

Lost in Translation

by peskipiksi

Viktor tries to translate his best-selling Quidditch book - with amusing results.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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'What's that?' asked Harry, as Hermione staggered into the common room on Saturday morning, weighed down by a heavy parcel wrapped in brown paper.

'It's from Viktor,' said Hermione happily, brandishing a letter, which Harry took and read out loud.

"Dear Hermione,

Herevith I send you the first copy of my Kvidditch book, "Kvidditch for Beginners". I haf attempted to translate it from the Bulgarian in vitch I wrote it, and vitch sold over half a million copies in its first veek.

I vould be very grateful if you vould consent to look it over as I fear I haf made many errors.

Vith Love,"

(At this point, Ron snorted violently.)

"From Viktor," Harry continued firmly.

Ron grabbed the first page and the snort became raucous laughter. 'Old Vicky's lost it!' he crowed delightedly. 'This is gibberish!'

'Don't be mean, Ron,' said Hermione, looking affronted. 'He's the best Quidditch player in the world; he wouldn't write gibberish!'

'Seriously, Hermione,' Harry broke in before they started snarling at each other, 'none of this makes sense. Listen: Arguably the best player in the history of the sport is Mr 'Dangerous' Snuff-It Llewellyn.'

Hermione smiled fondly. 'Poor Viktor! He's just mistranslated "Dai", that's all. Right, take this.' She rifled through the piles of textbooks on the table, found one of the few Muggle books she had brought to Hogwarts, and handed Harry a copy of Roget's Thesaurus.

For the next half hour, Harry proofread "Quidditch for Beginners", changing V's to W's and K's to Q's, using the same charm Hermione had used when Ron's Spell-Checking Quill malfunctioned a week ago. When he came to the list of fouls, however, he found himself at a loss. 'Duffel bagging is illegal?'

Still looking delighted at Viktor's mistake, Ron came to his rescue. 'Haversacking. Hand still on Quaffle through goal hoop.'

'Sidekicking the Keeper?'

'Um... a sidekick is a stooge. Stooging is when all three Chasers enter the scoring area at once.'

'Swanning the opposing team?'

Even Ron was stumped by this. 'What in the name of Merlin is that?'

Hermione looked up from her own corrections. 'A female swan is a pen. Can the Stooges pen the Keeper in?'

Ron snorted again. 'Hermione, you know nothing about Quidditch!'

'I am trying to help,' said Hermione with dignity. 'A male swan is a cob. Is that any more use to you?'

'Cobbing,' cried Ron. 'Excessive use of elbows. Give it to me; I'll do the terminology.' The next moment he collapsed in hysterical laughter, his words barely distinguishable. "The World Cup in 1754 was forfeited when the losing Seeker, Barnabas Brabbe, transfigured his opponent into a blancmange." That can't be right, surely. We'd have heard about it!

Hermione began to laugh too. 'He means "jinxed him to a jelly"! She pulled a clean sheet of parchment towards her. 'I've just had an idea for Fred and George. Tip-Top Translation Quills. I reckon the Department of International Magical Co-operation's going to need them when Viktor gets published!'

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Prompt from Fairfield: Viktor wants help with the English edition of his Quidditch book.

All the Quidditch terms come from 'Quidditch Through the Ages'.

The 'blancmange' line is the actual translation in the German edition of HBP of the phrase 'to jinx Dean into a jelly.' (i.e. so badly he's a blubbery mass) (HBP Chapter 14)