does have an instinctual grasp of magic, even if he doesn’t always understand the theory behind it,” Hermione agreed before she looked at Harry with a playful glare. “Thatt’s really annoying, by the way. Most of us need to understand *how* a spell works before we can cast them, and you just do it.”

“Sorry,” Harry shrugged with a smirk.

Hermione huffed while Nadine giggled and patted her on the back.

For the next couple of hours, Harry showed Apolline and Gabrielle the sights around Hogwarts. Gabrielle was fascinated by the moving portraits, shifting staircases, and all the magic happening in the background. Harry smiled, at her, remembering his own sense of wonder the first time he walked around the castle.

When it was time for lunch, Harry decided to take them to the Kitchens to get a basket to take outside. The sun was shining, but the air was still crisp and chilly. As they sat around Harry’s favorite tree and Apolline conjured a blanket, Fleur shivered and leaned against him for warmth.

“There is such a thing as Warming Charming,” Aurora smirked.

“Oui, but zhen I don’t ‘ave an excuse to cuddle wiz ‘Arry,” Fleur said to laughter.

“I’m glad to see you so happy,” Apolline smiled. “It took me years to find your father.”

“Is Mr. Delacour at work?” Hermione asked.

“Non,” Apolline said, smiling sadly. “Jean passed away shortly after Gabrielle was born.”

“Oh! I’m so sorry,” Hermione said apologetically.

"It's alright, you didn't know," Apolline said.

With his arm wrapped around Fleur, Harry rubbed her arm and kissed the top of her head. Looking for a way to get the conversation going again, he took a piece of bread and handed it to Gabrielle.

"Throw this as far as you can out into the lake," he told her.

Apolline looked at him curiously but translated for him anyways. Gabrielle furrowed her brow cutely before she stood up and heaved the bread into the lake. A few seconds later, she gasped delightedly when the giant squid's tentacles broke the surface and pulled it down under the water.

Gabrielle asked something that caused Apolline to shake her head and the girls to burst out laughing.

"What?" Harry asked curiously.

"She wants to go swimming with it," Aurora replied with a giggle.

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Harry had a great time spending the day with Apolline and Gabrielle, but as the day grew later, he steadily grew quieter and more nervous. Neither he nor Fleur touched much of their dinner. The girls tried to distract them by telling amusing stories and jokes, but it did little to soothe their growing nerves.

"Mr. Potter, Ms. Delacour," Professor McGonagall said. "It's time."

Nodding, Harry set down his fork and stood.

“Good luck,” Hermione said.

“I’m confident both of you will perform wonderfully,” Apolline said.

Gabrielle rushed over and gave both of them a tight hug. Forcing a smile on his face, Harry patted her shoulder. With a wave, he turned and took Fleur’s hand in his as they followed McGonagall out of the hall where Krum was already waiting for them. With a silent nod, he followed them outside.

Out on the front lawn, the ziggurat loomed ominously in the sun’s dying light. Torches flickered around the outside, casting sharp, moving shadows on the dark grey stone. Since the week before, stands had been erected around the ziggurat, along with blue and white striped tents near the entrance. Ministry workers rushed around the stone structure, levitating massive white banners that floated between the stands and the ziggurat.

“What are zhose?” Fleur asked, pointing to the banners.

“The banners are charmed so the audience can see what’s happening inside,” McGonagall said.

“Great,” Harry murmured.

“You’ll do fine, mon amour,” Fleur whispered, squeezing his hand. “We ‘ave trained for zhis.”

“I just hope it’s enough,” Harry whispered back.

Before she could reply, they reached one of the tents, and Professor McGonagall pulled the flap aside. Inside, Crouch, Bagman, and the school head were waiting for them.

“Welcome!” Bagman said boisterously. “Please, make yourselves at home.”

Harry, Fleur, and Krum remained standing.

“Mr. Crouch, if you would give out the instructions,” Professor Dumbledore said, his lips twitching under his beard.

“Yes,” Crouch said. “Your task is to make your way through the temple and collect a scroll that will give you a clue to the second task. Should you fail, it is still possible to complete the second task. However, it will be much more difficult. Inside the temple, you will face a variety of traps, enchantments, and beasts blocking your way. We have safety measures in place to prevent serious injury or death, but I warn you to remain on your guard at all times.

“Before you arrived, we randomly selected in which order you will compete. First will be Mr. Krum, followed by Ms. Delacour, and lastly, Mr. Potter. When your name is called, you will proceed out of the tent and into the temple. Once you have completed the task, Professor Flitwick will meet you at the exit and give you further instructions. Any questions.”

“How will we be scored?” Krum asked.

“Scores will be based on the time taken to complete the task, as well as your overall performance,” Professor Dumbledore said. “While difficult magic can increase your score, so can simple solutions to difficult problems.”

Krum nodded and crossed his arms over his chest.

“If there are no other questions, we’ll leave you to prepare,” Mr. Crouch said. “Good luck to all of you.”

As soon as the judges left the tent, Fleur grabbed Harry by the hand and led him over to the couch. Pushing him down into the seat, she plopped down next to him and curled up against his side. Krum smirked at him and gave an amused grunt before turning away and beginning to pace back and forth.

It felt like hours, but in reality, it was probably only minutes until they heard the rumble of feet as the crowd took their seats. Not long after, they heard the sound of Bagman's voice booming out.

"Witches and wizards, welcome to the first task of the Triwizard Tournament!" he announced to a roaring cheer. "Tonight, your Champions will be tested to see who can make it through this cursed temple. Inside sits a scroll that will give them a clue to the second task. They will need to show their power, their finesse, and their cunning to make it through. First up will be Viktor Krum of Durmstrang!"

The Durmstrang contingent let out a deep, rumbling yell mixed with the sound of stomping feet.

"Second will be the lovely - the talented - Ms. Fleur Delacour of Beauxbatons!"

Fleur's classmates cheered loudly, notably higher in pitch.

"And last, but certainly not least, we have Hogwarts' very own – the Boy-Who-Lived – Harry James Potter!"

Harry's leg began to bounce nervously as his classmates cheered for him.

"Without further ado, Mr. Krum will begin at the sound of the cannon,"

"Good luck," Harry said as Krum stepped in front of the exit of the tent.

Turning to Harry, Krum nodded just as the cannon sounded. Standing tall and straight, wand in hand, he walked outside to thunderous applause.

"I really wish I could've gone first," Harry sighed.

Fleur smiled and kissed him on the cheek.

"I know," she said. "Zhe waiting is 'orrible. I'm glad you're 'ere to keep me calm."

"Me too," Harry said, kissing the top of her head.

"Ow do you feel about making a bet?" Fleur asked, her eyes sparkling mischievously.

"What kind of bet?" Harry asked curiously.

"Zhe loser 'as to do anyzhing the winner wants tonight," Fleur purred seductively into his ear, sending a shiver down his spine.

"That would be really awkward if Krum won," Harry joked.

Fleur slapped his chest lightly, a smile tugging at her lips, "You know what I mean."

"I know," Harry grinned. "Alright, you've got yourself a bet."

Running his hand up and down her back, Harry leaned back and listened to Bagman's commentary.

"Krum is starting out cautiously. Hopefully, that won't cost him too much time," he said.

"Ow long do you zhink the task will take?" Fleur asked, lifting her head from his shoulder.

Harry shrugged, "I don't know. A little while at least, if they want to make a show out of this. Why?"

Fleur bit her lip with an indecisive look before suddenly sliding off the couch and onto her knees.

"Fleur!" Harry gasped as she reached for his belt. "What are you doing?"

"It will 'elp me relax," she said, looking up at him pleadingly.

Harry looked at her for a moment before sighing.

"If we get caught, I'm telling them you seduced me," he said.

Smiling, Fleur opened his pants and pulled out his length. In only a few strokes, he was rock hard in her grasp. Turning her head sideways, she gave an open-mouthed kiss to the side of his shaft near the base. Slowly making her way up to the tip, she stared up at him with her bright blue eyes as she wrapped her lips around his head. Groaning, Harry ran his fingers through her silvery blonde hair as she began bobbing her head.

Fleur didn't seem to be in any rush to finish him off as she practically worshiped his length. It amazed Harry that this goddess genuinely enjoyed sucking his cock. String up at him with sparkling eyes, she lavished him with her head, sucking as she bobbed her head sensually. It was like she wanted to savor every moment that she could.

As Harry caressed her cheek, Fleur closed her eyes and moaned, her mouth vibrating pleasantly around him. Letting go of his shaft, she placed her hands on his thighs and gripped them firmly. A moment later, her lips, stretched wide by his girth, descended. Harry hissed when he hit the back of her mouth and then continued into her throat. With her nose pressed against his pelvis, she swallowed around him. The pleasure caused Harry's hips to flex upwards involuntarily.

Fleur looked up at him with a smirk in her eyes and swallowed again.

“Shit,” Harry breathed.

He groaned when she chuckled, sending delicious vibrations along his length. Pulling back slowly, she sucked hard all the way up to the tip, where she took a deep breath.

“Krum looks a bit battered after that, but he appears to be able to continue,” Bagman’s voice carried into the tent.

“As much as I’m enjoying this, it looks like you might need to hurry up,” Harry said.

Fleur pouted, “But I’m ‘aving so much fun.”

Before Harry could respond, Fleur took him back into her mouth. This time, she didn’t hold back. She drove her head down repeatedly, swallowing the entirety of his length over and over again. Wet, noisy squelching left her mouth, but not a single gag. Even as saliva leaked from her lips and ran down his shaft, she showed absolutely no difficulty in taking his shaft.

Gripping his thighs, she pushed her head down all the way and shook her head from side to side, her eyes gazing up at him lustfully. Swallowing around him, she grabbed his hips and gave them a tug. Realizing what she wanted, Harry gripped her head in his hands and began flexing his hips. Groaning loudly, he relaxed his grip for a moment so she could pull back for air before swallowing him again.

Bucking his hips gently back and forth, he stared down at her gorgeous face. Under her chin, he could see her neck bulging where his length filled her throat. As much as Harry wanted to prolong this incredible feeling, he knew they didn’t have the time. His shaft pulsed in Fleur’s mouth as he neared his peak.

Pulling back, she opened her mouth and stuck out her tongue while stroking his shaft furiously. With a groan, Harry came, a thick layer of cum shooting out of his tip and coating her tongue. Before he could pulse for a second time, Fleur dove down and swallowed him again, allowing him to erupt straight down his throat.

“Fuck,” Harry groaned, gripping her head and bucking his hips.

Moaning sensually, Fleur pulled back when he’d finished. Pulling off the tip, she opened her mouth to show him the cum that was still on her tongue. Closing her mouth, she moaned again as she swallowed with a smirk.

“Bloody hell,” Harry panted.

Giggling, Fleur cleaned him up with her wand and tucked him back into his pants. Standing up, she kissed him on the lips. With a cheeky smile on his lips, Harry slid his hands up her side and cupped her breasts. Unfortunately, she was wearing thick dueling robes. Giggling, she turned sideways and sat down in his lap.

“And Krum has done it!” Bagman shouted. “What a performance! The other two Champions have their work cut out for them if they want to top that!”

Standing up, Fleur straightened her robes and tied her hair back into a ponytail.

“Wish me luck?” she asked.

Smiling, Harry stood up and rested his hands on her hips.

“You don’t need it, but good luck,” Harry said.

Smiling nervously, Fleur hugged him tightly, her face buried in the crook of his neck.

"Ms. Delacour, you may begin at the sound of the cannon," Bagman said.

"Promise me you'll be safe," Harry whispered.

Pulling back slightly, Fleur smiled at him softly.

"I promise," she said.

She'd just pressed her lips to his when the cannon sounded. Breaking the kiss, she took a deep breath and walked to the exit of the tent. Turning back, she gave him one last smile before walking out to a thunderous cheer.

Sighing, Harry ran a hand through his hair and began to pace. The wait was agonizing as he only had Bagman's vague commentary to listen to. Besides the occasional, "That was a close one" and "Brilliant move there, pity it didn't work," he could only imagine what she was going through.

It was several minutes later that the crowd burst into applause again.

"And Ms. Delacour has done it!" Bagman shouted, causing Harry's shoulder to slump in relief. "An extraordinary display! We'll certainly have a hard time judging this competition."

Knowing he was next, Harry felt a ball of dread settle in his stomach like a lead weight as she stood in front of the exit, shifting anxiously from foot to foot.

"Now, it's time to see how our youngest Champion holds up," Bagman said. "Mr. Potter, you may enter at the sound of the cannon."

Harry barely had time to take a calming breath before the cannon sounded. Gripping his wand tightly, he forced his feet to take him forward. There was an explosion of cheers as he stepped out into the cold night air. He could see his breath fogging the air in front of him as he followed the stone, torch lit path to the doors of the temple.

Even though he was still at Hogwarts, he felt like he'd stepped into another world. His heart pounded loudly in his ears as the heavy, bronze double doors to the temple swung open at his approach. The entrance chamber was a square stone room with a single bronze door at the end. Shadows danced across the floor from the flickering torches along the wall.

Stepping inside, Harry gripped his wand tightly, his eyes darting around the room. The sound of a squeak had him turning around to watch as the doors to the entrance closed with an echoing boom.

Harry spun back around and cast a few of the Detection Charms he'd learned over the last few weeks. The only thing that showed any signs of magic was the door at the end of the room. As a precaution, he also cast what they'd come to call the See-Through Charm to check for physical traps as he slowly made his way across the room.

It was a good thing he did because the stone floor in front of the door was rigged as some sort of pressure plate. Being careful not to step on it, he leaned over to push the door open. It swung open to reveal a pitch black, narrow hall.

Harry lifted his wand to light it but paused and thought better of it. Bill had advised him to use as little magic as possible to avoid setting off magical traps unnecessarily. Walking over to the wall behind him, he pulled one of the torches off of the wall. Going back to the door, he checked for traps in the hall, and, finding none, he stepped over the trapped part of the floor.

As soon as Harry walked passed the door, he was startled when it slammed shut behind him. Grabbing the ring shaped handle, he gave it a tug, only to find the door locked. The only way to go was forward.

Gryffindor's charge ahead, he thought.

Slowly and cautiously making his way down the hall, Harry looked closely for anything out of place. As he walked, he would occasionally cast Detection Charms, but found nothing. After walking for a couple of minutes, he reached another bronze door. Checking again for traps and finding nothing, he pulled open the door.

On the other side was a small, square room with no visible exit.

Furrowing his brow, Harry decided to take a closer look. This time, he cast an Immobilizing Charm on the hinges to keep it open. Stepping inside, he started examining the walls and casting Detection Charms. He'd barely started when he heard a rumbling of stone on stone behind him.

Whipping around, he watched in dismay as the stones the hall was made of moved around like puzzle pieces. In a moment, they wall off his only exit, trapping him inside the small room.

"Shit," Harry cursed.

Taking a deep breath, he ran his hands through his hair.

There must be a way out of here, he thought.

As he resumed casting his charms, he focused his mind on the task at hand to fight off his rising panic. While checking along the floor for a crack that would denote a hidden door, Harry noticed the reflection of a light blue glow in his glasses. Turning around and looking up, he found a single glowing rune etched into a stone in the ceiling.

Harry squinted his eyes and studied it closely. It took him a moment to realize the rune wasn't finished. It was the rune Hagalaz and looked like the letter N, but he knew it needed a small line added to the top left-hand side.

Raising his wand, Harry took careful aim.

“Diffindo.”

His Cutting Charm hit exactly where he wanted. The rune flashed bright blue before the entire stone crumbled to dust. As Harry stepped out of the way, a rope ladder unfurled in front of him. Smiling to himself, he levitated his torch up through the hole and then began to climb.

At the top, he pushed himself through the hole in the ceiling and found himself in a massive room. The ceiling was three stories high, and light from the full moon outside streamed in from gaps in the ceiling. The whole room itself was shaped like a trapezoid, wider at the bottom and narrower at the top. To the left and right, worn, stone animal heads set into the walls had water cascading down into two channels that led to a pool in the center of the room.

A broken bridge led to the other side, where a black granite obelisk sat. Harry truly felt like he was in some foreign ruins as he looked at the crumbling walls. Thick brown vines grew down from the holes in the ceiling and branched out along the walls and ground. Moths and other small, flying insects flew around the wide, shiny green leaves and red flowers that blossomed from the vines. Hidden amongst the leaves, he spotted weathered statues of magical creatures in aggressive poses.

Even though Harry didn’t need the torch in this room, he still carried it with him. Thinking that the obelisk was the most obvious place to start, he made his way cautiously out onto the broken bridge.

“Reparo,” he incanted.

As the chunks of stone jumped from the pool and fit themselves back into place, he heard a rustling to his left. Harry’s eyes widened when one of the statues came to life. With a feline growl, the leopard like, stone Nudu prowled towards him. With two large strides, it leapt into the air, paws outstretched and mouth gaping open to reveal curved, spike shaped teeth.

“Reducto!” Harry shouted.

A bright red bolt of magic raced from his wand and impacted the Nudu on the right side of its chest. With a *bang*, the impact shattered into chunks of stone. Harry whipped his wand and crouched behind his shield as the pieces of stone rained down into the pool around him, several striking his shield with a *thud*.

Panting from the adrenaline racing through his veins, Harry slowly stood up and looked around. Blowing out a breath, he straightened back up and looked around to see if any of the other statues had animated. Seeing that they hadn’t, he cursed himself for not checking the room first and cast his Detection Charms.

So many objects lit up around the room that it would have taken him hours, maybe even days, to figure out what each and every spell or enchantment did. What was clear, however, was that there was a ward around the obelisk and that all of the statues were enchanted. He suspected that all of them had the ability to come to life, but he didn’t know how to determine what actions would cause that to happen.

Approaching the obelisk cautiously, Harry waved his wand near the edge of the ward. Warding was one of his weaker subjects. He could tell it was some type of protective ward, but he didn’t have the knowledge to tell precisely what it was. That meant he would be able to dispel it easily.

Fortunately, Bill had sent him instructions for a Ward Breaking Charm that worked on nearly everything, as long as you had the power. Looking at the statues warily, Harry cast a Shield Charm around himself in case they decided to attack while he was working. With no other option, he took a deep breath and prepared to break the ward.

“Disrumpo!” he incanted.

A beam of crackling, hissing purple magic lanced from his wand and struck the golden ward. Harry gradually increased the power he put into the spell and watched the ward closely. If he put too much power into it too quickly, he risked shattering the ward and then breaking the obelisk behind it, possibly leaving him unable to complete the task.

Breaking wards required a very precise application of powerful magic, and Harry wished he had practiced more.

The ward pulsated, and his wand began to shake. Gripping it in both hands, he pushed harder and harder until he finally saw the ward crack like glass. Sweat dripped from his brow as he eased a little more power into his spell. As he did, the cracks extended like a spider's web, little crackles and pops coming from the ward.

Knowing he was close to breaking through, Harry gave a short, sharp push with his magic and then wrenched his wand away before he even knew if it worked. The golden ward shattered with the sound of breaking glass, the golden magic flaking apart and then burning up in the air.

Harry sighed in relief and wiped the sweat from his brow when he saw that the granite obelisk was untouched. It was only then that he realized just how much magic he'd used and how exhausted he was.

Remembering the statues, he whirled around and looked to see if any had been animated. He watched for several tense seconds, but nothing moved on either side of the room. Relaxing slightly and taking a moment to catch his breath, he looked over the obelisk.

Etched into the shiny black stone were hundreds of tiny Runes. Some Harry recognized, but there were many he didn't. If the task involved translating what was on it, he knew he was in serious trouble. Walking around, he stopped on the opposite side. Amongst the Runes sat a carving of an ornate scimitar shaped sword with the handle facing up and the tip facing down. Two stone handles protruded from the obelisk just under either side of the curved crossguard.

To Harry, it looked like he was meant to hang the sword over the etching.

Looking around the room, he spotted a sarcophagus at the back of the room that he hadn't noticed before. Walking back across the bridge, Harry approached it cautiously, Detecion Charms continually flowing from his wand.

Inset into the stone of the sarcophagus was the sword he was looking for. Waving his wand over it, he found the sarcophagus enchanted, and the sword itself was cursed. It took a couple of minutes for him to figure out exactly what curse it was.

A Blinding Curse.

If he were to touch the sword now, it would leave him blind until the counter curse – which he didn't know – was applied. Glancing at the sarcophagus and then over at the statues, he thought being blinded might not be the worst thing to happen if he touched it. He had a feeling that the heavily enchanted sarcophagus would activate the statues in the room. The first one had just been a warning to the Champions.

Fortunately, Harry knew how to remove the curse from the sword. That was something he had practiced extensively. Waving his wand over the sword, he mumbled the incantations under his breath as he performed the delicate process of stripping away the curse. Unlike Ward Breaking, removing a curse was more about knowledge of the right spells and using them with finesse than having power.

As he completed his long, complicated wand movement, timed perfectly with the incantation, a black, silky sheet of magic lifted from the sword and dissipated into the air. Letting out a breath he didn't realize he'd been holding, Harry checked the sword for curses again.

Nothing.

Taking a deep breath, he readied his wand and reached for the sword. It came free from the stone sarcophagus easily, the polished steel gleaming in the moonlight. Immediately, Harry heard a loud rustling behind him.

The statues had come to life. Every last one of them.

Gryffins, Thestrals, Unicorns, Graphorns, and Hippogriffs ripped free from the vines wrapped around them and turned to him angrily. Just short of a dozen of them prowled towards him. Walking around or flying over the pool in the middle of the room, they surrounded Harry in a semi-circle. As he readied himself to fight, he heard the sound of grinding stone behind him.

Looking over his shoulder, he stared in shock as the top of the sarcophagus was pushed aside, and a hand covered in ratty, yellowed cloth gripped the edge.

“Okay, that’s just not fair,” Harry said.

The Mummy sat up in the sarcophagus sat up and turned its head to Harry. A shrill squawk drew Harry’s attention back to the statues. One of the Hippogriffs charged forward, wings extended and razor sharp claws ready to descend on him.

“Bombarda!” he shouted.

The statue exploded as easily as the first, but now he had a lot more to deal with. Shuffling away from the Mummy as it climbed out of the sarcophagus, Harry hit a flying Thestral with a Reducto Hex and shielded himself against the claws of a Gryffin.

“Confringo!” he yelled, taking out a Unicorn.

Hearing the rapid thump of stone on stone, Harry jumped out of the way just as one of the Graphorns charged past him. He shattered it with a Bombarda Hex and used a Knockback Jinx to give himself a bit of room.

“Bombarda! Reducto! Confringo!” he bellowed in quick succession.

Three more statues shattered. With only three left, he checked back on the Mummy. It ambled slowly towards him, arms extended like it had just stepped out of an old horror movie. Despite

being slow, Mummies were nearly indestructible and incredibly powerful. They'd been known to rip entire limbs off wizards that were unfortunate enough to get too close.

Destroying the last of the statues quickly, Harry turned his full attention to the Mummy.

"Bombarda!"

The bright red bolt of magic detonated with a rumbling boom against the Mummy's chest. It barely slowed before resuming its stilted plodding towards him.

"Reducto! Bombarda Maxima!" Harry cast to little effect.

Glancing back over at the obelisk, he considered running back over there and putting the sword in place. The problem was, he didn't know what it would do. Would he have to solve a puzzle? Would he just add something else to fight and have two things to deal with on his hands?

"Diffindo!" Harry shouted.

The Cutting Hex hit the Mummy on the leg but didn't so much as nick the clothe.

Maybe I can trap it, Harry thought.

Backing over to the wall where the statues had been, he watched the Mummy closely as it plodded closer. His adrenaline surged as he stood in place, waiting for it to get as close as possible. Just as it got within reach, one of the Mummy's arms swinging for his head, Harry ducked under and sprinted around it.

"Depulso!" he shouted as it turned around.

The Mummy stumbled back a step.

“Herbivicious Incarcerous!” Harry yelled.

The thick vines that had once grown around the statues now came to life and wrapped around the Mummy. A muffled groan left its mouth as the vines tightened around it, trapping it against the wall.

Harry sighed and smiled at his success.

Suddenly, there was a series of loud *cracks* as the Mummy tore itself free and lurched forward with surprising speed. Harry gasped, his eyes widening as its hand reached for his neck. Frightened, he raised his hand out of instinct. As he stumbled back and fell, the sword in his left hand hit the Mummy’s outstretched arm.

With a *thump*, the arm fell to the floor before quickly dissolving into dust.

Scrambling to his feet and gaining some distance from the Mummy as he tried to calm his pounding heart, Harry looked down at the sword in his hand. Slowly, a grin formed on his face as the Mummy continued ambling towards him, its remaining arm still outstretched.

Stowing his wand, Harry gripped the sword in both hands. Stepping to the side just as the Mummy got within reach, he slashed down and lopped off the other arm. As it fell to the ground and crumbled into dust, he reversed his swing and lopped off the Mummy’s head. With the head gone, the Mummy dropped to its knees before crumbling into a pile of dust.

Holding the sword up to the moonlight, Harry smiled at it. Moving it back into his left hand, he drew his wand and ran back over the bridge. Carefully, he set the sword in its place on the obelisk. The handles hooked around the crossguard and pulled the sword back where it was sucked into the stone. The instant it disappeared, the runes on the obelisk glowed blue.

Harry stepped back as the granite turned to liquid and fell. It revealed a dark room below him that the obelisk had been covering before the stone solidified into a set of stairs. Torches along the walls burst to life, illuminating the way down.

Wand held at the ready, Harry descended.

He found himself in a room filled with treasure. There were chests overflowing with Galleons, jewel encrusted goblets, gleaming silver plates, and intricately crafted jewelry. A path had been cleared through the piles of treasure, leading to a pedestal holding a single scroll.

Harry cast his Detection Charms but found the whole room and everything in it enchanted. Figuring that the treasure was a trap, he ignored it and made his way to the pedestal. Checking for curses was difficult with all the magic around it, but he was reasonably certain that there weren't any.

Reaching for the scroll, he stopped just short of touching it. Something just didn't feel right. It was too easy, he thought. Using his Detections Charms again, he didn't find anything concerning, but he couldn't be sure he wasn't missing anything through all the enchantments. He finally found something when he cast the See-through spell that Hermione and Nadine had created on the pedestal.

There was a mechanism hidden under the stand holding up the scroll. He suddenly had the image of a movie he'd watched at Mrs. Figg's house when he was a child. He remembered a man exchanging a bag of rocks for a golden statue. It hadn't worked, and the man ended up fleeing from a massive boulder.

Harry didn't see any boulders, but he didn't want to find out if there were any.

Following the mechanism, he traced a long rod to the bottom of the pedestal, where it was connected to a string. The string continued under the floor and into the wall, where he couldn't follow it with his spell anymore.

Thinking for a long moment, he moved back to the stand holding up the scroll, and pointed his wand at it.

“Immobulious,” he incanted.

Sighing heavily, Harry reached out with a trembling hand and carefully picked up the scroll. For several seconds, nothing happened. Just as he began to relax, he heard a sound behind him. Turning around, he found the stairs were gone, revealing a bronze door that had been hidden behind them.

After checking it cautiously and looking for mechanical traps with the See-through Charm, he pushed it open. Harry jumped and scrambled back when he was met with a wave of noise. A moment later, he sighed in relief when he realized he was looking at the lawn of Hogwarts, and the sound was the cheering of the crowd.

“And he’s done it!” Bagman crowed. “What a spectacular performance from our youngest Champion!”

“Well done, Mr. Potter,” Professor Flitwick said, bouncing on the balls of his feet excitedly. “Well done indeed!”

“Thanks, professor,” Harry smiled.

“Follow me. I’ll show you to the medical tent,” he continued.

“But I’m fine,” Harry protested even as he followed the diminutive wizard.

“It’s necessary for the Tournament, I’m afraid,” Professor Flitwick said. “I really must commend you on your Charms work. Truly exceptional. You reminded me very much of your mother.”

"Was she good at Charms?" Harry asked eagerly.

"One of the most gifted students I've ever had the pleasure of teaching," Flitwick said. "I have no doubt she would've been proud of your performance tonight."

"Thank you," Harry said, his throat tight.

Professor Flitwick smiled at him as they stopped in front of the tent.

"I'd like to talk to you about the spell you used to look through things when you have a moment," he said. "I'm not familiar with it."

"You have to talk to Hermione and Nadine about that," Harry said, scratching the back of his neck sheepishly. "They're the ones that made it for me,"

"Really," Professor Flitwick said excitedly. "They crafted their own spell?"

"I think they modified a medical spell if I remember right," Harry said.

"Impressive. Then again, I think we both know Ms. Granger always has been," Professor Flitwick smiled. "Anyways, I shall leave you to Madam Pomfrey's tender care. Just know that no matter how you place tonight, you've done your professors and your school proud."

"Thank you, sir," Harry said, a lump in his throat.

As Professor Flitwick left, Harry turned and entered the tent.

"Arry!" Fleur yelled.

Beaming, she jumped up from the bed she was lying on and hugged him tightly. Harry closed his eyes and held her close, finally able to fully relax.

“Ms. Delacour, I need to examine my patient,” Madam Pomfrey said.

Sighing, Fleur pulled back with a pout. As Harry looked her over, he noticed some scratches on her neck and a bandage on her shoulder.

“What happened?” Harry asked, concerned.

“Zhe ‘ippogriff scratched me. It’s nozhing,” she assured him.

“Bed, Mr. Potter,” Pomfrey told him firmly.

As he lay down in the unoccupied bed between Fleur and Krum, the healer bustled over with a tray full of potions.

“First a Basilisk, then Dementors, and now this,” Pomfrey tutted, handing him a blue, sparkling potion. “Drink.”

“What is it?” Harry asked, recoiling at that smell.

“A Rejuvenation Draught,” she told him. “You used a lot of energy breaking that ward. Now drink.”

Harry downed the potion and grimaced at the bitter taste. Madam Pomfrey ran her wand over him, humming and tutting on occasion.

“Well, you appear to be in good health. For once,” she said, making a note on her clipboard. “Just a very minor case of magical exhaustion. Get plenty of rest tonight and no magic until tomorrow evening. Understood?”

“Yes, ma’am,” Harry said.

“Good,” Pomfrey said, looking at him sternly. “And I better not see you again until after the second task.”

“I’ll do my best,” he smiled.

“Somehow, I don’t find that reassuring,” Pomfrey sighed.

As she walked away to tend to Krum, who was smiling and humming to himself, Fleur crawled into his bed and smiled at him.

“What happened to Krum?” he asked, wrapping an arm around her.

Fleur covered her mouth to muffle a giggle.

“‘E was stung by a Billywig,” she told him.

“Billywig?” Harry asked. “Aren’t they Australian insects that make you giddy if they sting you?”

“Oui,” Fleur replied, smiling amusedly. “Zhey also make you float. Professor Flitwick had to push ‘im into zhe tent.”

Harry chuckled and glanced over at Krum. He was tapping his foot and humming a sound under his breath with a goofy smile on his face.

"I don't think I've ever seen him smile before," Harry whispered.

"Neizzer 'ave I," Fleur giggled.

Turning back to her, he bent down and kissed her lightly. That wasn't enough for Fleur, who grabbed the back of his head and plunged her tongue into his mouth.

"Ahem,"

Harry and Fleur jolted apart and blushed when they found Dumbledore smiling down at them.

"Sorry to interrupt, but it's time to get your scores," he said, his eyes twinkling brightly. "Poppy, is Mr. Krum able to join us?"

"He should be fine, but I want him back in the Hospital Wing for the night," Pomfrey replied.

"Very well," Dumbledore nodded. "If you three will follow me?"

Harry and Fleur followed him hand in hand out of the tent while Krum trailed behind, still humming to himself. The crowd cheered loudly as they stopped in front of the judge's stands and waited for their scores. Fleur squeezed his hand tightly, clearly nervously. Harry squeezed back, trying to reassure her as much as he could.

"Witches and Wizards," Dumbledore said, his magically amplified voice quieting the crowd. "After much discussion, we have the scores. For Viktor Krum, the judges were impressed by your determination to make it to the end. However, while you were able to solve all of the puzzles placed in front of you, you also triggered the most amount of traps. Out of a possible score of fifty, we award you forty-two points."

Krum chuckled happily and waved to the crowd as they cheered. Suddenly, he began to float upwards. Reaching out quickly, Harry grabbed his shoulder and pulled him back down as Fleur suppressed a giggle. Looking back at the judges, Karkaroff glared at Harry and crossed his arms over his chest.

“Fleur Delacour,” Dumbledore said. “The judges were extremely impressed with the ease with which you dealt with the wards and enchantments. However, you had a little difficulty with the statues. Overall, an excellent performance. We award you forty-five points.”

Harry grinned and squeezed Fleur’s hand. While she remained composed, he could tell it was taking all she had not to break out in a celebratory dance.

“Harry Potter,” Dumbledore continued once the crowd quieted. “Despite having less knowledge than your fellow Champions, you were able to use an impressive display of power and control to accomplish your task. You triggered the least amount of trap, and you were the only one to use the sword to defeat the Mummy. That said, you’re lack of knowledge did make you the slowest to complete the task. After much discussion, we award you forty-six points.”

The Hogwarts section and part of the Beauxbatons exploded in cheers as Harry blinked in shock.

“You did it!” Fleur cheered, hugging him tightly.

“Tonight, all of you have shown why the Goblet chose you as Champions,” Dumbledore said. “Congratulations to all of you. Now, while this is a competition between our schools, this is also about fostering international cooperation. In the spirit of that, a party will be held to celebrate the accomplishments of all of our Champions in the Great Hall.”

With a loud cheer, the stands emptied as the students and guests made their way to the Great Hall.

“You were both brilliant!” Hermione yelled, running up to hug Harry and then Fleur.

"You'll 'ave to tell me 'ow 'Arry did," Fleur said, smiling brightly. "Zhey wouldn't let us watch."

"Me too," Harry said. "I want to know how Fleur did."

"You both did wonderfully," Apolline smiled as she, Nadine, and Aurora approached from the Beauxbatons stands.

Two of Krum's classmates took him from Harry and pushed him towards the castle. Beaming, Gabrielle ran up and hugged Harry and Fleur tightly. As she spoke rapidly in French to her sister, they began making their way back to the castle.

"Don't forget our bet, mon amour," Fleur whispered in his ear.

It took him a moment to remember what she was talking about. When he did, Harry smiled and pulled her close.

"I'm not sure what to ask for," he said. "I already have everything I want."

Fleur smiled at him lovingly and pulled him in for a passionate kiss.

"Knock it off, love birds," Aurora complained, pushing them from behind. "You can do that later."

"Oh, we will," Fleur murmured promisingly.

Harry blushed heavily when Apolline chuckled along with the other girls.

"Come on, we've got a party to get to," Nadine grinned, taking Hermione by the hand and pulling her along.

Harry smiled as he watched the two of them blush and smile, continuing to hold hands as they walked into the castle.

“Zhey look cute togezher,” Fleur said.

“Yeah, they do,” Harry smiled.

Squeezing his hand, they walked into the Great Hall to thunderous applause.