

Harry Potter and Merlin's Reaper

By

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Story 1

Chapter One - The End.

My name is Harry James Potter. I was the most dangerous man alive.

Four Hundred Sixty Two. That was how many death eater I had killed in the last three months. Three months since my reason for living had been extinguished. Three months since I was human. Three Months since I could die.

It had started easily enough. The Wedding of Bill Weasley and Fleur Delacour. It's funny I still recalled that I had for some reason expected the wedding to be at the Burrow, and how the gentlest response to this was Hermione's "Honestly Harry."

I had never been to a wedding. I hadn't known that they were traditionally conducted by the bride's family. I had never left the United Kingdom before that day, when I took hold of the length of chain that was an international portkey. With the 'hook behind the navel' feeling I made my first trip out of the nation of my birth.

And vomited all over my shoes when I arrived. My problems with portkeys got worse the longer the trip it seemed.

I was again treated to Hermione's "Honestly Harry" as she cleaned me up. I would kill a thousand Death Eaters to hear her "Honestly Harry" just one more time.

Bill had said "I do" when the first of the Death Eaters Apparated into the wedding party.

In less time than it took me to draw my wand, the wedding party was dead. Mr. and Mrs. Weasley fell next never to rise again. Hermione shoved me out of the way of a Killing Curse, to be hit by it her self. From the ground I saw Neville and Luna fall.

I snapped. A cold black fury engulfed me, and something happened to my magic. From the ground I raised my wand to cast a reducto at the nearest Death Eater when my magic leaped unbidden from my body and devoured the life of the Death Eater, and I felt my magic increase. Then the magic leapt to another Death Eater and did the same. Again my magic grew. Unbidden my magic killed all 35 of the Death Eaters, and added their magic to my own.

It took almost 2 minutes for Voldemort to make his appearance with his inner circle. By then somehow, I was in full control, I put up anti-apparition and anti-portkey wards with a thought and dismembered the Lucius Malfoy right in front of Voldemort's eyes. Then the Lestranges. Then Dolohov, then Snape, then the rest. Only Voldemort remained. He screamed threats at me, and I ignored him. I used My new level of power to sever Voldemort's connection to his horocruxes before taking 6 hours to kill him, and added his magic to my own.

I set out to kill all the Death Eaters that remained. I accessed the magic that controlled the dark marks and hunted them down.

It had taken three months. The Death Eaters were gone. The Weasleys were gone. Hermione was gone. Neville, Luna, everyone I cared for gone. My reason for living was gone. My heart broke when I had seen Ginny fall. My universe imploded when Hermione died. I hadn't even known I loved her until she was gone.

The remaining forces of the light were frightened of me.

I was frightened of me.

I was alone.

Chapter Two - Lost Love.

I took Hermione to her parents the day of the wedding, after Tom Riddle was no more. I remembered how important it was to Cedric to be taken home, my sense of responsibility pushed through my grief so I gathered Hermione in my arms and apparated to her front step.

Hermione's Mother opened the door to me. I guess the look on my face told a tale. Her eyes fell to the sheet wrapped bundle I cradled in my arms and I knew that she knew. I entered the house and laid Hermione's body, still wrapped in the sheet on the sofa in the sitting room. Mrs. Granger clutched at the sheets, removing it from Hermione's face. She then clutched the dead girl to her breast and started to sob hysterically. I left her to her sorrow and departed the room to find Hermione's father. He was in the back yard mowing his lawn. I approached him from behind and put his hand on the older mans shoulder.

"Harry?"

"Yes sir," I said, "something terrible has happened. Mrs. Granger needs you." I led the man to his wife and dead daughter. *Dead daughter. She's dead because of me. If I had stayed at the Dursleys, none of this would have happened.*

//

There was a frantic knocking at the front door. I went to answer the knocks. There on the front steps were Mad-eye, Remus, and Tonks.

"Oh thank Merlin" Tonks brightened, her hair going from amousey brown to a vibrant electric pink. There has been an attack at Bill and Fleur's wedding. So many killed, no one could account for you or Hermione, so we were hoping that you came her."

"Not now Dora." Remus had read Harry's expression. "Harry is Hermione alright?"

"Hermione's gone. She took a curse meant for me." Remus and Tonks followed me to the sitting room,

Moody stayed at the door as a sentry.

When they saw the state that the Grangers were in, they moved to comfort them. The Grangers regarded the magic users with looks akin to hatred or fear. When the worst of the crying had stopped, I told the story of the day, ending with Hermione's death.

"I promise you Michael. We will find the ones who did this and punish them."

"The ones that did this are dead Remus." I said.

Again, the attention of the room turned to me. "There's still V-v-v-Voldemort Harry."

"Voldemort is dead. I made sure it was slow and painful. He screamed every second."

"Voldemort is DEAD? That's wonderful news Harry!"

"Oh yeah Tonks, it's so fucking wonderful that I'm dead inside. The Weasleys are dead. All of them. Neville is dead. Luna is dead. Hermione is..." I lost all of the composure I had left, bawling like a baby. "Hermione is.. Hermione is..."

The Grangers put aside their grief for a moment and swept me into their arms, ignoring my sobs. "She loved you too Harry. That's why she saved you. She loved you too."

"I'm so sorry, bringing my problems when you have lost so much." I gasped out the words, I had to get out of there. "I've got to go."

"Why do you have to go?"

"I've got to kill them. I've got to kill the Death Eaters."

"Which ones?" Remus asked.

"All of them." And I apparated away.

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Chapter Three – Evaluation.

Harry sat in the dark of his room at Grimwald Place. The killing of the last Death Eater left him with no reason to go on. The absorption of the life force and magic of more than 400 wizards left him with no way to end his life. He knew he needed to find something, any thing to occupy him, to prevent him from turning into what he had destroyed. Without his anchors he was adrift.

"Merlin, please. Give me focus."

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"Why do you request an audience Myrddin?"

"Lord Chaos, I have a request."

"And what might that request be young Myrddin?"

"Lady Order one of our agents of chaos has completed his task, but the aftermath promises to destroy him."

"One of our servants has actually achieved balance between Chaos and Order in his reality?"

"Indeed he has. He has removed the major source of violent order in his world, allowing the freedom of chaos to balance the order that remains. The fight that resulted unfortunately removed the anchors of his humanity, leaving him emotionally adrift. He has attempted to end his life, however the magic he used to achieve your balance protects itself and he cannot die. There is a danger he may become the source of a resurgence of violent order."

"Should he be eliminated?"

"If you deem it necessary. At this time he would consider that to be a blessing, but I have a suggestion."

"Speak Myrddin. I have no patience with your prevarications."

"My apologies Lord Chaos. The neighboring reality where we have been unable to inspire an agent of chaos to conflict with the violent order in place. In this reality his analog was killed in infancy. A minor transfer to this reality would introduce his chaos into that order."

"Interesting proposal Myrddin. However we do not have the energy budget for such a transfer."

"Not a problem Lady Order, this servant of chaos has sufficient chaotic energy to affect the transfer himself. This would drain him of the majority of his magics. If we do this, I would suggest that I inhibit the aspect of his internal chaos that allowed him to harvest the magic of others."

"You make an interesting suggestion Myrddin. We shall reflect, and consult our superiors."

Myrddin bowed to the aspects of Order and Chaos, and settled to wait.

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When Myrddin had been a corporeal existence, he had lived in Atlantis until his sense of humor had annoyed his seniors. He had been cast out most of a century before the cataclysm that sank his homeland beneath the sea. Recognizing that his origins set him apart from the rest of humanity he traveled and taught inspiring the magic in common peoples. From his teaching grew the Wizarding societies of humanity. Perhaps his most joyous existence had been his time as Merlin, where he

discovered HE was an agent of chaos. His function was to prevent order from becoming too entrenched. It amused him to no end when his function was described by later generations as being an agent of order. Order didn't have agents. Order was the natural state of human civilization. It took agents of chaos to inspire freedom. It was important for Order and Chaos to be in balance.

It was during his 2000th year he left the corporeal existence behind, and ascended to his current state. For a millennia now he had been in training to perhaps one day take on the mantle of Order or Chaos. In another couple of millennia he might begin to be ready. It was his closeness to his former existence that made him an excellent manager for his tiny slice of realities.

He honestly hoped that he could rescue the agent of chaos that had salvaged his home reality. Following such a magnificent job the boy deserved more than the personal hell he was experiencing now.

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Lord Chaos reappeared before Myrddin. "Your request is granted. If you can transfer your agent to the problem reality without expending from our energy budget, do so. Otherwise eliminate it, capturing its energy for reuse.

"It shall be done Lord Chaos."

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Harry's attention was suddenly drawn from his sorrow and mourning. A Dark Mark? Was there a Death Eater left? He gathered his magic to him and apparated to the Mark.

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Harry was locked in stasis, with only his mind active. *What the hell is going on?* He tried to use his magic, nothing.

"Calm down young Harry."

/Dumbledore? How?/

"No Harry, not Dumbledore. I have had many names. The one you are most likely to know is Merlin."

/Merlin? Great, I'm insane on top of everything else./

//

"You are hardly insane Harry. You are perhaps the sanest of your kind. You know suffering, you know joy. You have lived your short life as well as you could. It is unfortunate that you didn't know love until the subject of your love had died, but at least you knew the love. Millions live their entire lives without discovering it."

/That do you want from me?/

"I am here to offer you a choice. I can offer you the end of your existence so that you can move on to the next level. Or, I can show you how to move to a reality very like your own, but one where you died when Tom Riddle attacked you as an infant. Without you, no one could stand against him and he has taken the world and molded it into fit his needs. In this reality you could stand against him as you stood against him here."

Will Hermione and my Parents and Sirius and the Weasleys be at the next level?

"I do not know. I lacked the courage to pass on to that level and stayed here because there was a need.

Will there be Death Eaters for me to kill in the other reality?

"Millions."

If I die in the reality of Tom Riddle, will I move to the next level?

"Yes."

/Let me kill Death Eaters./

"And so you shall. They have sown evil. You will be my Reaper. Harvest the evil from this world, allow freedom to grow. Good luck young Harry."

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Chapter Four – Waking

Amelia Bones, properly disillusioned patrolled the perimeter of the camp. They had been here two days. They were past due a move, but so many were sick. A raid for food and medicine was over due. She needed to get to planning it. Since they lost Mad-eye last month these things had gone to hell. The former Auror had reached the far point of her perimeter and was about to turn back when something happened.

It wasn't weather, even though it had been drizzling all day. It wasn't wind, though there was a cold cutting breeze. It made a sound like a Muggle electrical station if such things still existed, a loud buzz and crackle, there was a flicker in the air, almost 25 feet up, something was there, then it wasn't, then it was again. It was something like the strobe lights she had seen in a Muggle disco in her youth in London. What ever it was it flickered in and out of existence, and then a bolt of lightning struck the ground underneath what ever it was, knocking her to the ground with its proximity. As she laid there she was the form solidify, and fall to the ground with a wet squelch.

Amelia pulled her self to a standing position and ran to the fallen form. It was a man. A badly scarred man. A naked badly scarred man with jet black hair just now getting wet in the mud. He couldn't be more than 18. She knelt and touched his neck checking for a pulse. He was warm, and there was a strong pulse. No limbs appeared to be broken or at odd angles. Under perfect conditions she wouldn't chance moving him. These were not perfect conditions. He hefted the naked stranger to her shoulders and carried him back to camp.

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"Only you could go out into the rain on the midnight to 4am watch and come back with a naked man."

"Very droll Poppy. What can you tell me about him?"

The Healer made another sweep of her wand.

"Well, he's a wizard, and a powerful one. Possibly as powerful as Dumbledore, look at his index

scores."

"You know I can't read that Gobbledygook of yours."

"Fine. He's young, no more than 18. He's amazingly healthy considering your description of his arrival. He's well fed, though there have been periods in his life when this was not true."

"Him and everyone else who isn't kissing Voldemorts ass."

"hmm. He's had an amazing amount of physical childhood trauma. He has basilisk venom in his blood."

"Basilisk venom? Why is he still alive?"

"You'll have to ask him that. Oh and here's the odd part. I've treated him in the past, but have absolutely no memory of having done so."

"What?"

"Each Healer's technique is slightly different. At some point, within the last 5 years, I treated this wound," she indicated a large scar on his left arm, "this puncture wound," she pointed to a round scar on the boy's right forearm and it's exit on the other side, "and several on his chest and back. My signature is all over his body. I haven't done this much work on you, but I could draw every scar on your ancient carcass. I don't remember ever even laying eyes on this boy, but he is the spitting image of James Potter."

"Potter's been dead almost 16 years."

"I know that, but LOOK at him."

"Ok, you've worked on him, but you haven't. He looks like a dead man when that dead man and all of his family died years ago. You've told me quite a bit about him other than what's wrong with him.

"hmm? Oh he's sleeping. That's all, just sleeping. He's exhausted.

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A guard was posted so that Poppy and Amelia could get some sleep. Neville Longbottom stared suspiciously at the naked man on the cot. If he moved in a way Neville didn't like he might just wake up dead.

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Evan Rosier crept closer; what ever that was that caused the spike in magic last night had led him and his capture team of 9 Death Eaters to this squatter camp. At least it looked like a squatter camp. There seemed to be just a little too much magic in the air, and wards. What kind of squatter's camp had wards up? That was fine, he was good with wards.

The wards lasted 3 minutes before falling without giving any indication that they were gone. Disillusioned AND covered with invisibility cloaks the 10 Death Eaters crept forward. One of the junior team members came across Susan Bones returning to the tents with a bucket of water and cast a crucio on the young girl. Her screams woke the camp.

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In the hospital tent Harry Potter woke to the first scream. He then heard the sounds of spell fire and sat up rigid on the cot.

"Don't you fucking move" Neville hissed. His wand pointed directly between the prisoner/patients eyes.

Harry turned his attention to the speaker, his eyes widened in recognition, but the sounds of another round of spell fire echoed in his ears.

He spoke a pair of words; words filled with the promise of pain and death "Death Eaters." The utterance was a mixture of hatred and fury. He apparated away.

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He reappeared behind Rosier. Again he spoke "Death Eater". Rosier spun around to see a naked wandless man, smiling he raised his wand to kill the fool. He never got the chance.

"Burn" came from the naked man and Evan Rosier burst into flame. Even rolling in the sopping mud wouldn't extinguish the fire consuming him. The fire died when he did.

The inhabitants of the camp had killed three Death Eaters in exchange for 7 of their own. Harry dealt with the other six. Three Windpipes magically crushed, another burned, the largest of their number disemboweled where he stood, then he found the Death Eater still casting crucio on Susan Bones, no magic as used at all, Harry simple apparated behind him and twisted his neck until it snapped. He then saw Susan.

"My god, Susan" he scooped the convulsing girl off the ground and apparated with her back to the hospital tent where Poppy was just coming from behind her screen. The attack had lasted 29 seconds. Harry laid the girl on the cot he had vacated only seconds before wrapping Neville Longbottom in a bone crushing hug. "How are you alive? I saw you die. I buried you! Oh God Neville, who else is here?"

Amelia Bones ran into the tent seconds later finding Poppy starting to treat her niece for Cruciatu Curse exposure, and Neville Longbottom in a crushing bear hug with his shoulder being cried on by the naked stranger.

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Chapter Five – Talking

"Let's start with the easy question. Who are you?"

Dressed in clothing salvaged from one of the Death Eaters, Harry Responded "Who are you? Why am I here? You can't be Madam Bones, she died last year. Neville, Susan, what the holy hell is going on here?"

Neville gave him a go to hell glare. "Answer the fucking question, or so help me I'll kill you where you sit."

Neville? What the hell is going on with Neville? I've never heard him swear and he's said 'fuck' twice in 5 minutes while nobody blinks an eye. Susan Bones looked at him with wide eyes. Something had happened to her as well (aside from the crucio he had stopped) she hadn't spoken a single word the entire time she'd been there. "Ok, fine. My name is Harry Potter, son of Lilly Evans Potter and James Potter." He sneered "If you were really Amelia Bones, you'd know that you were on the panel that judged me when I defended myself against that pair of dementors before my 5th year."

"Harry Potter died Halloween night 1981."

Harry turned to look at the speaker. His mouth fell open "Professor McGonagall? What happened?" He rose from the chair, ignoring the wands suddenly pointed at him, he gaped at the jagged scar that ran down the left side of her face. "Who did this to you?" she flinched slightly when he ran his trembling fingers down the path of the scar, "Oh my god, this is an old wound. Have you been wearing a glamour all this time? I don't understand. You don't know me. Madam Bones is alive? Neville swears?"

He sat back down. "Ok, from the top. My name is Harry James Potter. I was born July 31, 1980. On Halloween night 1981, my parent's home in Godric's Hollow was under the fidelius charm. The Secret Keeper, Peter Pettigrew betrayed them to Voldemort." There was a gasp from his listeners when he said the name. He continued. "My father died on the stairs of our home. My mother was in my room defending me. Before Voldemort killed her she somehow invoked some unknown magic that caused the killing curse to rebound and destroy Voldemort's body. I got this." He pointed to his scar. Dumbledore

had Hagrid collect me from the wreckage of my home and bring me to Surrey where Professor Dumbledore and Professor McGonagall left me on the door step of my mother's sister to be raised. They didn't like magic or me and made sure I knew it. When I turned eleven I got my Hogwarts letter. On the train I met Ron Weasley and his rat Scabbers. We made friends. I met his twin brothers George and Fred. Then I met Draco Malfoy. He was an ass, so we didn't become friends. Neville lost his toad Trevor, and came to our compartment looking for it. A few moments later Hermione Granger came looking for the toad as well. She was muggle born. She became my best friend too. It seemed like every year someone tried to kill me. First year it was Professor Quirrell, he was possessed by Voldemort. They were after the Philosophers Stone."

"Second year it was a diary of Tom Riddle that was actually a HorocruX. This diary possessed Ginny Weasley' the sister of Ron. It forced her to open the Chamber of Secrets and release a basilisk. I ended up fighting the basilisk and killed it with Gryffindor's sword. It bit me, but Professor Dumbledor's phoenix Fawkes cried on the wound. I survived but still have basilisk venom in my blood. I used one of the fangs of the basilisk to destroy the horocruX."

He stopped and sipped at a glass of water. "Third year Sirius Black broke out of Azkaban prison. Everyone said he was coming for me. I kept seeing Grims. Sirius Black was my godfather. He was accused of being the Secret keeper. But he wasn't. He was never tried, just locked away. He wasn't coming to kill me; he was coming to rescue me because he saw a newspaper photo of the Weasleys in Egypt. Ron's rat Scabbers was in the photo and Sirius recognized the rat as the animagus form of Peter Pettigrew. My father, Sirius and Peter all became unregistered Animagi while at Hogwarts to be able to help Remus Lupin deal with being a werewolf. Pettigrew betrayed my parents to Voldemort, and Sirius was punished for it.

Fourth year Hogwarts hosted the TriWizard Tournament. The age requirement was set at 17. That years DADA instructor Mad-eye Moody was actually Barty Crouch Jr. polyjuiced to look like Moody. He did something to the Goblet of Fire and my name came out as well as the student from each school. So I was forced to compete at the fourth competitor. I had to get an egg from a Dragon, rescue people from the merfolk in the lake and beat a maze. At the end of the maze was the Triwizard Cup. Cedric Diggory was the other competitor from Hogwarts, he and I worked together there at the end, and decided to take the cup together. It turned out to be a portkey. Voldemort and Pettigrew were waiting. Pettigrew killed Cedric and used me to create anew body for Voldemort. I escaped because Voldemort was an arrogant idiot and managed to use the portkey to return to Hogwarts with Cedric's body. The Minister wouldn't listen and was telling everyone I was an attention seeking liar.

Before 5 year Madam Umbridge sent a pair of dementors to kill me, but I drove them off with my patronus. The ministry put me on trial for underaged use of magic. I only got off because Professor Dumbledor showed up and Madam Bones wouldn't let the Minister rail road me. Madam Umbridge ended up the high Inquisitor at Hogwarts until Hermione Granger tricked her into going into the forbidden forest and insulting the Centaurs. We then took the schools Thestrals to rescue my

Godfather and prevent Voldemort from getting the prophecy concerning the two of us. It was a trap and as usual I rushed head long into it. This time I took Hermione, Ron, Ginny, Luna, and Neville along with me. Stupidity and luck allowed us to survive until Dumbledore showed up to save me. The Minister saw Voldemort in front of a whole lot of witnesses so there was no denying it anymore.

6th year Professor Dumbledore told me about all of Riddle's Horocruces. He had 6 in all having divided his soul 7 times. The professor found Slytherin's ring and destroyed it, leaving 4. When we went after another horocruux when Draco Malfoy let death eaters into Hogwarts. When we got back Professor Dumbledore was killed by Snape. The Horocruux we went after was fake, so we still had four to find.

Ron, Hermione and I were going to hunt down the rest of the Horocruces, but first we went to his older brother Bill's wedding. It was at the wedding the Death Eaters attacked. All the Weasleys were killed, Luna Lovegood was killed, The Delacours were killed, Neville was killed, Hermione was... was killed. Something in me went all crazy, and my magic started killing Death Eaters without me trying to. It would strip their magic from them and add it to mine. There were 35 Death Eaters there, I killed them all. Then Voldemort and his inner circle showed up. I killed them all. "

The tears started again. "I buried my friends there in France, all but Hermione, she was muggle born. I took her home to her parents. Then I went out to kill Death Eaters. I got them all inside of three months. Then I tried to kill myself, but my magic wouldn't let me. I sat around for a bout a week feeling sorry for myself, then I felt a very weak Death Eater signature, and apparated to it."

"Then I woke up here, and killed Death Eaters."

"Who was I with?"

"What?" Harry's attention returned to Neville.

"Who was I with at that wedding I died at?"

"Oh. You and Luna Lovegood had been going out all summer."

"Me and Luna Lovegood? He's insane, kill him and put him out of his misery."

"You aren't exactly my cup of tea either Longbottom" A tall girl with a buzzcut said. "But he's telling the truth. No one could make up a line of crap like that without having lived through it." She put her hand under his chin and lifted his face so she could look into his eyes. "So I was your friend was I Harry Potter?"

His eyes widened with recognition. "Luna? Luna? My God, what is going on?" he stood, his eyes never leaving her face, she had a focused intensity that the Luna he knew had never had. No dreamy attitude, no inability to maintain focus. This Luna was a raptor, a killer, a force to be feared. "Luna?"

Madam Bones interrupted "Yes Mr. Potter, Luna Lovegood, our current security chief of the resistance."

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"Come with me Mr. Potter. She led him away through the camp to one of the smaller tents.

"Preparations are underway to move the camp to another location. Can you help with that? I saw you apparating earlier, several times. That would be exhausting to most wizards, but you aren't most wizards."

"I'm ok. I'll move what I can"

"From your expression I take it I'm different from the Luna Lovegood you knew?"

"Oh god yes. I'm sorry, that didn't come out right. You are very different from the woman I knew."

"Watching your parents tortured to death changes a person I guess."

"You lost them both? My Luna watched her mother die when a spell she was researching went wrong. She was 9. She was alone with her mother for 5 hours before her father found her."

"I lost my parents at the age of 10. They survived the first round of purges due to being purebloods, but they were too outspoken. They were tortured to death and I was made to watch. Luckily for me one of the Death Eaters thought I was attractive so I was sent to the pleasure pits for his use." Her grey eyes burned in a most intense way. "It took me two years, but he was the first one I killed. My score is 53 dead Death Eaters. What about you?"

"Where I'm from 462. Here, seven."

"Quite the hero, of course you didn't kill until they drove you to it. That probably is a good thing. Sometimes I get worried that I enjoy it so much." For a second she took on a dream like look that brought his Luna to mind. "Time that I determine if you're telling the truth." She stood and started unbuttoning the blouse she wore. "Remove your clothing."

"What?"

"I am a touch empath. If I held your hand for a couple of days I would know everything you know. Increasing the area in contact increases the speed of the transfer. I have found sex to be the fastest way of verifying. Your occlumency shields mean nothing to what I do."

"You want me to make love to you so you can read my mind?"

"No Harry. I don't want you to make love to me, I want you to fuck me, as long and as hard as you can. I want you to make this war go away for a few minutes, for both of us."

"Do you have sex with all the new recruits?"

"No, just the ones I fancy."

"I, uh, I've never done this..."

"A virgin? How rare." She reclined on her bed. "Come here." She undid his belt and allowed his trousers to fall to the ground. Reaching up she pulled on his neck until she could cover his mouth with her own and pulled him on top of her. She broke the kiss "I'll be gentle, this time."

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Lucius Malfoy entered the control center of the regional Magic Monitoring Directorate. He found the watch supervisor at his post.

"Any word yet on the missing Capture Team?"

"None My Lord. We have verified that they didn't return to their barracks, nor have any of them been seen at their homes of record." He checked the logs. "Rosier didn't log where he was going, we have a spiral search of our area of coverage going on by 6 separate teams, broom and ground. The search started 2 hours ago and should be complete in 4 more hours. If they are in our region, we will find them."

"Very well. I will be in my office. Keep me informed."

Malfoy returned to his office. The capture team needed to be found within the next five hours or he was going to have to report their loss up the Central Directorate. This would mean an interview with the Dark Lord. Those rarely went well.

"Slave attend me."

The girl rose from her pallet and rushed to him, undoing the belt of his pants, taking him in her mouth. This one was a find. Discovered at when she was 14, hidden by her parents. The father was executed for the crime of siring a spontaneous magic user. The Mother, still attractive, was sent to the pleasure pits designated to serve the Death Eaters aroused by the giving of pain. She had survived almost 9 months. It had taken almost a year to completely break this one to his will; her mouth was quite talented, though Draco and his friends took joy in pairing her with other slaves, with toys and without. Lucius enjoyed the recordings of that, but wouldn't admit it to Draco. The boy needed to know his place. A few more moments and he took her head in both hands, thrusting deep, and spent himself into her.

She cleaned him, rearranged his clothing and returned to her pallet, her eyes bright in anticipation of his next need.

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Tom Riddle, Lord Voldemort, master of the world was unhappy.

Something had changed. As yet, he didn't know what had changed, but something had. There was a flux of magic out there somewhere that he hadn't felt since Dumbledore had died. Surely the old fool hadn't managed to return? No he was dead. Riddle had ripped his still beating heart from the old mans chest.

He couldn't even isolate the direction of the flux. But it was there, wavering just on the edge of his perception.

Now to find the source.

Story 2

Chapter Seven – Travels

Luna Lovegood stirred from the bed. Since her empathy had blossomed into a skill she could use at will, she had used her sexuality at a lie detector on five men and two women, finding two spies in the process.

None of those that had come before had prepared her for this man. Linking with him was like falling into a well, deep, dark, frightening, and endless.

She had discovered his life, all of his memories from the first love of his mother's eyes looking into his as he suckled at her breast; to the abject horror of watching his friends (including a version of her) die at the hands of the Death Eaters.

Few people understood pain and suffering as this man did. Had she finally found a life mate? She shook that thought from her mind.

The evacuation should have started while she had the man distracted. She knew she had to save this man, for herself if for no other reason.

“Come on Potter, get up.”

“That was... wow.”

“Thank you, get up, get dressed. We've got to break camp.”

She watched as he pulled his clothing back on, and then led him out of the tent.

Straight into an ambush.

Six wands were pointed at their faces when Harry stood up upon exiting the tent. He unconsciously moved in front of Luna.

“Identify yourselves”

Harry raised his hands to show he held no wands “Harry Potter sir. She's Hannah Abbot. Come on, we're just having a little party.”

“From the looks of things there were quite a few people here.”

“Of course there were, everyone comes up here, where else can you get away from your parents? Come on, you guys did the same thing didn't you? Come on, you've gotta let us go, her dad will kill me.”

The wands started to lower and Harry moved. Luna's eyes widened when he wandlessly cast a wide cutting hex four of the six fell sliced to the bone and bleeding profusely. Before either of the other two

could react, he had them by the throats, snapping their necks with his magic. She had seen this ability in his memories, but to actually see him in action was frightening. The last of the Death Eaters fell to the ground before she remembered to draw her wand.

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“What do you mean one of the search teams is missing?”

The off going watch supervisor wilted under Lucius’ questioning. “Lord Malfoy, they were two hours over due for check in, I had another team search their path. The trail ended in a clearing, there was nothing there. No sign of anyone ever being there before, no sign of the men.” He hesitated. “They were all class 4 wizards sir; there shouldn’t have been anything out there that could stand up to all six of them. The last time a team disappeared like this, there were found to have raided a Muggle village for women and reported in the next day.”

“I would have thought that the deaths of that capture team would have focused the minds of their fellows. Check the local villages for missing women. I must report to the Dark Lord.”

Thankful for the dismissal, the off going watch supervisor left to inform his on watch counter part of Malfoy’s orders.

“Slave!”

The girls head came up immediately from her kneeling position on her pallet, eyes bright.

“I go to the Dark Lord, be prepared for my return. I will have need of your meager talents.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

He thinks he’s so powerful.

He thinks I’m nothing.

I’m not nothing. I feel the power in me.

It sings in me.

Maintaining control hurts so much.

Until I get my hands on a wand.

I will kill him. I will kill his son. I will kill his son’s friends. I will kill his wife.

The power sings what it will do to them. The power will free me.

I will kill them.

When I get a wand.

He thinks I'm nothing

I'm not nothing.

I don't hide behind my magic

He killed my daddy.

He and his friends hurt my mum over and over until she died.

He hasn't killed me.

He uses me as if I was nothing.

His son uses me as if I was nothing

Until I get a wand.

Then the power will sing.

They will die.

Before they do, they will know I'm not nothing.

Before they die they will know I'm Hermione.

Hermione Granger.

I'm not nothing.

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Chapter Eight – Consolidation

Harry Potter walked around the new camp. Magic use was kept to a minimum so as to not attract the attention of Voldemort's capture teams. Everywhere he looked he saw broken beaten people, who fought because it was the only thing they knew. It wasn't right. Something had to be done. Someone had to make changes. He sought out Luna.

Luna was in a conference with her 'war cabinet'. They all looked up when he arrived.

"If you don't mind, I've got some questions."

"Why not?" said Luna. "We aren't making any progress; perhaps the perspectives of a dimensional traveler will offer new ideas."

"Dimensional traveler?"

"You came from somewhere very like this, with people wearing our faces and using our names lived and died. You must come from another dimension. Back when the Muggles had science, they postulated such things. What were your questions?"

"Well, firstly, why the traveling tent city? Why don't you use a permanent structure to keep people out of the weather and healthy?"

"You mean a permanent structure that the Death Eaters can locate and destroy? Use your head lad." McGonagall spat.

“Why don’t you just use the Fidelius charm?”

Flitwick shook his head “That charm was lost when Dumbledore was lost; he had rediscovered it from ancient texts and never shared it with another.”

Luna looked up, shocked. “You know the Fidelius! I saw it in your memories!”

“I guess that means we know it. My Dumbledore evidently shared information more freely. I learned it from you Professor Flitwick. Would it be bad form to teach my teacher?”

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Amelia Bones looked sadly at the state of her ancestral home. Portions of the roof had fallen in over the last ten years, the lawns were pastures for neighboring farm animals, but young Potter had performed the charm, and it was her home again. A team of 10 wizards and witches were busily trying to repair what could be repaired, and create anew what could not. With McGonagall as her secret keeper, her home was now a base of operations for the resistance. One of eight that now housed all of their people indoors for the first time in a decade. She was still wanted, every death eater knew her on sight, but at least she had her home back.

Tonight, Susan, her dead brother’s only child, would sleep in a house for the first time since she was seven. Perhaps here Amelia would be able to bring the girl out of the shell she closed around herself when her parents had been killed so long ago. Perhaps here, she would again speak. Amelia had seen the way Susan had been watching young Potter, perhaps with his help... A thought for another time, she cast ‘reparo’ on yet another broken window, and watched as the glass leaped into place to rebuild the pane.

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“Professor Vector?”

“I have never taught Mr. Potter, why do you call me that?”

“Sorry, where I came from you taught arithmancy.”

“Logical, I suppose. I do hold Mastery in the subject, if the war had not intruded teaching or research are probably where I would have gone. How can I help you?”

They were sitting in the drawing room of Professor McGonagall’s home outside Dundee. “What do you know of the ‘mosmordre’ charm?”

“A variation of an ancient protean charm. It projects the dark mark over targets of the Dark Lord’s wrath.”

“Could you help me develop a variant?”

“Why would you want a dark mark Mr. Potter?”

“Not a dark mark, a signal in the sky, a sign of hope. One that will scare the hell out of death eaters once they know about it.” He dug into his pocket and dug out a drawing. “This is what I want to show, I wouldn’t think that it would be harder to do than the skull and snake that Riddle uses.”

“I will look into it. It will be good to get back to my favorite subject after so long.” The older woman looked at him shyly. “So I taught? Was I good at it?”

“I never took your classes.” Harry admitted, a bit ashamed. “I wasn’t smart enough. But the smartest witch I’ve ever known raved about your classes said that they were fantastic.”

“So that’s what a normal life would have been like.” She said wistfully.

“Oh you did more than just arithmancy. You offered what the 6th and 7th years called ‘private tutoring in probability research’, it was quite popular.”

“I’m not sure what you mean.”

“Every Friday night you ran a private lessons on a Muggle card game called ‘poker’ in your class room. Staff and older students were always there. The most important lesson you taught was to never try and bluff Professor Vector...”

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“Harry my boy!” Flitwick stood oh his chair to greet him. “Rumor has it you’ve been making the rounds making request of we ancients. I was wondering when you would get around to me.”

Harry laughed. “Saving the best for last Professor.”

“I haven’t been a professor since you were in diapers Harry, call me Filius.”

“I’ll try sir, but to me...”

“I’m glad I made such an impression. Now tell me, what did you and your fellow students think of me?”

“Respect for your abilities, and trust in your willingness to allow us to make mistakes. If Professor McGonagall was our strict mother figure, who loved us and made us toe the line, you were the crazy uncle, who always had the best stories and the best toys.”

“Thank you for that, it wasn’t what I tried for, but as results go, it’s not bad.” The small man grinned, “What is the task you have for me?”

“I checked among the members of the resistance, there are no wand makers. I recall a story by your counter part where he told of at one time thought of becoming a wand maker. Did you as well?”

“I did indeed. I thought that you were exclusively wandless.”

“Only because what ever brought me here did so completely naked, and as a consequence, wandless. It isn’t a wand I want however. I need a staff.”

“A staff? Well, from what I’ve seen, you have the requisite level of magic. If I can get the right materials, a staff attuned to you would be a powerful tool indeed.”

“Tell me what you need Professor, I’ll find it. This is what I want it to look like.”

“Are you serious Mr. Potter?”

“Absolutely Professor.”

“Do you need the blade to be real? It would be child’s play to use runes to project the illusion of a blade, but of course the illusion wouldn’t cut anything.”

“Perfect, I was worried about doing myself damage with it, but I need it for the effect. An illusion would be perfect”

“I’ll have a list of the materials I need tomorrow. If everything goes as planned, you’ll have your new staff in about 6 weeks.”

“Perfect. Just in time for the sorting feast.”

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“A staff Filius? Does he have that kind of power?”

“You’ve seen him work Minerva. When he put your home under the Fidelius charm, he was winded but after resting for 5 minutes was running about repairing things left and right. He’s in Dumbledore’s league, at least.”

“I think you’re right about his power level Filius.” Amelia interjected. ‘I’ve seen him do multiple apparitions, just flickering from place to place with no visible strain. Has he told anyone what his plan is?’”

Luna Lovegood set her mug on the table in front of her. “He intends to do to them, what they did to us when Voldemort and his Death Eaters were a terrorist group. He’s going to instruct them in fear.” She took on a reflective, thoughtful look. “He admits that he has relatively little training for combat, mostly he did school based formal duels other than a few times he went up against his version of Voldemort and his Death Eaters. He doesn’t intend to participate in duels or set battles. He intends to strike at soft targets, wreck havoc, and get out.”

“Is this what he tells you Miss. Lovegood, or did you gather your information in other ways?”

“Minerva if you want to know if I am sleeping with him, the answer is occasionally. He’s in a lot of psychological pain. He saw the woman he loved die because she pushed him out of the way of a killing curse. If she exists in this reality, he will go to her in a heartbeat, even knowing that she isn’t the woman he loved. Mostly he allows me into his bed because I help him with his nightmares.”

“That bad?”

“Yes Filius, that bad. I’ve seen his nightmares. Horrible things, like nothing I’ve ever seen or imagined.”

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Harry sat at the table in the kitchen sipping a mug of tea. It had been a rough night. He had watched as Hermione died over and over again. Then she started speaking to him, asking why he let her die. He would wake screaming. Somehow he would get back to sleep just to have it happen again.

Susan Bones entered the kitchen carrying a tray.

“Good morning Susan.” She usually ignored him when he spoke to her. She put the tray into the sink, then sat down across from Harry and looked into his eyes.

The pretty blonde took his left hand in hers and lifted it to her face, rubbing the back of his hand against her cheek.

He smiled; she returned the smile and released his hand. “What happened to you Susan? What took your voice?”

She had no response; she just kept gazing at him.

Harry finished his tea, and went to the sink to clean the mug, as he was rinsing it clean he felt her come up behind him and pull him into a hug. He waited until she broke from the hug and turned to face her. She looked so vulnerable; he leaned forward and lightly kissed her forehead. Susan took his hand and lead him through the door and outside to the grounds. Hand in hand, she led him to a quiet brook then upstream to a huge walnut tree. She sat on the grass, leaned against the tree and pulled him down to join her.

They sat in silence in the shade of that old tree for more than an hour before he broke the silence to tell

her about his life. He started with his first memories of Dudley hitting him and carried on through to the horrible day when Hermione died and he brought her home to her parents. The girl was already crying silently, he saw no point in telling her what a monster he became as he tracked down and killed the remaining Death eaters.

When her tears subsided, he told her of his plan. He told her what he intended to do so that no one needed to hide anymore. She cried again. He hugged her and somehow she ended up sitting on his lap. Susan wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him.

He found himself returning the kiss. Her mouth opened for him and he... What the hell are you doing you selfish bastard? He took her face in his hands and lightly pulled her away.

“I’m sorry Susan. I’m not a very nice person. You deserve... You shouldn’t be with someone like me. You deserve better than me.”

He lifted her from his lap, and placed her on to the grass. Rising to his feet, he said “I’ve got to get back Susan. There are some chores I promised to get done today.”

Again, she didn’t respond. He started back to the house, he was about 50 feet away he turned back and saw that she was crying once more. Well done Potter, you made her cry yet again. You worthless idiot.

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Chapter Nine – Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me

Amelia found Harry sitting alone in the sitting room of her home, well after 2 am, staring at the fire in the hearth. She quietly observed the young man for several minutes before she broke the silence.

“What’s wrong Harry?”

He looked up at her with dead eyes. Gods, the boy was in such pain.

“I’m thinking I need to leave Madam Bones. I need to go before I hurt someone.”

“What do you mean Harry? Who are you likely to hurt?”

“Susan. She took me out to that big walnut tree by the brook, and listened to me feel sorry for my self for a while, then we were kissing, and it was all I could do to...”

“Susan took you somewhere?”

“Yes, to the big walnut tree by the brook.”

“How did she take you?”

“She took my hand after she hugged me.”

“Susan initiated the contact?”

Harry was confused, why did she keep going on about this? “Yes.”

“And she led you by the hand?”

“Yes.”

“This is wonderful Harry. She hasn’t initiated any physical contact with anyone since she saw her parents killed. You’ve got to stay; it sounds like you are our best chance for reaching her.”

“But I don’t want to take advantage of her...”

Amelia sat next to him on the sofa. “Harry, merely the fact that you are worried that you might tells me that you won’t. Please, stay and spend what time you can outside your missions with Susan. Bring my niece back to me, please?”

Why is life never easy? Why is Susan reacting to me?

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“Here it is Harry!”

“Thank you Professor.” He took the staff from the small man. It was 4 foot long the base was capped in silver; the top had crystal that started pulsing with power as soon as Harry took it in his hand. “This is amazing.”

“Well, try it.”

Harry raised the staff and concentrated on the oak tree 100 feet away. He sub vocalize ‘reducto!’ and a huge red beam jumped from the staff to the tree, a thunderous explosion, and the oak slowly toppled over. “Sweet Merlin.” He whispered.

“Did you intend to do that?”

“No. I meant to mark the tree. I didn’t put anymore into that reducto than I would with my wand. How powerful is this thing?”

“It is attuned to you Harry. I put a lot of time into that. What you can do is amazing!” The small man paused, thinking. “How do you feel? Are you drained at all?”

“No, no more than a normal reducto.”

“We need to test this some more.” He waved over some of the spectators that had gathered at the sound of the explosion. A short discussion that Harry could not hear, then the group surrounded him.

“Harry we’re going to start casting on the count of three. Nothing too rough at first. See if you can shield against all of us.”

Harry nodded his agreement and waited for the signal to begin. At the signal he raised the staff over his head and sub vocalized ‘protego totalum’. A bluish dome of magic bloomed from the crystal at the head of the staff. Just as the first of the attacking spells arrived. Stunners, body binds, and an assortment of other curses, hexes and combat charms hit his shield and stopped. They didn’t bounce off, they weren’t redirected, they stopped at the shield and the various colors of the spells were absorbed into the blue of the shield, and the shield brightened.

“Keep holding it Harry!” Flitwick called. “Everyone, step it up! Combat spells! Now!”

The surface of the shield became a maelstrom of magical energy. Still the energy was captured and used to strengthen the shield, rather than reflected away in the usual manner. As it took in more and more magic the shield brightened into an intense sky blue. The attack went on for more than 10 minutes when attackers started to reach the ends of their reserves and started to drop out.

“Crucio!” came from behind Flitwick’s position. He stopped his own casting to see who was using it.

Luna Lovegood held the cruciatus on the shield. It did not seem to be penetrating, or if it was there was no indication of it. The shield shifted color to silver, and still it took the curse, absorbing it and strengthening its self. One by one, the casters dropped out due to depletion of their reserves, but Luna kept going.

After 10 minutes, Flitwick stepped up to her “Let it go girl, you’ll do your self damage.”

“No.” she grunted through gritted teeth. “He has to know what he can do.” She continued to push her magic down the conduit to his shield trying to force the spell through.

After another 10 minutes, Luna collapsed to the ground panting as if she had run for miles. The shield dome looked like a huge drop of quicksilver, perfectly reflective, with glowing swirls of something scudding about its visible surface.

The attackers then found themselves bound in conjured ropes, an incarcerous attack! They fell to the ground attempting to undo the ropes, when an incendio erupted from the shield and set the fallen oak afire. The shield still held.

Harry dropped the shield and released his victims. Extending his hand to Flitwick he assisted them man to his feet, then did the same with Luna.

“That was amazing Professor. It was obvious after a while that you couldn’t see though the shield, but I

could see you just fine” Harry looked as excited as a child with a new toy. “After a while I realized the shield was self sustaining. I wasn’t doing anything for most of the test.”

“You and that staff were amazing my boy.” Flitwick was bouncing on the balls of his feet in his excitement. “We have to find out what else you can do.”

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Bill Weasley was a happy man. Today he had pulled down the wards protecting another coven of terrorists. The six witches and three wizards were captured shortly after he did so. No doubt the inquisitors had gleaned the information the coven was hiding and had them executed by now. Hopefully the nine children the coven had been holding had been placed into good homes. He was the Directorates premier ward breaker; he had been assured that rewards were coming his way.

Bill had entered Hogwarts the year that the Dark Lord has ascended to rule Britain. As a consequence he had missed the disappearance of his parents and the disbursement of his siblings to various relatives. He had been sorted into Ravenclaw. He recalled a small quiet disappointment that the restructuring of Hogwarts had done away with the house his that most of his relatives had attended, but if your family was not reliable enough to be sorted Slytherin, Ravenclaw was a good (if distant) second choice. Over his time at Hogwarts he had striven to prove his reliability.

He also discovered the joys of being a Pure Blood. First year he had heard stories of ‘mudbloods’ who had polluted the school before his arrival, but the Dark Lord’s ascension had stopped that. 4th year he had taken an attractive half blood Hufflepuff to his bed and showed her why she shouldn’t tease her betters. She had actually complained to the Head Girl, who had Bill and several of his friends take her to an unused classroom to teach her not to complain about being shown her place.

Upon finishing at Hogwarts, Bill had reclaimed his family’s ancestral home at Ottery St. Catch pole, the Burrow. Finding employment at the Directorate as a Ward Breaker he also drew his siblings back home from the relative to which they had been sent. Charlie, Percy and the Twins were all in Hogwarts, leaving only Ron and Ginny at home. With his first bonus, Bill purchased a pair of House Elves to care for the children and set to work making a name for himself.

He had. Wards that everyone said would take days to bring down, Bill managed in hours. The fortunes of the Weasley family grew. Charlie became a quidditch player upon finishing school, and traveled the

world. Percy had joined the Central Directorate and risen within the bureaucracy to where he actually met with members of the Dark Lords inner circle. Ron was Head Boy this year AND Slytherin Quidditch captain, with a near harem of young half bloods following him everywhere he went. (Bill smiled to himself when recalling Ron's personal philosophy: "Marry Pureblood, Fuck Halfblood, Rape Muggle, its all good."), and Ginny. The Weasley brothers let it be known that Ginny Weasley was reserved only for the Royalty of Magic, The children of the inner circle and the Dark Lord help any mere boy, pureblood or not who dared touch her.

The twins on the other hand were the family disappointments. They worked in Diagon Alley as shop assistants. They left two years before having only finished their O.W.L.s after they met his most recent 'bonus'. Their weakness disgusted him.

He entered his bedchamber and found his aforementioned bonus glaring at him. After bringing down some particularly nasty wards around a French school for witches, he had been awarded with one of that school's culls. It was routine for a newly liberated facility to be culled of its undesirables. Usually they were killed outright, but this one, this one was special. A bastard cross between a pureblood and a half Veela, this quarter Veela could pass for a normal witch, but had the Veela charm. Offered the beautiful woman as a prize he readily accepted. She was manacled with charmed chains to keep her from using her Veela charms to enthrall him. After a few months he developed a charm that when evoked turned her Veela charm into herself, making her ravenous for him. When the charm wasn't in use she glowered at him and swore in French. He really didn't care.

"Get up, make yourself presentable. We are going to a party tonight. If you know what's good for you you'll make the right impressions on the right people."

Fleur Delacour nodded her understanding and rose from her pallet. The chain that joined her manacled hands to her collar of submission tinkled with her movement.

Un jour.

Un jour.

Votre concentration hésitera, ce jour où vous mourrez

Vous fils orphelin d'une chienne.

Je jure la vengeance pour Gabrielle

Vous trouverez pourquoi Veela sont ainsi craint.

A/N the last: Ok, I can't leave it like that. I learned in "The Power He Has Not" that nothing pisses a readership off faster than putting untranslated French into a fic unless it's killing Harry Potter. So without further delay, below are the thoughts of Fleur Delacour in Anglais... uh, English.

Someday.

Someday.

Your concentration will falter, that day you will die

You fatherless son of a bitch.

I swear revenge for Gabrielle

You will find why Veela are so feared.

Chapter Ten – Nex Messor

Hermione Granger lay on the bed curled into the fetal position wishing for oblivion. The Young Master had used her again, used her with his two friends. They hadn't brought one of the friends slaves this time. It had been the three of them and her. So much pain she had blacked out, only to be revived and the pain came again. And again. And again. She hadn't been hurt this badly since they had branded their initials on her inner thigh. M. Z. W.

She started when cool gentle hands touched her face; she opened her eyes to look into the giant eyes of Dobby the House Elf. "Is Miss alright?"

"No Dobby, it hurts so much." Her tears flowing. "So very much."

"Dobby help Miss" The elf levitated her to the bath, and with gentle hands cleaned her. House elves had some healing skills, and Dobby was especially skilled. He needed to be. She again lost consciousness; her last thought was noticing the copper taste in her mouth. After some amount of time she awoke to Dobby's gentle touch. "Dobby always be your friend Miss. Dobby sad to think what Young Master do to Miss."

The Elf was crying. She drew him into a hug.

"Thank you Dobby, I'm feeling better now. You always help me."

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"The incantation is 'Nex Messor'. I have not been able to do a full-scale test of course; it would draw

too much attention. The result should be exactly what you are looking for.”

“Thank you Professor.” He practiced running through the incantation of the entire spell in his mind. There was going to be a very unhappy dark lord.

“You’ve got your mark, your staff, those robes you and I transfigured, and the pendant that changes your voice. What is your plan Mr. Potter?” asked McGonagall.

“Death Eaters are a superstitious and cowardly lot”, Harry quoted wondering if this reality had ever had that particular art form, “I don’t inspire fear, so I need a disguise capable of striking terror into their hearts. I must be a creature of the night, black, terrible...”

“You plan to attack Death Eaters by your self?” McGonagall asked, frowning. “We have been fighting them for almost 20 years. You don’t need to do this alone.”

“I know you have Professor. What I’m going to be doing is quite, well, stupid. I’m planning to go into the figurative belly of the beast. I intend to kill Death Eaters, all I can find. I’m going to strike at their safe places. Where they feel at home, I am going to kill them. I will have one rule. If it wears the dark mark, it dies. I don’t think that I would want to have anyone there I would be responsible for.”

Flitwick was oddly jovial. “So those anti-apparition wards you had me erect, I saw you breaking through them. That must mean a high profile target to start. Surely you don’t mean...”

“No, my first outing isn’t going to be Voldemort. I’m not ready for him yet. I’ve put a lot of thought in where I could strike for maximum effectiveness, where I could scare enough Death Eaters where they live.”

“Where?”

“Think about it Minerva. What is today’s date?” Flitwick was positively bouncing up and down.

“August 31st. Why what does that...” Realization dawned in her eyes and she raised her hand to her mouth.

“Exactly Professor. I’m going to Hogwarts.”

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After a judicial use of the household potions (specifically denied her, but Dobby promised that they would be replaced before anyone noticed) Hermione was healed and mostly no longer in pain.

“Young Master is spending the night at Master Zabini’s home. Master and Mistress are away for the night at a party Miss. No one will see you if you read.” The elf popped away.

Hermione made her way back to her pallet in the Master’s study. From its hiding place under a loose floorboard, she removed the previous year’s text from the Young Master’s Dark Arts class. He had not missed it since he had returned from school, and probably never would. Whenever she got the chance, she studied the book and memorized the wand movements for casting the various spells. When she got a wand, people would die.

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Bill Weasley was having a grand time, circulating at the party, greeting people who could help his career, ignoring those who could not.

“William!” Bill turned to face Lucius Malfoy. He bowed

“Good Evening Lord Malfoy, Lady Malfoy. I hope your family is well.”

“Just excellent William. Draco leaves tomorrow for his final year at Hogwarts. He was telling me he looks forward to seeing your sister again.”

Narcissa seemed oddly interested in forming an alliance with as minor a house as the Weasleys, but she may end up disappointed. “He may need to join the queue; she has been keeping company with Lord Nott’s son Theodore this summer, and has had many young nobles calling for her.”

“Ah the curse of being young, beautiful and powerful. It was much the same for Narcissa at Hogwarts.”

“Lucius, you’re embarrassing me.”

“The truth cannot be embarrassing Narcissa. So is this Veela I’ve heard so much about?”

“Indeed Lord Malfoy.” He pulled Fleur forward by the chain attached to her collar of submission, her gaze focused at her shoes. Bill had crafted the charms on the restraints so that her magic shown though with enough power to make her the most beautiful and desirable woman in the room, but not enough to enthrall. The sight of her took Malfoy’s breath away. Narcissa found suddenly noticed someone she wanted to speak to across the room, and left without a word. Bill was impressed, either the man had his wife under unspoken control or she did not want to know.

“Would you like to sample her charms?”

Malfoy’s eyes widened and he licked his lips. “A man would never decline such a generous offer William. You must come by my office some time to discuss what can be done to aid in your career. When might we arrange some time with the Veela?”

“Why not now Lord Malfoy?” Lucius nodded. “there are many rooms available in this manor, I’m sure you will find her to your liking.”

Not again, not again, not again. Ran through Fleur’s mind. This would be the 5th man this monster had

given her to this night.

Bill tapped his wand on her collar, starting the process to cause her Veela charm to cascade back into her and whispered in her ear “Return to me when he finishes with you.”

Losing control to her magic, Fleur melted into Lucius Malfoy’s arms as he led her away.

Bill turned and made his way to the buffet line. Yes, this is turning out to be quite the party.

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Harry was sitting in the kitchen again. He surprised himself by actually falling asleep around 11pm and not waking until 4am. Five whole hours. Almost a record for him. He was surprised when Susan came in to the kitchen.

“Good Morning Susan.”

She turned in surprise to see him. He gestured to the pot of tea on the table with him. “Cup of tea?”

She stared at him. Then sat down and turned the mug upright looking at him expectantly. He tipped the teapot to fill her cup.

“I’m sorry about the other day by the tree. I was an ass. What was happening surprised me, the deaths of my friends is just too... too fresh. I’d like to be your friend Susan. I don’t know if I can be what you want, but I can be your friend if you like.”

She cocked her head to the side. She then lifted the mug to her lips, her eyes maintaining contact with his over the rim of the mug. Lowering the mug back to the table, she reached out and took his hand into hers. When they finished the tea, she stood still holding his hand and led him into the sitting room. She

stoked the fire, levitated several lumps of coal into the flames and pulled him to the sofa facing it. When they sat she snuggled into him and pulled the hand she was holding so that it lay across her shoulders, and sighed.

Amelia Bones had been coming down the stairs when she had seen Susan leading Harry from the kitchen. Susan was actually doing the leading. It seemed that Harry had not been exaggerating this was wonderful.

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They spent the day together. She pulled him out to the grounds to see the sunrise. After a while, he quit speaking as well, and they spent the day in silence. She showed him the grounds, parts of the house he had never seen. They had a quiet lunch together in the kitchen, and then she guided him to her room. It was still relatively bare; they spent the day transfiguring things to decorate the room. He had an idea, and excused himself for a moment. He apparated away.

He recalled a stuffed toy of some type that he had found while cleaning up the old manor house when they had taken it back. He searched the trash pile until he found it. A purple mangled something.

“Reparo!” the toy reassembled its self back into the small purple dragon with blue wings, clean and pristine as the day it was made. He added a few charms and enchantments, tucked the little dragon under his arm and returned to Susan.

When he appeared in front of her, she looked up at him and smiled. He handed the toy dragon to her. Her eyes widened and she clutched the stuffed toy to her chest. The toy yawned and sneezed a small cloud of smoke. She pulled it away from herself and looked at it in shock. It wiggled free of her grasp and climbed up her arm to rest on her shoulder and nuzzle into her neck while thrumming happily.

Susan looked from the dragon to Harry and back to the dragon. She then launched her self into his arms.

Leaving the dragon to patrol her bed, they left to walk around the grounds, hand in hand through the day. Amelia approached them in the early evening.

“Harry, it’s almost 7. Did you want to eat before you leave?”

Harry looked to Susan, “No. Best keep the possibility of nerves to a minimum. I can eat when I get back.”

“Assuming they haven’t changed the schedule the students should be getting into the Great Hall about now. The sorting is at seven. When will you be making your entrance?”

“I figure to do it at 7:15. No one will be expecting anything, it should be in, do what I need to do, and then back out. 20 minutes at most.”

He turned to Susan. “I’ve got to go. Can I come see you when I finish my mission?”

She nodded and he apparated to his room to change.

Amelia put an arm around her niece, and heard the girl whisper “Come back.”

Chapter Eleven – Back to School

The sorting was finished, and the students were happily digging into their first feast of the year. They sat at three long tables laid with glittering golden plates and goblets. At the top of the hall was another long table where the teachers were sitting. At the far end of the Great Hall was a cage. Within the cage were three Muggle teenagers, suffering the casual curses sent their way by laughing students. It was the latest of the Memorable first days since the ascension of the Dark Lord. Also the last.

Suddenly without warning Hogwarts rung like a struck bell. A dark cloud formed in the Great Hall and lightning started striking repeatedly in the center of the open space between the students' tables and the Head Table, blinding everyone. When the lightning stopped, dazzled eyes could make out a kneeling figure at the point where the lightning had been striking, the stone floor where he knelt blackened by the lightning strikes.

The figure stood, cloaked from head to toe in black, hooded in the same material, the figure wielded a scythe. A skeletal clawed hand raised the scythe above the figures head and slammed the butt of the tool to the ground, a thunderous clap rang out, the stone floor of the Great Hall rippled like water, and the doors slammed shut and locked.

“Hello Hogwarts.” A deep raspy voice rang out. “Death is visiting you again.” From the staff table curses flew to the cloaked figure, and splashed against a shield. Again, he raised the scythe and all 28 seated at the staff table found themselves paralyzed and levitated to the mysterious stranger. Their bodies formed a circle around him and the left sleeves of their robes suddenly shredded. “All of you bear the mark of the lunatic half blood Riddle? How very sad for you.”

The Stranger left the circle to stand before the cowering students. “I am the Reaper. I am Death. I have come for the fools who call themselves Death Eaters, the fools bound to Riddle. I have a single simple rule, listen well, and learn. If you bear the Dark Mark, you die.” He turned back to the teachers. “Burn!”

There were screams from the students as the staff burst into flames. “Tell your parents, if they are marked, I am coming for them.”

“The Dark Lord will kill you.”

The hooded stranger turned to the speaker at the Slytherin table. “Come here Draco Malfoy.” The blond panicked and attempted to run, before finding himself in a body bind and levitated to the imposing man. His left arm extended and the sleeve of his robe shredded exposing naked flesh.

“No Mark Malfoy? Are you too intelligent to be branded like a farm beast, or too cowardly to take his mark?”

Through clenched teeth, knowing that his words would make it back to the Dark Lord, Draco said, “The Marking Ceremony for 7th years is tomorrow night.”

“It WAS tomorrow night. Tell your father I am coming for him. Tell your Dark Lord that Death is coming for him. Tell that half blood coward that the Reaper will shred his soul far worse than anything he has done himself in the making of his horocruxes. Tell him I know about everything, and that Tom Riddle will not be hiding much longer. Your Dark Lord is nothing.”

“I am the Reaper. If any of you take the mark, you die.” He raised the scythe and banished the entire enchanted ceiling of the Great Hall. He then cast ‘Nex Messor’. Above the castle an apparition of the Reaper with his scythe appeared. “Tell your Dark Lord I’m coming for him.” He levitated the caged teenagers to him, the cage decaying to nothing at his touch. “Sleep young ones.” The young Muggles slumped into slumber, their bodies glowing as their injuries healed. “I also come for unmarked cowards who torture Muggles. Come here Ginevra Weasley.” The pretty redhead floated to the cloaked man, bound and wide eyed in terror. Her left arm extended, the sleeve shredded to expose bare flesh. “You have no mark. You have it in you to be so much more than the cowardly bully you have become, trading your body for favors. Continue on this path and I will snuff out your live as easily as I do the cowardly half blood Riddle.” He waited until the echoes of his voice ended. “Prefects, take charge of your Houses.”

The lightning struck again, the cloaked figure and the former captives disappeared.

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Harry stopped outside the village that the teens had come from, that information gleaned from their minds. He laid their sleeping forms in the town square, their injuries healed, and their bodies at rest. With any luck, they would attribute their experiences to particularly vivid nightmares. Probably not, but he could hope.

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The Ministry Aurors responded to the slaughter at Hogwarts within an hour. They found the charred corpses of the staff still suspended in the air. It took another two hours for the levitation charm to be broken so that the bodies could be removed.

“One man? One man did this?” the Auror asked incredulously.

“I think it was a man” the Head Boy, Ron Weasley told him. “He was tall, his exposed hand looked like a skeleton’s, but that could all be glamour. The voice was deep and raspy, like something from the grave, but I suppose it could have been a woman heavily disguised.”

“What did he look like?”

Blaise Zabini pointed to the spectral Reaper hovering over the castle. “Like that.”

“He said horrible things about the Dark Lord, and spoke of someone called “Tom Riddle” as if we should know who he was. He called them both ‘half bloods’. Can you imagine anyone insulting the Dark Lord like that?” added Lavender Brown.

“He killed the staff and none of you did anything?”

“The Headmaster and the teachers all tried to curse him, some even used ‘Crucio’, and they all splashed against his shield and did nothing. I was terrified. He said he was Death. He knew our names! How could he know all of our names?” asked Ginny Weasley.

Parents started to arrive, gathering their children to them. The aurors stood straighter when they recognized Wizarding Royalty among the new arrivals. This did not bode well for Auror Shacklebolt. Sometimes being in charge of a high profile investigation could ruin your whole day.

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20 minutes after the Aurors arrived on scene, Voldemort the first entered the Great Hall, striding in like the living god his followers believed him to be. Upon his entrance, everyone threw themselves to the ground in supplication.

Ignoring his subjects, he surveyed the scene. The source of the flux he had been feeling for weeks had been here. He examined the magical signature on the floating corpses that had been his hand picked teaching staff here at Hogwarts, then the spectral Reaper above the castle. Banishing the entire ceiling of the Great Hall was formidable magic.

Who ever did this was a challenge to his rule. Who ever did this might actually be powerful enough to challenge HIM. Where had this 'Reaper' come from? For more than a decade anyone world wide found to be a class 6 wizard was eliminated. Tested at first manifestation of his powers and retested annually there after until their magic stabilized at their adult level every magical child was monitored. Somehow, someone had slipped through his net.

Who ever this 'Reaper' might be he had issued a direct challenge to Voldemort himself. Who ever he might be, he knew things that no living person should know. This 'Reaper' knew his birth name, knew about his horocruxes. This was alarming. Steps needed to be taken.

This challenger had to be found and destroyed.

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Susan was waiting at the apparition point for Harry when he returned. She approached him and pushed

the hood of his cloak back, and hugged him. She led him to the dining room where Luna, McGonagall, Amelia, and the others were waiting.

“It’s our habit to dissect a mission after the fact to see what can be learned.” Luna gestured for him to sit. “You’re back, that’s always a good sign. Did you get into Hogwarts?”

“Yes. Professor Flitwick, I have to compliment you. This staff is a work of genius. It punched a hole in the wards like a hot knife through butter, and made the most spectacular light show doing so. The Teachers were all marked. Riddle is going to have to hire new people to train his Death Nibblers.”

“So your rein of terror had a successful start?”

“I believe so Madam Bones. I know I made Draco Malfoy soil himself. After the staff died, I could not sense any other Dark Marks close to the school. I threatened everyone, called Riddle a half blood and told him or her I was going to kill everyone that was marked. Grabbed some Muggle kids they were torturing and got out. Maybe 15 minutes on site.”

Luna gave him an appraising look. “At the rate you’re going you’re going to have more kills than the rest of us combined. Will you be able to live with it?”

“I think so. As long as I don’t enjoy it, I guess I’ll be alright. This is all just practice. Its Riddle I have to take out, after him, the rest will be easy.”

“You’re a powerful Wizard Harry” McGonagall interjected. “Remember the cautions against abusing power.”

“In my original world there was a Muggle who said it best: ‘With great power comes great responsibility.’ I believe I know my responsibilities here. This isn’t for me. This is so that people don’t have to live like you have since he came to power. People should be able to live and not be afraid. I’ll never go dark Professor. I’m fairly gray, but not dark.”

The meeting went on for another 20 minutes, discussing minutia of his mission, then broke up, with another scheduled in two days to plan the next attack.

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Following the debriefing, Harry followed Susan to the kitchen. She had set his dinner aside for him, and she sat with him while he ate. When he finished, they cleaned the last of the evening's dishes together, then walked up the stairs to their rooms. She pulled him into her room.

"Susan, I don't know if I can be what you want me to be."

She looked up at him, rose on her tiptoes, and kissed him lightly on the lips. In a quiet voice, raspy from long lack of use she said: "When I was six, they came and killed my mum and daddy. They were going to kill me, but they hurt me first. There were three of them, and they hurt me a lot. I didn't understand what they were doing then, but I knew it hurt." Tears were running down her face. "Auntie came before they could kill me. She saved me but it was months before I could close my eyes without seeing them. I felt so guilty about being alive when mum and daddy were not. It was easier to be quiet so that everyone left me alone. Then you came here. You aren't like the others. You aren't frightened all the time. You aren't angry all the time. You are a good man Harry Potter. You took the time to talk to the silly mute girl that everyone else ignores. You knew a happier me, and treated me like her."

Susan crossed the room to her bed, scooping up the toy dragon that was patrolling. "You made me this, when you didn't need to. You didn't expect anything in return. You're a good man Harry Potter. I want you to spend the night with me. I want to spend the night with a good man. I don't mean sex, though I'll let you if you want. I just want you here with me so that I can feel safe for just one night. I know I'm not the woman you want, but I'm tired of being so frightened all the time."

Oh hell. What can I say to that? "If you want me to stay, I'll stay Susan." She smiles at him, and left for the bathroom to prepare for bed.

Harry made it to his own room to undress and prepare for bed. A clean pair of boxers and t-shirt under a dressing gown, he made his way back to Susan's room.

“Good evening Harry.”

“Madam Bones.”

“Thank you for getting Susan to speak.” She said. “Susan told me of her plans for tonight. She’s been though hell Harry. I’m sure I don’t need to say this, but I will: Hurt her and I’ll kill you.”

“Yes ma’am.”

“Go on, she’s likely waiting.”

“Good night Madam Bones”

Amelia stared after the door closed. All that power and frightened by a mother hen. Amazing. Minerva was worried about nothing, there was no way this boy would go dark.

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Susan was waiting for him when he entered the room. She pulled back the quilt and sheet on the bed and he joined her, extinguishing the lights. They cuddled in silence for most of an hour.

“Harry?” came her raspy whisper. “Do you want me?”

“Oh Merlin, yes. But not tonight. Maybe later when we know each other. We don’t know each other, and we should before we go any further.”

Susan just snuggled closer to him, listening to his heartbeat. Auntie was right, he is a good man.

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A/N: It has occurred to me that a timeline of how this reality got so very screwed up would be useful. Here is what I am working from.

Chapter Twelve – Answers and Timelines

October 31, 1981. – Possible Point of divergence of the Realities.

James and Lilly Potter, as well as their son, 15 month old Harry are killed by Voldemort at their home in Godric's Hollow.

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He was over the threshold as James came sprinting into the hall. It was easy, too easy, Potter hadn't even picked up his wand...

"Lily, take Harry and go! It's him! Go! Run! I'll hold him off!"

Hold him off, without a wand in his hand! ...

"Avada Kedavra!" The green light filled the cramped hallway, James Potter fell like a marionette whose strings were cut ... He could hear Lilly Potter screaming from the upper floor, trapped, but as long as she was sensible, she, at least, had nothing to fear ...

Voldemort climbed the steps, listening with faint amusement to her attempts to barricade herself in...

He forced the door open, cast aside the chair and boxes hastily piled against it with one lazy wave of his wand ... and there she stood, the child in her arms. At the sight of him, she dropped her son into the crib behind her and threw her arms wide, as if this would help, as if in shielding him from sight she hoped to be chosen instead...

"Not Harry, not Harry, please not Harry!"

"Stand aside, you silly girl... stand aside, now."

"Not Harry, please no, take me, kill me instead --"

"This is my last warning --"

"Not Harry! Please ... have mercy ... have mercy ... Not Harry! Not Harry! Please -- I'll do anything ..."

"Stand aside. Stand aside, girl!"

He could have forced her away from the crib, but it seemed more prudent to finish them all ... The green light flashed around the room and she dropped like her husband. The child had not cried all this time. He could stand, clutching the bars of his crib, and he looked up into the intruder's face with a kind of bright interest.

"Avada Kedavra!"

The boy joined his parents.

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March 5, 1982 – The ministry falls to Voldemort

The Minister of Magic remained seated at the desk of his office as his protective detail died. Lucius Malfoy and Bellatrix Lestrange burst into the office as the last of the Aurors fell. They aimed their wands at him as Voldemort swept into the room.

“I believe you are in my chair.”

“Dumbledore will stop you!”

“You put far too much faith in an old man. Avada Kedavra!”

The minister slumped from his chair. Voldemort turned to his lieutenants, Sweep the building, no survivors!”

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May 2, 1983 – The fall of Hogwarts

The death of Albus Dumbledore – Minerva McGonagall and Filius Flitwick join the resistance.

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Minerva’s scream echoed though out the castle. That bastard Riddle had pulled Albus’ heart from his chest with some horrible black curse. She gathered her self, and rose from where she had fallen when the cutting curse had hit her in the face. Maybe she was going to die, but the bastards would find out why the name McGonagall was feared to this day in the Highlands. She turned to face the two Death Eaters running toward her, and watched as they fell before she could even raise her wand.

She felt a hand take her right wrist.

“Minerva, it is time to go.”

“They killed Albus Filius.”

“I know that Minerva, we can’t do anything about that. If we stay, we die. If we leave we can kill them at our leisure.”

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December 5, 1983 – The Fall of the Muggle Government of the UK

Prime Minister, under Imperius Curse, commits suicide during National Televised Announcement

The Queen swears Fealty to Voldemort, abdicated to allow his succession to the Throne as Voldemort the First. Dies w/ family 2 days later.

Muggle Government and Military heads under imperius curse.

Prince William (18 months) secreted away from Balmoral to the highlands of Scotland, by rogue SAS squad and his nanny when his mother and father and murdered. A charred body of a toddler left behind.

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“Where did you find the baby Sergeant?”

“This is Jimmy, me son Major. The bastard hit housing, me entire family was...” the man shuddered
“We need the decoy, We’ve got to protect the Prince.”

“The King.” Major Llewellyn corrected. “Good thinking” He turned to the woman with the toddler in her arms. “Are you ready to go Ms. Lawrence?”

“We are Major. We must protect the crown.”

“Indeed.” He turned to his troops “Move out men. We’re going to ground!”

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February 28, 1984 – Night of the Knives

The Governments of France, Germany, Italy, Austria, USSR, PRC, US, Canada, Mexico, Brazil all fall to mixture of imperius controlled politicians and military leaders and polyjuiced imposters.

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December 25, 1986 – Bones family attacked, Susan’s parents killed, Susan raped. Rescued by Amelia Bones and her resistance cell.

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The last of the three stood up from the sobbing little girl. He extended his wand to snuff out her life when “Crucio” rang out in the small house.

The three Death Eaters fell to the ground screaming in pain.

“Fry the bastards” spat Amelia Bones as she scooped her niece from the bed. “It will be ok Susy, they won’t hurt you any more.” She saw her brother and his wife lifeless on the floor. “These bastards won’t hurt anyone any more.”

She turned to her team “Keep it up until they don’t feel it anymore. I’ll see you at camp.” And she apparated away.

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June 10, 1987 – Consolidation of all governments to Voldemorts rule.

Massive culls of population. Total elimination of all Muggle educational facilities, medical facilities,

In the three years between the Night of Knives and the consolidation of governments, world population has gone from 6 billion to 800 million.

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April 1, 1991 – Lovegood family captured and tortured. Xenophilius and Selene killed, Luna taken as sex slave

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November 22, 1993 – Luna kills her rapist, escapes to the resistance.

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“Welcome home Master” 12 year old Luna welcomed the man in her life back to his home. “I made you dinner.”

“Thank you Pet.” He waved his wand over the plate of food she placed in front of him. No toxins, no poisons. “It never hurts to check Pet.” He ran his hand over her ass, she wiggled into him as he began to eat “After dinner tonight, something special for you to do for me.”

“Ooh Master, you tease me”

He laughed and drank from his wine glass. He immediately began to choke.

“Oh don’t you like it Master? I made it just for you. A special binary poison. Part in the gravy, part in the wine. Individually harmless so your scan would show nothing. You really shouldn’t have left your potions books lying around ‘Master’, they gave me so many ideas.”

She picked up his wand and put it behind her ear. Then she got a claw hammer from the kitchen. “The Poison won’t kill you ‘Master’ It paralyzes you. I’m going to kill you. One bone at a time.”

She started on the toes of his left foot. The poison prevented him from screaming, but Severus Snape died in agony.

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January 4, 1994 – Accidental discharge of Magic during food foraging gives Hermione Granger and her family away.

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June 3, 1997 – Harry James Potter translates into this reality.

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Harry apparated just outside the village of Godric's Hollow. The town its self was empty, the population lost to the cullings, the only people in miles lived on the farms that still provided food for the cities.

Flitwick suggested to him that he might be able to find his parents home despite the Fidelius still being in effect because he had lived there when it was cast. He had second hand accounts of how his analog had been found in his crib, but the house was untouched, unlike the devastation that his reflecting the curse back on Voldemort had caused.

He followed the directions given him by Minerva, and there it was. The Path to the door was over grown, unlike the well traveled path that ran along the fence line. He approached the door, and it opened to his touch. The house was over run with magical pests, much like his memories of #12 Grimmauld place. This was going to take a lot of work, and it wasn't the kind of work he was any good at. Cleaning a normal house, no problem, cleaning a magic house, he had no idea. If only he had....

Dobby! He could go and try to free Dobby. While he was there he could deal with Lucius at the same time.

He gathered his staff and cloak from his bag. Pulled the cloak on, and apparated to Malfoy Manor.

Story 3

Chapter Thirteen – Retribution

Harry apparated in to the foyer of Malfoy Manor. No one was around. Interesting. He established his shield and decided to explore. Let's see now, four dark marks in residence. Interesting again. It had been a week since his assault on Hogwarts, was Draco stupid enough to take the mark after seeing his power? He made his way to the mark on this level of the house. He found the mark in the dining room. It was attached to Narcissa Malfoy.

The woman gasped when she saw him, he cast a body bind on her and levitated her to him. She followed him up the stairs. Second door on the right opened into Draco's suite. Inside huddled over a book he found Draco and Blaise Zabini. Again, he cast body binds on them and levitated their frozen forms. The silent parade continued down the hall to the Master's study.

Harry unsealed the door and pushed it open. There was Lucius Malfoy, with his back to the door, trousers around his ankles, hips frantically thrusting. Harry's eyebrows rose. During the day? With his wife and son in the house? Arrogant ass. He ignored the girl's cries of pain.

"Good Day Lucius Malfoy, are you ready to die?"

The Death Eater whirled about, wand in hand, when the body bind hit him. His limbs slapped to his side and his wand clattered to the floor.

"I am the Reaper." He intoned. "I am here to erase the blot that is the followers of the insane half blood Riddle." With a wave of his hand he partially canceled the bind on the upper part of the elder Malfoy's body."

"The Dark Lord will..."

"Yes, I know, 'the Dark Lord will kill me'. I cannot help but notice I am still here. You are going to die today. The only question is do I do it fast and painless, or slow and painful. Your choice."

"What do you want?"

Harry handed Lucius a sock. He smiled at the look of bewilderment from the man.

"Call your house elf Dobby."

Still confused Malfoy spoke "Dobby!"

The elf popped into existence before his bond Master.

"Give him the sock."

Malfoy was even more confused, this maniac came to his home to force him to free a house elf? “Take the sock Dobby.”

“Master is giving Dobby clothes? Master gave it, and Dobby took it, and Dobby — Dobby is free.”

The cloaked figure knelt down next to the diminutive elf. “You are free Dobby. Would you like to work for me?”

“You did this? You are a great wizard, but Dobby cannot leave, Dobby must stay to care for Miss.”

“Miss?”

“CRUCIO!”

Harry turned to see the naked girl that the elder Malfoy had been using holding the wand and casting, at Lucius. Her wand movement was precise, her concentration total. The air filled with Lucius’ screams.

Hermione? How is this even possible? She is muggle born. The muggle borns were all killed in the cullings, how?

“Hermione? Hermione Granger?”

The girl quit casting and pointed the wand at Harry. “Stay away from me Wizard. I will kill you as I am going to kill them. She turned back to the Malfoys “CRUCIO!” and cast again, this time with Draco as the target. “You like that? You’ve all used me for 3 years. My turn, my turn...” three minutes of casting, of pushing the untested spell through a wand she was unfamiliar with took its toll. The girl slumped to the ground, barely conscious. “you killed my daddy, you killed my mum... I’ll kill you!”

“You used her? You’ve been raping her for 3 years?” Harry lost control. His magic leaped out unbidden and reduced Lucius Malfoy to a bloody mist, Narcissa, Blaise and Draco followed him into death.

Horrified at his loss of control, Harry forced himself to calm. Again, he turned to the Elf who was staring in horror. “Dobby, we’ve got to get Hermione somewhere safe. Will you come with me? I’ve got a house, it’s filthy, but it’s safe.”

“Miss hurt badly, Dobby do what he can, but she hurt badly. Dobby come with you, if you help Miss.”

Harry scooped the protesting girl from the floor, what had those bastards done to her? “Do you need to hold on to me to apparate Dobby?”

“Only first time. You hurt Miss, Dobby kill you.”

“Dobby, if I hurt Miss, I’ll kill me.”

The elf nodded, then took hold of the hem of his cloak. The three of them apparated away.

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They reappeared on the front step of the Potter Cottage outside Godric’s Hollow.

“Dobby, this house hasn’t been lived in for about 16 years. Could you see if you could make one of the bed rooms suitable for Hermione?”

The elf nodded and headed inside.

The girl in his arms was asleep. He had to keep reminding himself that this wasn’t his Hermione. For that matter, his Hermione had never been ‘his’. She had been used, and hurt. Could he take her to the resistance? He couldn’t recall a single muggle born among them. Not for the first time he found himself wondering just how screwed up this world was.

Hermione. Here. In his arms. What the holy hell had those bastards done to her?

Not my Hermione. Not the woman I know. She’s dead. This isn’t my Hermione. God she’s so hurt.

A pop. The Elf was back. “Dobby take Miss. Dobby help her.” He levitated the unconscious girl into his arms. “Thank you great wizard. Thank you for freeing Dobby and helping Miss.” And he was gone.

Harry sat on the porch and began to sob.

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Poppy Pomfrey was cleaning up her ‘ward’ after a day of minor complaints. Having roofs over everyone’s heads and secure places to operate from had cut way back on the demands for her time. She turned when she heard a soft pop of apparition. Potter.

“Madam Pomfrey, I need your help. I’ve found a rape victim, she needs... I don’t know what she needs. I don’t know how she would be accepted here, could you come with me? She’s hurt badly.”

“Of course Harry. Let me get my kit.”

Poppy called for one of her assistants, and they were gone.

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“Sweet Merlin Harry, who did this to her?”

“The Malfoys. They had her for three years.”

“Paid them a visit did you?” She shuddered “I hope you made it slow.”

“I lot my temper.” He said. “It was over much too quickly.” He looked ashamed of himself. “Will she be alright?”

“The physical damage I can deal with. Her mental state, I don’t know. Do you know her?”

“In my world, she was my best friend. Maybe more if I wasn’t such a coward.” He looked into her eyes. “She’s Muggle born. Is this going to be a problem with the Resistance?”

“Maybe. A lot of people blame the Muggle Born for Voldemort’s terror. They say that if it wasn’t for them, he wouldn’t have ...”

“If so, I’m going to have to distance myself from the resistance. My version of that woman was the smartest witch I ever met. She knew more magic than I did, and was always learning more, forcing me to push myself to keep up with her. If they don’t want her, they don’t want me. I can sit under this fidelius for ever and the rest of the world can go to hell.”

“I can understand that Harry. I’ll talk to the Council if you like. I need to get back.”

“Just a second, I’ll let Dobby know that I’ll be gone for a few moments.”

“No need Harry. I may not know where I am, but I know where I need to go. I can apparate myself.” She was gone.

“What did you mean ‘in your world’ wizard? I’ve never met you in my life.”

Hermione stood in the doorway behind him, clutching at Lucius Malfoy’s wand, holding a repaired dressing gown closed with her free hand.

“My name is Harry Potter. I’ve got an odd story to tell you. You probably won’t believe it.”

“Try me wizard.”

“I’m not from here. I come from a world very like this one, where you and I met on a train when we were 11 years old.”

“You’re from another dimension? That sounds like a bad science fiction story.”

“Tell me about it. Her name was Hermione Jane Granger. Her parents are Michael and Kathy. They are dentists. Her date of birth is 19 September 1979. She loved books, all kinds. Her personal guilty pleasures were Jane Austin novels.”

“How... how do you know these things?” She sat on the far side of the porch.

“Like I said, we met on a train when we were 11. She’s saved my life more times than I can count. I’ve saved hers once or twice. Every year for my birthday she would buy me a book. Every year for her birthday I try not to buy her a book, but usually end up getting one. I ... I... “

“You what?”

“I loved her. I know you aren’t her. I know you don’t know who the hell I am, but when I look at you, I see her. When you look at me, I see her. When you speak I hear her.” He struggled to get hold of his emotions. “You’re safe here. I’ll teach you to use that wand. Its only fair, she taught me.”

“You won’t touch me Wizard.”

“I know that. I never touched her. I never told her how I felt. I didn’t know how I felt until she died saving me.”

“If you weren’t with her, was she alone?”

“No. She was with my best mate. She loved Ron Weasley.”

Suddenly she had the wand pointed between his eyes. “Don’t you lie to me! I could never love that motherless son of a bitch.”

“Not you, her. The Ron here is a piece of work, I’m sure, but the Ron I know is a great guy.”

“Oh yeah, A REAL FUCKING GREAT GUY I’VE STILL GOT ONE OF HIS AUTOGRAPHS!” she opened the robe she exposed her inner thigh, there in horribly deep scars were the initials M, Z, and W. “MALFOY, ZAMBINI, AND WEASLEY CARVED WITH THEIR OWN LITTLE WANDS” she screamed at him.

He couldn’t take his eyes away. Once again the fury, cold and dark burst within him.

“Dobby.”

Dobby popped into existence before him. “Dobby, please take care of Miss. I have to go see someone.”

“Yes Great Wizard.”

“My name is Harry, Dobby. I’m not a great wizard. I’m just a killer. I need to go kill someone.”

And he was gone.

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Chapter Fourteen – The Burrow

Ron Weasley kicked off the ground testing his new broom. His year as Head Boy and Quidditch Captain was in shreds, but vacation was vacation. Bill had shown him the charm to control his Veela, and there were several Muggle girls in Ottery St. Catchpole should he decide he needed company. Muggles were a lot of fun. They had no resistance to the imperius at all. Then they were begging you to do what ever you wanted.

He looped over the Quidditch pitch, just enjoying the act of flying. Draco and Blaise had died when the Reaper wanker had attacked Malfoy Manor. He really missed his mates. The girls they had shared, the parties they had attended. Something had to be done about that Reaper. Hopefully the Dark Lord or one of his inner circle would crush the pretender.

Bill was home today, and was entertaining himself with his Veela. Charlie was on the road. Ginny was off with Ted Nott, probably with her ankles behind her ears, trying to nail down a proposal.

“Accio Broom!”

The shouted command startled him, and Ron fought to regain control of his broom on its inexorable descent to the waiting hands of the Reaper. The broom stopped suddenly when the Reaper grabbed it, Ron’s momentum kept his body moving and he impacted in to the ground hard enough to knock the wind from his lungs.

The Reaper reached down to take a fist full of the shirt Ron was wearing, and he was dragged to the Burrow. The Reaper slammed him against the outer wall and applied a sticking charm kept him there.

“Don’t go away Ronald Weasley. I need to attend to your brother inside before we have our little talk.” The cloaked figure turned away from Ron, to enter the Burrow. In the living area, Fleur was startled by the door slamming open and she had spilled the drink she was bringing Bill into his lap. He backhanded her across the room as Harry entered the room.

Harry’s magic pulled the sitting man to his feet, and slammed him face first into the nearest wall.

“Hitting women Bill? Is this what the Weasley family has become? Arthur would be so proud of you.”

“Don’t you mention my Father in this house, it has taken me all my life to overcome the shame he brought on this family.” The larger man charged at the cloaked figure, fists flying.

He ran full force into a wall of magic, a wall that surrounded him from all sides, the field of magic then took his arms and legs and pulled. Bill Weasley screamed, as all four of his extremities were dislocated.

The Reaper turned to the girl on the floor, and helped her to her feet.

“Fleur Delacour. Of course, why didn’t I expect it?”

“You know me?”

“I know your name and your face. I have found that does not mean I know you. We will discuss it later if you like. Do these shackles inhibit your talents?”

“They do, and he uses the collar to control me.”

“Well we cannot have that.” He touched the manacles and willed them to unlock. A pair of quiet clicks signaled that he was successful. The collar was harder, not locked at all; it was a single piece of conjured metal. He again applied his will to the metal of the collar and increased its size until it was large enough to pass over her head.

“Ennervate!” and Bill Weasley returned to consciousness.

“Do you want him?”

“Oh oui. Please.”

“When you’re done, meet me outside. I have a place where you can stay.”

He turned to exit the house, smiling slightly at the screams coming from the living room. What’s this? A Pensieve? Wonderful. He picked it up and carried it outside.

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Ron was still struggling against the sticking charm holding him to the house when the cloaked figure exited, carrying one of Bill’s trophies. He placed the bowl thing on the garden table and summoned Ron’s wand. Then the Reaper removed his cloak.

Underneath the cloak and glamours was a man about his own age. A pair of gloves, his scythe, and an amulet joined the cloak. The man put Ron’s wand against his temple, and began to pull silvery strands of something from his head. The strands were placed in the bowl. The black haired youth then turned to face him, and canceled the sticking charm, allowing Ron to fall to the ground.

In a normal voice, the man began to speak. “I wasn’t going to come here. I was not going to confront you Ron. Even though you took the Mark, and I knew instantly when you did, you and your family were not to be touched. Then I found her.”

“Who?”

“Hermione.” The redhead had a blank look. “Hermione Granger.” Once again, the fury built with in him. “You didn’t even know her name. Wonderful. Malfoy’s sex slave.”

“What about her? Why would you care what I did to a mudblood slave?”

The man took him by the neck and pulled him to the bowl. “I’ll just have to show you why I care” as he pushed Ron’s face into the swirling silver vapor.

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“Anyone sitting there?” he asked, pointing at the seat opposite Harry. “Everywhere else is full.”

Harry shook his head and the boy sat down. He glanced at Harry and then looked quickly out of the window, pretending he hadn’t looked. Harry saw he still had a black mark on his nose.

“Hey, Ron.”

The twins were back.

“Listen, we’re going down the middle of the train — Lee Jordan’s got a giant tarantula down there.”

“Right,” mumbled Ron.

“Harry,” said the other twin, “did we introduce ourselves? Fred and George Weasley. And this is Ron, our brother. See you later, then.”

“Bye,” said Harry and Ron. The twins slid the compartment door shut behind them.

“Are you really Harry Potter?” Ron blurted out.

“That was when we met Ron. You became my best mate.”

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He had just raised his wand when the compartment door slid open again. The toadless boy was back, but this time he had a girl with him. She was already wearing her new Hogwarts robes.

“Has anyone seen a toad? Neville’s lost one,” she said. She had a bossy sort of voice, lots of bushy brown hair, and rather large front teeth.

“We’ve already told him we haven’t seen it,” said Ron, but the girl wasn’t listening, she was looking at the wand in his hand.

“Oh, are you doing magic? Let’s see it, then.”

She sat down. Ron looked taken aback.

“Er — all right.”

He cleared his throat.

“Sunshine, daisies, butter mellow, Turn this stupid, fat rat yellow.”

He waved his wand, but nothing happened. Scabbers stayed gray and fast asleep.

“Are you sure that’s a real spell?” said the girl. “Well, it’s not very good, is it? I’ve tried a few simple spells just for practice and it’s all worked for me. Nobody in my family’s magic at all, it was ever such a surprise when I got my letter, but I was ever so pleased, of course, I mean, it’s the very best school of

witchcraft there is, I've heard — I've learned all our course books by heart, of course, I just hope it will be enough — I'm Hermione Granger, by the way, who are you?"

She said all this very fast.

Harry looked at Ron, and was relieved to see by his stunned face that he hadn't learned all the course books by heart either.

"I'm Ron Weasley," Ron muttered.

"Harry Potter," said Harry.

"Are you really?" said Hermione. "I know all about you, of course — I got a few extra books, for background reading, and you're in Modern Magical History and The Rise and Fall of the Dark Arts and Great Wizarding Events of the Twentieth Century."

"Am I?" said Harry, feeling dazed.

"Goodness, didn't you know, I'd have found out everything I could if it was me," said Hermione. "Do either of you know what house you'll be in? I've been asking around, and I hope I'm in Gryffindor, it sounds by far the best; I hear Dumbledore himself was in it, but I suppose Ravenclaw wouldn't be too bad... Anyway, we'd better go and look for Neville's toad. You two had better change, you know, I expect we'll be there soon."

And she left, taking the toadless boy with her.

"That was when we met her. She was our other best mate. We did everything together for the six years we went to school together. She loved you. You loved her."

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"Hermione!" Ron groaned.

Hermione lay utterly still, her eyes open and glassy.

"They were found near the library," said Professor McGonagall. "I don't suppose either of you can explain this? It was on the floor next to them..."

She was holding up a small, circular mirror.

Harry and Ron shook their heads, both staring at Hermione.

"I will escort you back to Gryffindor Tower," said Professor McGonagall heavily. "I need to address the students in any case."

"This was when we found that Hermione had been attacked by the basilisk from the Chamber of Secrets. We almost lost her."

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“I’m quite surprised the Mudbloods haven’t all packed their bags by now,” Malfoy went on. “Bet you five Galleons the next one dies. Pity it wasn’t Granger —”

The bell rang at that moment, which was lucky; at Malfoy’s last words, Ron had leapt off his stool, and in the scramble to collect bags and books, his attempts to reach Malfoy went unnoticed.

“Let me at him,” Ron growled as Harry and Dean hung onto his arms. “I don’t care, I don’t need my wand, I’m going to kill him with my bare hands —”

“You were more than willing to do damage to your good friend Draco when ever he felt the need to insult Hermione.”

Harry showed Ron all of his memories of Ron and Hermione together. Her recovery from the basilisk’s petrification, the making up following the Triwizard Tournament, their times together in the Order’s Headquarters, the stolen moments the three of them shared. Even a memory he never wanted to relive:

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“Ron!”

Harry sat up in the darkness. He had snuck off to the attic be by himself for a bit. Since Dumbledore’s death, the world had been closing in on him. He did not know how long he could deal with it. Why was Hermione looking for Ron up here? Then a dim light flooded the attic as Ron lit his wand with ‘lumos’. The light showed his friends with their clothing in a pile on the floor.

“I want to see you ‘mione”

“Ron! Oh, Ron!”

“I love you ‘moine.”

“Love me, love me, love me Ron” she drew him into her, and her passion was quieted by his kisses.

Harry turned toward the wall and tried his hardest not to listen to his friends lovemaking. Not for the first time he felt a burning jealousy for Ron Weasley. If it was important in life, Ron had it, a lot of it. He smiled to him self; at least the two most important people in his life had found a measure of happiness together in the insanity that was his life.

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Ron felt himself being pulled out of the pensieve, to be thrown to the ground. He watched as the black haired man added his wand to the pile of things by the table.

“I know that you aren’t the Ron Weasley who was my friend. I know that the woman you abused isn’t the Hermione Granger we both loved. But knowing it and believing it are two different things.”

“I showed you those memories so that you would understand why I’m going to kill you. I’m not going to do it with magic; I’m going to take you apart with my bare hands. Get up you gutless Son of a

Bitch.”

Ron scrambled to his feet feeling confident that his larger size and weight would ensure his victory against this deluded madman. His confidence was quickly shattered when he discovered that his relaxed upbringing as a Pureblood hadn't done much to condition him physically, and that fighting with ones brothers doesn't prepare you for fighting someone who wants to kill you. He found himself face down in the dirt, with the madman kneeling on his back trying to twist his head around so that he could look backwards.

Harry had Ron's life in his hands. One quick twist and it was over. One quick twist. One quick twist... He reared back and punched the Pureblood as hard as he could, before standing and walking away.

“I can't do it. I can't kill you Ron, no matter how much you deserve it, I can't kill you.”

“I however, can.” Harry spun to see Fleur use Bill's wand to cast a point blank 'reducto' into Ron Weasley's head.

“You are an enigma Warrior.”

“My name is Harry. Harry Potter.”

“Fleur Delacour. But then somehow you know this.” She looked at him oddly. “I recall every man I have met. I do not know you.”

Harry looked sadly at the body that had worn the face and name of his lost friend. “I get that a lot here. Do you have somewhere to go? I've a safe house if you need it.”

“And what is the rent for this 'safe house'.”

“The promise that if I ever try to take advantage of you or my other guest, you kill me.”

“I believe I can make that promise. Here.” She tossed him a bag. “The treasure of the house. Should not the infamous 'Reaper' collect the treasure of his fallen victims. That will frighten the pureblood bastards more than you're just killing them.”

“I never thought of pillaging them. Thank you.” He gathered up his things, returned his memories, and picked up the pensieve. He offered the woman his other arm. “Shall we?”

She warily took his arm and they apparated away. Leaving only two corpses, a burning building, and a spectral Reaper floating in the sky.

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Kingsley Shacklebolt was not enjoying life.

The Weasley home was the fifth site attacked and destroyed by this 'Reaper', and this one was different. Firstly, it was done in broad daylight. Secondly, for some reason the body outside, the newly marked Ronald B. Weasley showed signs of having been physically beaten before he was killed. That must have made it personal, but no one in Weasley's circle of friends or enemies had the level of power

doing some of the things being done. That Reaper in the sky was the work of a class 6 magic user at least, and other than the dark lord, there weren't any magic users of that level.

Moreover, of course the Dark Lord wanted daily updates on the case. Anytime the Dark Lord takes, a personal interest in your work is a bad thing.

No, Shacklebolt was not enjoying life.

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Chapter Fifteen – The Cottage

Tom Riddle arrived on the scene of the Weasley murders soon after the Aurors reported the incident. He examined the available evidence while the Aurors prostrated themselves before him. Somehow, this one was different.

He looked to the senior Auror. “Rise Shacklebolt. Make your report.”

“I have only an initial summary My Lord.” Kingsley was sweating this report. “This appears to be the work of the same Terrorist or team of terrorists. The man inside, William Weasley 27, a Ward Breaker for the Directorate, had his arms and hips dislocated by powerful magic before he was killed. The killing was less clinical than previous victims, it was as if it was done slowly and messily to prolong the death while keeping the victim alive and conscious of the pain.”

“The second victim, Ronald Weasley 17, Hogwarts Head Boy this year, until the tragedy there. His murder was even more unusual than his brothers. It appears that he and his assailant actually fought with their fists, like Muggles. Only after he was beaten physically was he executed with a ‘reducto’ to the head. A devastating attack, but one at extremely low power for this assailant, which when coupled with the method of death for his brother leads me to suggest that this so called ‘Reaper’ had been joined by another.”

“Like the Malfoy murders, this home had a slave with magic. In this case a quarter Veela with full charm capability classified Class 5 Magic User Veela charm as well as Human Magic. In both cases the slaves are missing, but unlike the Malfoy case, none of the house elves are missing.”

Weasley was obviously a fool. As a Ward Breaker, he was a Class 5 Magic User himself. To keep a slave with more or less equivalent powers to your own was a recipe for disaster. If it wasn't for the Reaper floating above his head, he would have wagered that the slave had freed herself and taken revenge on her ‘owners’. What ever attraction a Veela might have, it was a fooling risk. “Malfoy had a slave with magic?” How had that tidbit of information not reached him before?

“Yes My Lord.” Shacklebolt consulted his notes. “A untrained captive mudblood, designated LC-1994203, aged 18 years. Captured due to an accidental discharge. Claimed by Lucius Malfoy rather than terminated.”

“This slave escaped detection until the age of 14? Class 1 I take it?”

“No My Lord, records indicated her index scores placed her on the high end of class 4.”

“Class 4? Malfoy allowed a Class 4 mudblood slave to survive to adult hood? It is fortunate that he had died, else I would be forced to kill him myself for such a flagrant violation of my policies. No matter how attractive she was. Where do you think this rogue Class 4 Magic User might be Shacklebolt?”

“I have no idea My Lord, we are still investigating.”

“I am asking for conjecture Auror, not fact. I don’t punish people for making incorrect guesses, just for lying to me.”

“My apologies My Lord. If I was to hazard a guess, I would guess that the woman is dead, or soon will be. She was taken no doubt to warm the bed of the terrorist that took her, now 12 hours later he has taken a Veela, undoubtedly for the same reason. Veela do not share My Lord.”

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Harry apparated to the cottage with Fleur in tow. He was going to have to pull down the Fidelus and recast if these women were to be able to come and go as they wish. But that was for another time. Now he was exhausted.

“Welcome back Great Wizard.”

He knelt down to look into the elf’s eyes. “I told you Dobby, my name is Harry. I’m not that great a wizard, I’m just Harry.”

A short look of conflict flashed across the elf’s face. “Dobby try Master Harry.”

“Thank you Dobby. Someday we’ll work on losing that Master title, ok. Ms Delacour could use a place to stay. Could you prepare a room for her?”

“All rooms are ready for Master Harry’s friends Master Harry.”

“Thank you Dobby.” He found a bag of gold that Fleur had liberated from the Weasley home. “Dobby, the ladies could use some clothing. Could you get their measurements and go get them what they need?” He handed the elf the money, then paused in thought “are house elves allowed to do things like that?”

“Oh yes Master Harry. Dobby do it all the time for Mistress and Young Master.”

“Good. Find out what they need, and get it. Not just clothing, what ever they need.”

“Of course Master Harry.”

“Thank you Dobby. The house looks wonderful, thank you for cleaning it for me.”

He stood again to find Fleur staring at him in amazement. “You are indeed an enigma Warrior.”

“No, I’m just Harry. I do weird stuff all the time.”

“You propose to feed and clothe me asking nothing in return?”

“I propose to care for those who live in my house until they chose to go elsewhere. You, the other girl upstairs, anyone.” He shrugged. “I do what I want to do. I expect others to do what they want to do. On those odd occasions when two or more people want to do the same thing at the same time, well that’s just part of the magic. I’m exhausted. I never intended to go after the Weasleys today. I’m going to get some sleep. “

She gave him an odd look. “Would you like company?”

He smiled. It struck her how he could smile and still appear to be so sad. “No, thank you.”

Fleur Delacour was amazed. No man had ever turned her down since she reached puberty. What kind of man was he?

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“Thank you little friend”

“Master Harry ask Dobby to shop for Miss Fleur, Dobby do that.”

“How did you know my sizes?”

“House Elf know to shop for household, is part of Elf magic.”

“Tell me Dobby, what do you know of Master Harry?”

“Dobby good elf. Dobby never speaks of the Master’s business.”

“Dobby doesn’t know very much about Harry Potter, beyond the fact he forced Lucius Malfoy to free Dobby, and then he rescued me from the bastard, yesterday.”

Fleur turned to face the younger woman clad in a bathrobe descending the stairs. “I am Fleur Delacour. You are?”

“My name is Hermione Granger. Is Potter collecting women?”

“I don’t think he expected to find me. The eldest Weasley held me. We have something in common it seems, I was given to Lucius Malfoy recently. I look forward to killing him.”

“You’re too late, Potter did that yesterday. For the last three years, Ron Weasley has regularly used me. It seems we have quite a bit in common.”

“Miss? Master Harry had Dobby shop for Miss.” The elf handed her a bundle wrapped in brown paper.

“Clothing? I haven’t had clothing in three years...” the young witch whispered.

“We appear to be sharing the good fortune of being rescued from our servitude by a good man.”

“My father was the only good man I’ve ever known. He wants something, wait and see.”

“I do not know. I offered my self to him last night.” Seeing the look on the younger witches face she continued “I am Veela, we have different needs. Part of our abilities is the Veela charm. We can enthrall men. I wanted to find out if I was safe here, so I turned my charm on to him and asked to sleep with him.”

“and?”

“He turned me down. No hesitation, when I use my charm even women will come to me. I accidentally learned that at school. Until last night no man had ever refused me.” A look of concern crossed her face. “I find that somehow comforting.”

The younger woman looked at her like she was insane.

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Harry came down the stairs in time for lunch. He sat as far as possible from the two women, mumbling good morning as he passed. As he ate he seemed to remember something and pulled a wand out of his back pocket. He pushed it across the table to Hermione.

“What’s this?”

“Weasley’s. Thought you’d like it. He doesn’t need it anymore.” He frowned, “If I’d known what they’d done I’d have gotten you Malfoy’s and Zambini’s as well.”

“You killed him?”

“Yes.”

“I wanted to kill him.”

“I know that. Your soul is clean, you don’t need to dirty it with killing.” He took a pull on the coffee. “My soul is damaged beyond all redemption. Let me take the hit for you.”

“Is my soul dirty as well?”

“Fluer, you’ve lived with different values. Hermione was raised with Church of England morals. Weren’t you?”

“How do you know these things?” She looked terrified of him. “How do you know so much about my life before the bad times? And don’t try to fool me with that ‘from another dimension’ crap!”

“Fine.” He stood and left the room, returning with the pensieve. He picked up the wand on the table and placing it against his temple, pulled out the silvery thread of memory, placing it in the bowl.

“Just put your face into the mist.” He looked embarrassed. “You’ll be seeing my memories.”

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Hermione and Fleur landed in the scene and it began to run.

The portkey deposited several people that they both recognized as Weasleys and Harry Potter in the grassy lawn of an estate.

“My parent’s home” said Fleur amazed at what she was seeing.

They watched as Harry vomited all over his shoes.

“Honestly Harry” said another Hermione, waving her wand about and cleaning him. “You’ve got to learn to use a portkey without getting sick.”

“I’m working on it.”

The pair followed the group to a mass of people.

“Welcome to our wedding Harry!” said a beaming Bill Weasley. “Thank you for coming.”

“Glad I could make it Bill. This is some place.”

“Fleur’s from a very old and important family. I still can’t believe she chose me.” Bill sighed “She asked that you go to see her before the ceremony... Hey, no running off with my bride!”

Fleur was shocked. “We married? I married that monster?”

“Sorry Weasley, I’ve convinced her that short, specky and skinny is better than 6 foot 2 inches of Red Headed God. You lose old man!”

Bill laughed and sent him off to meet the bride.

He turned a corner on his way to where Fleur was changing and there in a corner were Ron and Hermione, attempting to fuse at the mouths. He hurried along before they noticed him.

“Me and Weasley? No way. No way in hell!”

He reached the room where Fleur was getting ready. She swept him into her arms “’arri”

“Hello Fleur”

“Oh ‘arri, I am so glad you could come. I wanted a ‘Champions moment’ with you. And I wanted to see, if at least once before I become a proper married matron if you would succumb to my charm...”

“Don’t tease me Fleur. Bill would kill me.”

“And what of ‘ermione?”

“She’s with Ron. She’s happy. Ron’s happy. That’s what matters.”

“You do not matter ‘arri?”

“Not as much as they do. Let it go Fleur.”

“Alright ‘arri. But you must know that you do matter.”

“I’ve got to go if I want to get a good seat.”

“See you at the reception ‘arri.”

The ceremony was beautiful, both girls were amazed at the detail in his memories, just as Bill said 'I Do' chaos erupted. Death Eaters apparated into the ceremony and curses started flying. Bill and Fleur fell in the first volley, then the rest of the wedding party. They saw as the killing curse was closing on Harry's back when the memory Hermione next to him spotted it and pushed him out of the way, only to fall after the curse struck her. They saw his eyes go wide in anguish and heard the wounded animal sound erupt from his throat as his magic bloomed and began to extinguish the lives of the Death Eaters.

They watched in silence as he slaughtered Voldemort and his inner circle. They watched as he used his magic to bury the dead, and both of them began to cry when he picked up Hermione's body, wrapped her in a sheet and returned her to her parents.

The memory ended.

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"Well now you know. Now you know what a monster I am."

"You defended yourself after driven to madness"

"I've killed hundreds Fleur." He turned his attention to Hermione. "Never ask me to let you become what I am. You are too important to me."

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Chapter Sixteen – Faith

“What do you think?”

Fleur looked up from the pensieve. Harry had left another collection of his memories in it, neither of them had had the courage to look at the lives that might have been theirs.

“I believe he is showing us his memories. I wonder how one can tell the difference between memories and the delusions of a mad man. However, he did show me my parent’s home. How could even a mad man know that?”

“When he took me... Her home, it was the house I lived in before they came for us.” She shuddered, “That was my mum, my daddy.”

“My marrying that Weasley Monster, that was madness.”

“No more so than my making love with that other Weasley monster.” A cold fury burned in her brown eyes. “They must have been very different people.”

“He could not kill your rapist. He tried, but it was not in him. I had to do it. He was almost in tears. His memories of young Ronald are of a good friend, one he had lost your counterpart to, happily so that they could be happy. He could have killed the older one without a thought, he only allowed me to do it because he could see how much I needed to do it.”

“Yet he wouldn’t bring him to me.”

“And he told you why. Mindlessly chauvinistic, but at least he has a reason.” She smiled. “At least he attempts to protect us, rather than use us.”

“Could he? Use us I mean?”

“I saw his power when he attacked Bill Weasley. He barely touched the man and flung him across a room. Weasley manipulated my Veela charm with charmed bracelets and a collar. Potter’s power is such that he could manipulate my abilities in such a way that both of us would beg him to take us any way he wanted, knowing in our souls that it was our idea. Imagine the self control involved in not doing that when it would be easy.”

They sat in silence for a moment. “I wonder what sex is like when you want it. When you want the one you are with.”

“It is the most wonderful feeling there is. You are right to wonder, given what you have experienced. Sex has been a part of my life since puberty; it is the Veela blessing and curse. Until I was taken when Beauxbatons was captured, I never had a partner I didn’t want.” She had a wistful look “If you decide to experiment, do not toy with Harry Potter. Where you are concerned, he is fragile. You have the face, the voice, the mind of a woman he lost forever. A casual fling for you would be devastating to him.”

That thought seemed to give the younger girl pause.

“Enough of this.” The French witch gestured to the pensieve. “Shall we?”

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“Welcome back Harry.”

“Professor Flitwick. I was hoping that Madam Pomfrey had spoken with the council about Hermione Granger.”

“Ah, the Muggle Born you rescued. Yes, we have had discussions on the topic. Please, come in and see Luna and Amelia.”

This wasn't a good sign. No 'sure, bring her over.' No 'we can always use another wand'. Damn.

“Welcome back Harry.”

“I suspect that I'm not back, Madam Bones. What's the decision on my Muggle Born friend?”

“There is a prevalent view that the Muggle Born are responsible for Voldemort's excesses.”

“Madam Bones you know that's a load of crap. Why are you allowing bigots to make policy?”

“I think perhaps everyone should concentrate on our primary goal of eliminating the Death Eaters.”

“Luna, if this is what your people stand for, I'm leaving and not coming back.”

“Harry, we need to serve the people we lead.”

“Professor McGonagall, if this is serving people then perhaps they should be moved back into their tents, after all the fidelis was brought to you by the son of a Mudblood.” Anger was building in him; his magic started pulsing off him. “If I find any of your people attacking Muggles or the Muggle Born, I will treat them as I treat any other Death Eater.” He hit them all with a death glare. “Then I go looking for their leaders. I thank you for the aid you gave me when I arrived. I believe the magic I have shared with you can be considered payment in full. We are done with each other.”

He turned on his heel and walked away ignoring their calls for his attention. Susan rushed up to him carrying a bundle.

“I'm coming with you.”

“Susan, I'm not coming back.”

“I know that. I told them they were idiots for taking this insane position. I told them that it would drive you away. I told Auntie Amelia that I would go with you if you left. She told me to quit being silly.”

“Susan, I don't want to come between your Aunt and yourself.”

“You didn’t Harry. I saw that they had a chance to show the difference between the Death Eaters and themselves. They chose to be too much like them for my taste.”

“Susan...”

“Quit arguing with me Harry. I’m going with you.”

“Susan, there are two women living with me. They were kept as sex slaves, they barely tolerate me. I don’t know how they will react to you. I mean...”

“So purebloods need not apply? How is this different from those idiots in there?”

Harry sighed. He was trapped and knew it. Had he ever won an argument with any woman ever? “I think we’re running out of bedrooms.”

“Not a problem. I’m sure I can find some place to bunk down...”

He sighed again, and gathered her into his arms. They were gone.

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“Susan, this is Hermione and Fleur. They live here with me. Ladies, this is Susan.”

“Where did he rescue you from?” the French witch looked the new comer over in an appraising way.

“From my own silence and some pureblood nutters in the resistance.”

“You’re a Pureblood?”

“Yes she is Hermione. And you’re Muggle Born. Fleur is quarter Veela, and I’m a half blood. Should we get team jackets? Look we’ve all had rough lives, all of us just because of who our parents were.”

“I don’t care, I won’t live with a Pureblood.”

“You don’t have to Hermione. The door is right there.”

“You would send me away?”

“Not at all. You said you wouldn’t live with Susan. Susan is staying as long as she likes, just as you are. If you chose not to stay, that’s your decision. I open my home to everyone who would like to stay, but no guest can tell another they are not welcome.”

“I thought I meant something to you.”

“All three of you are reminders of what I have lost and I hope, friends. All three of you are good people, despite whatever inner demons drive you. I hope you stay Hermione, and get to know Susan.

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Harry left following the evening meal, on another Reaper strike. The three women sat in the sitting room of the cottage pretending to read, stealing glances at each other.

“Well this is pleasant.” Said Fleur, breaking the silence. “Let us all clear the air shall we? Hermione and myself are refugees from the Directorate, this is why we hide here. And you Susan?”

“I have been on the run from the Directorate since I was 6 years old, when Directorate Death Eaters killed my parents and raped me.”

“But you are not here to hide from the Directorate are you?”

“No, I’m here to be with Harry. He is the only man I have ever wanted to be with.”

“You can have him.”

“Well thank you Hermione, so nice of you to make a gift of the man. I suspect that if anyone ‘gives’ me Harry, it will be Harry himself.”

“And if I wanted him? Do you believe you can win against my Veela charm?”

“If you could enthrall him, you already would have. If you wanted him, you would be more interested than you are. I don’t see this as a competition, I see this as you two not wanting him, and I do.”

“Perhaps we could share? It will be another week or so before my urges become too intense to ignore... The ‘common knowledge’ that Veela do not share their men is nonsense. When I go into my active cycle, the pheromone release will effect us all. If no other men are available, who knows what will happen? Perhaps we will all share him.”

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Harry apparated to the perimeter of the Nott estate. So, the Reaper has finally gotten peoples attention. A dozen guards were patrolling the grounds. He picked up the guards, gathered them into a writhing mass of bodies, and then banished them into the tall stonewall. He apparated into the mass of Dark Marks he detected in the building, shredding the wards with a thought.

He appeared into the middle of a dinner party.

“Good evening. I am the Reaper. I bring death to those who wear the mark of the lunatic Half Blood Tom Riddle. I do hope you enjoyed your last meal.”

A dozen spells impacted on his shield, following them came the green flash of the Killing Curse. Harry cast a hybrid spell he had been experimenting with, a battering shield, which used its momentum to deflect the Killing Curse away from him. Harry cast a wide area stunner and smiled as the dinner guests fell.

“Hello Tom.”

“Who are you?”

“Tommy, you cut me to the quick. Do you actually not know who I am?”

“Tell me!”

“Tommy, I’m your evil twin from another Dimension. Of course you are such an evil son of a bitch, it makes me a sweet guy.” Harry laughed. That always pissed Riddle off. The angrier he got the more mistakes he made. “I’m here to kill you Tommy.”

Riddle started to cast another Killing Curse, Harry cast a silent bludgeoning curse that slammed the Dark Lord into the wall behind him.

“Ah, ah , ah. Not your time yet Tommy. I’ve got a whole lot of your followers to kill first. Want to know my plan? I’m going to demonstrate to your Death Eaters that you cannot protect them. They will tear each other apart trying to protect themselves from me. Your boys don’t know the meaning of teamwork. Say good night Tommy!” Harry pulled the wall down on him.

By the time Riddle had dug himself free, all of the marked at the dinner party were dead.

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Major Llewellyn and Sergeant Evans monitored the crossing. The vehicle count was consistent. This would make a good ambush. Hit and run, just as it had been for 16 years. The Directorate would be losing some people tomorrow.

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Harry returned to the cottage exhilarated. He had stood up to Tom and won, at least a battle.

“Hello Dobby”

“Good evening Master Harry.”

“How was everyone tonight Dobby?”

“Miss, Miss Susan and Miss Fleur were fighting.”

“Fighting? Why?”

“Over you Master Harry Sir.”

“Why would they fight over me?”

“Master Harry, you bring Veela into house with two other women. Does Master Harry not know how Veela not mated make other women feel?”

“No.”

“Master Harry, you need to study this. You will be Mate of all three women soon.”

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Chapter Seventeen – Tribulations

Tom Riddle, Lord Voldemort, the Master of the world stared unbelievably at the mirror. What had that Reaper fool done to him?

He cast another diagnostic spell, which returned nothing, just like all the others. The Healers had no clue as to what it was.

All twelve members of his protective detail died in a few seconds, silently. An estate with some of the best wards in the world, penetrated with seemingly no effort. For the first time since Dumbledore, an opponent had landed a spell on him. On HIM. Then his hosts and their guests were murdered while Riddle had dug himself out from under the wall that the Reaper had pulled down upon him. Not for the first time he found himself asking where had this ‘Reaper’ come from?

He cast a glamour on his face, and watched in anger as it, like the 19 before it dissolved away. There was no hiding the damned thing.

He raged throughout his apartments, destroying priceless antiques, scorching irreplaceable artwork, vaporizing furnishings. Almost immediately feeling bad about it. These were not the actions of the ruler of the world. He was acting like an angry 16-year-old, like when he made his first Horocrux. Now he would have to apologize to the house elves. He tamped down on his anger and magic.

If he was going to succeed against this ‘Reaper’, he was going to need to calm himself. Their exchange had proven to him that they were near equals in power. Riddle (he still thought of himself by that hated name, even after all these years) however had become complacent. He hadn’t dueled in a decade, not since Dumbledore, this new comer evidently dueled quite a bit, his speed and spell selection that of a much younger man. In addition, he knew what buttons to push to drive Riddle into a fury. At 73 Riddle was in middle age, but this Reaper moved like a man in his 20s.

Most feared his fury; the Reaper used it to make him sloppy. And laughed at him. Again, Riddle turned to the mirror and closely examined what the healers were calling ‘a blemish. For all the world it appeared to be a port-wine stain birthmark, in the shape of a stylized lightning bolt starting above his right eye and ending on his left cheek.

That damned Reaper had marked HIM.

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“Good morning Fleur.”

“Good morning Harry.” It did not look like he had gotten any sleep the night before, had he been here the whole time? “Is there something wrong?”

“When I got back last night Dobby told me that I ought to get to know about your Veela charms. I’ve

been through the entire library at Hogwarts and found very little on the Veela at all.” He looked uncomfortable. “Dobby suggested that it might become necessary for me to... mate with the three of you because of your charms... Is he making sense, or am I reading too much in to his way of thinking?”

“The Veela do not take well to not having regular sex. If we go more than twenty days or so without indulging, our bodies react badly. When our drives are ignored, the charm goes into over drive, as do our bodies, dumping pheromones into the air so as to bring potential mates to us and to drive the Veela into a mating frenzy. During these cycles, in close company, the pheromone dump will also affect other women, driving them to mate as well. My first time following puberty, not knowing what was wrong; I started quite the orgy in my dormitory. Since you are denying me, I suspect that Hermione, Susan, and I will be attacking you within the 5 days or so.”

“So, if we have sex, Susan and Hermione won’t be affected?”

She smiled. “Yes.”

“Even though I don’t love you?”

Hermione entered the kitchen. “If that’s your smooth move Potter, it needs work.”

“In so many ways Harry is an ideal man Hermione. To keep you from suffering from my pheromones he is considering sacrificing his virtue.”

“This is insane. I’m 17 year old and a beautiful woman is telling me she wants sex and I’m trying to figure a way out of it.”

“You must have loved her very much Harry.” Fleur shot Hermione a pointed look. “Come with me, we will make love.”

“Ok, ok.” She took his hand and started to lead him away.

He stopped. “Wait.” He went to his cloak and pulled out a small package. “I almost forgot,” he handed the package to Hermione. “Happy Birthday.”

Fleur led him away. Hermione waited a moment, then untied the string and removed the brown paper. Inside was a copy of *Pride and Prejudice*. A gasp escaped her lips and she clasped the book to her chest.

Susan came in and saw the expression on her face “What’s wrong?”

“Harry got me a book. I’d forgotten that it was my birthday, and he remembered.”

“Your counterpart was a major part of his life. He knew Fleur and Me as well; I doubt that he knows our birthdays.”

“You’re probably right.” She smiled. “I love this book.”

“Fleur having her way with him?”

“Yes, she told him about her cycle. Convinced him that by doing her, he would save us.”

“I don’t want saving.”

She is going to need him once or twice a month. I suspect you’ll get him the rest of the time.”

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Major Llewellyn lowered his binoculars. The food convoy bound for Edinburgh was due in about 35 minutes. It was supposed to be escorted by a dozen magic users as well as 10 collaborators. Sergeant Evans was in position to detonate their home brewed claymores. Four riflemen were positioned to deal with any magic users that might be on brooms. These fools still had not learned than no shield they could conjure in midair would stop a bullet.

“The wand users will go hungry tonight Major.”

“In deed sir.”

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“What have we done Poppy?”

“Made a mistake. I told you when you were doing it. You underestimated Potter AND your niece Amelia.”

The two sat in the kitchen drinking tea.

“I never thought she would actually leave.”

“Of course not Amelia. After all who would have thought that she would follow the boy who pulled her out of the shell she built around herself, who got her to speak again, that she took to her bed?” She smiled at her old friend. “Oh, wait. I thought that.”

“No one likes a smart ass Poppy.”

“Not until you’re hurt, then you like me a lot.” Poppy smiled into her mug “She’s a good girl, Amelia who held you up as the symbol of all that is right. Then you make a wrong decision against a man who she has fallen in love with. Why are you surprised?”

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Chapter Eighteen – Communion

Two redheads exited the Leaky Cauldron together. It had been a long day. There was little joy in working in retail, but until they could save the money for the shop they planned to buy together, there were few other choices.

“Good evening Gentlemen.”

They spared a glance to the dark haired kid who suddenly was walking between them.

“I’m looking for the world famous Weasley Twins.”

“Bad luck for you.”

“No Weasleys here.”

“Just Prewetts.”

“He’s Fabian”

“He’s Gideon”

“Prewett, not Weasley.”

“That’s too bad. I have some things that need blowing up real bad. Things that I would like to blow up real good. I’m told that the Weasley Twins are among the very best at blowing stuff up.”

“Prewetts here, not Weasleys. Not every redheaded twin is a Weasley.”

“Never heard of a Prewett blowing stuff up, twin or otherwise.”

“That’s because Prewett Twins”

“Never blow stuff up.”

“Or call attention to themselves”

“Because we’re perfectly…”

“Boringly “

“Normal in every way.”

“Too bad.”

“Why?”

“Is that too bad?”

“A girl I know named Fleur has a thing for twins that blow stuff up”

“Fleur?”

“Delacour?”

“She used to live with a guy named Bill.”

“We know a Bill.”

“Her Bill had an accident. She asked me to find the Weasley Twins, something about thanking them for trying.”

“Thanking”

“Them?”

“A most personal thank you.”

“Personal?”

“I wasn’t really listening, but she was talking about wanting to baisez vos cerveaux dehors ”

“We’re the Weasley Twins.”

“He’s Fred. I’m George.”

“I know.”

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The three days previous:

“Wow. That was... Wow.”

“Merci.” She looked down on him, her body shining in sweat. Her scent filled the room. “Three times Harry? I love the recuperative abilities of young men.”

“I can’t feel my legs. Wow.” He panted. “I’m not complaining, but I think you’re killing me.”

She smiled. “There are worse ways to die, no?”

He pulled her down for a kiss, and then rolled to his side taking her with him. She positioned her self so that he remained inside of her, and began nibbling on his neck while rocking her hips toward him. His breathing increase as he took in her pheromones.

“Fleur, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is spongy and bruised. Can we, I don’t know, talk for a while?”

“Do you want to hear the sad story of my life?”

“It’s not like that Fleur. I’ve told you everything about me, you’ve seen my memories.” He paused and shuddered, “I don’t have that much experience Fleur, only one other woman, but I’ve never felt anything like that before.” He shuddered again. “Please don’t do that, or I won’t be able to talk.”

“Perhaps I don’t want to talk.” She giggled when his eyes bugged out. “After all, you didn’t know much about my counterpart other than she was beautiful and thought you were a little boy, and then she was marrying your friend’s older brother.”

“I wasn’t **uugh** living with her, she never invited me into her bed. Please stop doing that. I want to know you. And heal a little bit.”

“Alright. I was born and raised on my father’s estate near Nice. When I was 11, I went to Beauxbatons. Unlike your world, the rise of Voldemort prevented a triwizard tournament. My 7th year, France and Beauxbatons fell to the forces of Voldemort, and I was taken as a prize. I was presented to Bill Weasley for bringing down our wards.” Her face darkened. “My sister Gabrielle was killed in the culling of undesirables of Beauxbatons. Weasley took me and traded my body for job advancement. He used me himself, and allowed his brothers Charlie, Percy and Ron to use me whenever they wanted. His sister used me to entertain her boyfriends, and on occasion had me pleasure her. You rescued me, allowed me to kill Weasley, I killed his younger brother for you, you brought me here, and I brought you to my bed.” She used her inner muscles to squeeze him again and smiled when he reacted. “Any other questions?”

“I thought my life was hard. I had no idea the Weasleys were so bad. You didn’t mention the twins.”

“Fred and George are nothing like the others. Bill sent me to them ‘to make them men’. They put me into one of their beds and kept the others away from me for most of a week. They never touched me, not once, not even when I asked. They tried to help me escape, but we were caught. Bill used the cruciatus curse on them as punishment. That was when they left saying they could not be part of a family who would treat a person as they were treating me. Fred cried when he snuck into Bill’s bedchamber to say goodbye. I haven’t seen George since they caught us.”

“Sounds like they meant a lot to you.”

“More than any men I’ve ever known. They didn’t want anything from me, only wanted to help me.” She smiled and nuzzled closer, her breath hot on his neck. “You remind me of them.”

“Did I kill the mood?”

She looked deeply into his eyes. “Not a chance Harry Potter. Are you rested yet? Hmm.” She ground against him. “Someone seems to be getting interested. Slowly this time?”

“**uuuugh!**” he responded.

“Fourth times a charm.” She giggled as she felt her body release another pheromone flood and his

response. His eyes glazed over as conscious thought left him and instincts older than man took over.

Fleur felt her own controls slipping away; the part of her mind that monitored such things was surprised. This had never happened before. Both their bodies were covered in sweat, her pheromones triggering responses in his body, his in hers. Their magics started to react to each other. She distantly noted that they were no longer on the bed, but levitating five feet over it, and the animal portions of their minds had them thrusting into each other all the harder for it.

Fleur's orgasm was building toward release, somehow she knew that his was as well. His hands found the sides of her head and pulled her face to his. As their tongues touched, her orgasm broke. She bit down on his tongue, hard. This pushed his orgasm over the edge, his back arching.

communion

All that she was poured into him. All that he was poured into her.

The tiny portion of her mind not addled by lust watched the incoming whole of Harry Potter in amazement. Communion was almost a myth among the Veela, a total irreversible sharing of self, thought to be possible only pair bonds built over decades, but she had known this Harry Potter less than a month, and only bedded him this day.

How was this possible?

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"Sweet Merlin on a Pogo Stick!" Harry stumbled into the sitting room three hours later, and collapsed on the sofa.

Hermione looked up from her book. "The conquering hero returns. How went the war?"

"Next time I just run for the hills and let her turn you and Susan into ravaging sex maniacs."

"Turn? You mean we aren't already? Aren't we next on your lists of conquests?"

"That's a bit unfair Hermione." He pulled himself into a sitting position.

"Why? You Great Heroes collect women left and right don't you? You hold our lives in your hand, how long will it be before you come to the bed you allow me to use to collect what you are owed?" She looked at him with loathing. "The 'birthday present', the attention, the looks you give me, it's all part of your plan of conquest isn't it?"

"In my life, I have had sex with two women, both of whom came to me. I will never come on to you. I will never approach you. I will never as much as touch you without your permission."

"That's what you say, that's what Fleur and Susan believe, but I know better. I know what you are up to. Draco was nice on occasion too. You might as well just go ahead and collect what you're due; I will never fall for your game."

His face fell. "I'm sorry you feel that way Hermione." He stood and left the room.

Hermione returned her attention to the book.

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Susan found him after he missed dinner. He was leaning against the tree in the yard in front of the cottage, staring off into the distance, with track of tears running down his cheeks.

“What’s wrong Harry?” She sat beside him.

“Nothing Susan. Just feeling a little sorry for myself.”

She took his hand and kissed it. “You can share the sorrow with me.”

“You know I would never hurt you, right? That I would never... never do anything you didn’t want, right?”

“Of course I know that.”

“You’re sure? You trust me?” The answer seemed to be vitally important to him.

“Of course I trust you Harry. Why would you even ask?”

“Hermione doesn’t trust me. She thinks I’m going to rape her.”

“She told you that?”

“Yes.”

“Why are you letting this bother you so much?”

“Hermione is the smartest person I know. Just about every single time she’s told me something, it’s turned out to be true.” He looked to her, his eyes full of tears. “What if she’s right? What if I am as much of an animal as she says I am? I mean I’ve been killing people since I got here, how am I different than Voldemort?”

Susan drew him into a hug. “Don’t listen to that stupid girl. She doesn’t know anything about you. You are a good man Harry Potter.”

“Am I?” He looked at her with fear in his eyes “How do you know?”

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Susan stormed into the sitting room. She pulled the book from Hermione’s hands and flung it across the room, then backhanded the startled girl across the face.

“You stupid bitch. How could you do that to him?”

“I didn’t do anything to him. We were talking and I offered my opinion.”

“What did you say to him Hermione?” Fleur asked calmly.

“I suggested that since he had taken you, that Susan and I would be next.”

“Harry did not ‘take’ me. He gave himself to me. If anyone was used, I used him.”

“Or so he’d like you to think. I’ve seen his manipulative kind. Get you to trust him, then he and two of his friends are all fucking you at the same time.”

“Ok” Susan said through gritted teeth. “He traveled from another universe, saved me from a Death Eater attack, designed and built the Reaper Personae, attacked Hogwarts and other Death Eater centers, freed you from the Malfoys, Fleur from the Weasleys, and me from the pureblood bigots of the resistance, and brought us all here to safety. He abandoned the company and protection of the Resistance because they wouldn’t accept you, just so he could get into your pants? Is this what you’re saying?”

“You do understand how silly that sounds do you not Hermione?” Fleur looked at the younger witch. “Harry and I experienced an unexpected communion, I am still processing his experiences, but he has always been a good respectful man.”

“That isn’t what I said Fleur. What I said is…”

Susan hit her again. “I don’t give a tinker’s dam what you think you said you stupid bint. A good man is out in the yard crying because he believes you to be the smartest woman he knows and cannot believe that you could possibly be wrong. You get your ass out there and fix what you’ve done or you won’t have to worry about Harry, you will need to worry about me!”

“Me as well. Harry has shown us nothing but kindness. He has made no demands on you aside from treating his other guests with respect, and you say that to him? You have seen his memories; you know the regard he held your counterpart in. How could you do this?”

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It had begun to rain by the time Hermione swallowed her pride and went to find Harry. He was still sitting under the tree, soaked to the skin, the tears would not stop. How could I have invaded Fleur’s mind like that? What kind of animal am I?

“Harry?”

He did not answer. Maybe she will go away.

She did not go away. “I’m sorry Harry.”

“For what? You told the truth.”

“Harry, except for my Daddy, the only reference I have for men were the Malfoys. I’m sorry I lumped you in with them. I know you’re not like that.”

“I am like that Hermione. I think about sex with you all the time. When I was with Fleur today, I was

thinking about you. Wondering if you tasted like she tasted, if you kissed like she kisses, if you smell like she smells. It used to be her in my mind, the other Hermione. Now it's you, hair cut the way you wear yours, the scar on your left breast, even those initials carved in your thigh." His shoulders shook with sobs. "I dream of you. I know you don't want me. I swear I'll never actually touch you, but I am the monster you fear."

"You think dreaming about sex with me makes you a monster? Honestly Harry, "she saw his body jerk, but didn't make the connection to her counterpart. "Dreaming about sex makes you a normal man. Having consensual sex with Fleur or Susan or me does not make you a monster. Raping a woman would make you a monster; I do not believe you would ever do that. I don't believe you could do that." She knelt beside him. "In your dreams and fantasies, are you hurting me? Are you forcing me to do anything?"

"no."

"There you have it. The normal male mind. You poor clods think about sex all the time. You do not fantasize about hurting me, you fantasize about making me feel good. I don't know if I'll ever want such a relationship, but it was wrong of me to take my bad mood out on you. You aren't a monster. You won't hurt of us."

Then how did I get into Fleur's mind?

She reached down to take his hand. "Let's get you inside and dried off. You can't save the world if you're sick in bed with a cold."

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"The spirit is willing but the flesh is spongy and bruised." - Zapp Brannigan

Story 4

Chapter Nineteen - Alliances

Riddle paced, at the conference table his Elite Death Eaters nervously waited for his next question. Standing at the far end of the conference room was Auror Shacklebolt. Shacklebolt's string of very bad days was continuing.

"Tell me again what we know about this 'Reaper'.

"Yes My Lord. We believe the terrorist to be male, but have not yet confirmed this. He is now responsible for 19 separate attacks. He is a powerful wizard, high end Class 6 magic user, possibly even, and please excuse the presumption My Lord, the second recorded Class 7 magic user."

"He attacks only those who wear your Mark. He has killed others, but only after they attack him. In 11 of the 19 attacks, he has freed body slaves. We have traced all but two of those freed slaves. Upon interrogation, it was determined that they knew nothing. He healed them and returned them to their homes. The two we have not found, the first Muggle born he stole from the Malfoys and the Veela, both no longer have any living relatives, I postulate that they remain with the Reaper. When the Veela was taken, you asked me to guess as to the status of the Muggle born My Lord. At that time, I guessed that she was probably dead. Given the slaves he continues to free, I respectfully retract my earlier guess. I believe the terrorist still has both of them with him. Probably voluntarily."

"Why voluntarily?"

"Both the Weasley's and the Malfoy's were reportedly particularly abusive to their body slaves."

"Your projections for his next target?"

"That is hard to say My Lord. Of the 19 confirmed attacks, the only commonality we have found is the presence of those bearing your mark. You yourself reported his stated goal of causing as much death and destruction as possible to demonstrate the absurdly false idea that you could not protect your people. I have Aurors stationed at several likely targets, but so far he hasn't hit any of those targets."

"Very good Auror Shacklebolt. Urge your people to take this criminal down."

"Thank you My Lord. We live to serve you."

"Yes, you do."

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"Well, this is the place."

"Sweet Merlin!"

"This is a cottage?"

"So I'm told" Harry said.

Susan, Fleur and Hermione came out on the porch.

"Oh goodie, three boy and three girls, what will we do?"

Susan shot Hermione a warning look. "Bringing us more outcasts Harry?"

"No, believe it or not, these two are purebloods in good standing, who want to see our Ms. Delacour"

Fleur ran to the twins without a word and gathered them into her arms. The three of them clung together murmuring to each other.

Harry continued on to the cottage, and guided the two other witches inside "We'd best leave them alone. They have a bit of a history, and need to get reacquainted."

Inside once the door was closed Hermione wheeled on him "They look like Weasleys."

"That's mostly because they are Weasleys. Weasleys who were tortured by their own brothers when they tried to help Fleur escape." Harry smiled. "They mean a lot to Fleur, they're in love with her."

"Both of them?"

"Evidently. If she's ok with that, none of my business."

Susan looked thoughtful, "I hope they can find some happiness."

"Me too. Look, I know you two spend a lot of time in the library. I was hoping you could do a search for me to find another property I own. We need more room, and I haven't been able to figure out how to pull down the fidelus on this house so I could put up another. That way people could come and go without me taking them in and out."

"I've seen some deeds somewhere Harry, we should be able to find something."

"Thank you Susan, you too Hermione.

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Dinner was very enjoyable. The twins were almost the practical jokers he remembered from his first world, even Hermione was laughing at one point. They spent the evening in the sitting room talking and telling stories. Harry's stories of his first world were the favorites of the group, especially when he started leaving certain names out, which was harder than it sounded when he decided to do it.

The Twins especially enjoyed hearing stories of Arthur and Molly, with stories of the exploits of their counterparts being close seconds. All three girls enjoyed stories of the Triwizard Tournament, though Fleur became sad at the mention of Gabrielle at the second task and was more than a little insulted at the suggestion that she might have been taken out of the third task by a mere quidditch player. It was almost midnight when the gathering started to breakup, Hermione heading up to her room, followed by Susan excusing herself a few moments later. At 1 am, Fleur led George and Fred upstairs. Harry stopped in the kitchen to see if Dobby needed any help. He found the kitchen spotless and Dobby was insulted (in a completely subservient way) at the suggestion that he needed help to clean up after only six people.

Ensuring the wards were set, Harry headed up stairs. He stripped and took a long hot shower, and after toweling himself off, pulled on a pair of boxers and entered his room.

Susan was in the bed.

"Hi."

"Susan, I..."

"Just shut up. I want what you did for Fleur. She needed you and I want you. Not all that much difference is there?"

"Susan I don't want to hurt you."

"Then get your ass in this bed and help me feel better. Sending me away will hurt me. We live in a crappy world Harry. Any of us can die tomorrow, why not be happy now?" she sat up, exposing her breasts. "Love me Harry. Hold me tonight."

Harry extinguished the lights and moved to get into the bed.

"Lose the boxers Potter" she growled.

Love making with Susan was very different from his previous experiences. Luna was hungry and driven. Fleur was an athletic and focused. For all her pretended aggression, Susan was hesitant and affectionate. Try as he might he could not bring her to orgasm, but she seemed happy to cling to him until they both fell asleep.

Harry woke with sunrise to find the pretty blonde still in his arms. He slipped from the bed, cleaned himself up, dragging a razor across his face, and brushed his teeth. He then returned to the bed, Susan snuggled in close and he enjoyed the smell of her hair until she started to wake.

Susan was surprised to find a warm body next to her in those first few seconds of waking up before memory engages. She looked up to his face and was welcome to wakefulness with a kiss.

"Again?" she asked hopefully.

"Yes, please." He kissed her again. "Practice makes perfect..."

"By all means, we need to practice.

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They spent the morning together, ignoring the hostile glares from Hermione. Fleur and the twins never did make an appearance, spending the day in Fleur's rooms, with Dobby making frequent deliveries of food.

Harry spent three hours following lunch coaching Hermione and Susan in their spell work. Neither had any formal education, discounting Hermione's stolen time with Draco's schoolbooks. Still both were powerful witches who had observed far more magic than they had attempted to use them selves. They quickly grasped wand movement and the intent behind magic. The lesson progressed well, leaving them a hour to relax prior to the evening meal.

Dobby did his usual miracle in the kitchen, Fleur and the twins actually came out for the meal. This was when Harry introduced the Twins to the concept of the Reaper.

For the first time since he had met any version of the twins, they were shocked beyond words. For about 17 seconds.

"That was you?"

"At the Burrow?"

"With Bill"

"And Ron?"

"Yes it was. I'm sorry." He was not going to tell them that Fleur had actually done the killing that day. That he could not do it.

"With what they were doing..."

"They needed to die."

"We were six when the bastards took Mum and Dad."

"Then Bill forgot all about them."

"And became worse than the Death Eaters"

"Charlie, Percy and Ginny are still around."

"Please, stay away from them Harry."

"They're ours to deal with."

"The Weasley name will mean something again."

"Something good."

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The Reaper apparated outside the gates of the Parkinson Mansion inside what had been Muggle London. Harry recalled the structure was called Kensington Palace, and he dimly associated it with Princess Diana. The building was lightly warded. He reached out with his senses and found six Dark Marks in residence.

Harry put up his shield and casually walked through the front gates. As soon as he crossed the threshold, he was hit by a half dozen curses. The shield absorbed them all. His magic reached out and crushed the man on his left, then threw the lifeless body at Auror on his right, that man fell to the ground unconscious. The remaining four panicked and started to run. Harry sealed the door, and then banished the running men in to the wall. They crumpled to the ground one dead, the rest badly hurt.

Harry took the stairs to the second level. Unmarked Aurors, that was new. If nothing else, he was forcing the bastards to innovate. The six Dark Marks were still in a single room... Odd that they did not react to the spell fire below... a quick examination of the walls eased his mind. This building was very well sound proofed. That must explain it. When he got to the room, they were in, he found himself confronted by an oddity, the door was not closed. Verifying that the shield was still up, he pushed the door open and was confronted by the six men he was looking for in various states of undress crowded around a single small woman, they were concentrating on the woman and did not seem to notice he was there. More rapists? Was this some kind of requirement to be Marked? He did not bother with confronting them; he just reached out and crushed their larynxes, allowing them to fall. Stepping into the room, he could finally see the girl. *Oh crap. Do I have to know all the rape victims in this world? Mary? Marti? No, Mandy, Mandy Brocklehurst, she was Muggle born, Ravenclaw, two or three years behind me at Hogwarts. That would make her 14 or 15.* He was suddenly furious that he had not made the bastards suffer more.

He reached down to help her up.

"Don't hurt me, please!"

"You'll be alright Mandy, I'll get you home."

The girl looked panicked. "Home? They killed Mummy last year. Daddy died before I was born. Where are you taking me? Please don't hurt me." She fumbled at the front of his cloak. "I'll make you feel good. Please don't hurt me Master. I'll be good to you!"

/Well hell/. Harry reached out with his magic and touched the sleep center of her mind, and she slumped to the ground. He performed a quick search of the room and found a cache of money. He cleared the cache out, financing a revolution was expensive, why not allow the oppressors to pay the freight?

He lifted the girl from the floor and held her close. He heard running feet coming his way. Time to go.

And they were gone.

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Chapter Twenty - Relationships

Harry and the sleeping girl appeared on the steps of the cottage, Susan was there waiting for him. Hermione was on the porch keeping Susan company during her wait; both were startled by Harry's sudden appearance.

"Another girl? What is it with you Potter; you need your own Harem?"

"She's 15 at the most Hermione, and she's a Muggle born. If anyone could know what she's been through, it's you."

"I... I... I am sorry. I don't know why I'm like that."

"Let's get her inside," said Susan. "I'll get her cleaned up and into bed."

"I'll help."

"Thank you both." He carried the girl upstairs to his room. "I put her out for the night. After you get her cleaned up, put her into my bed, I'll kip out on the sofa in the sitting room."

The girls exchanged a look. "Don't be silly Harry." Susan smiled. "We'll put her in my room. I'll be in here. With you."

Harry considered arguing, and then remembered that he always lost those arguments, so he nodded and

went back down stairs to find Dobby.

Dobby was in the kitchen preparing bread for the next day."Good Evening Dobby."

"Good Evening Master Harry Sir."

"Dobby, I always see you working, do you ever sleep?"

"Oh yes Master Harry Sir, Dobby sleeps a whole hour every night." He looked a little embarrassed.
"Dobby not young elf no more. When Dobby was young he only sleep an hour every 4 nights, but Dobby slow now, needs more rest."

"Dobby there is a new guest here who has been hurt like Miss was before you both came here. I have put her to sleep and she should sleep through the night. If she was to wake up, would you know?"

"Yes Master Harry Sir. Dobby knows when anyone in household is awake."

"Thank you Dobby. If the new guest wakes up, would you come and wake me please?"

"Of course Master Harry Sir. Dobby is good elf!"

"Dobby you are not a good elf."

"Dobby not good elf Master Harry Sir?"

"Dobby, you are the best elf."

The elf began to cry "Thank you Master Harry Sir."

"Good night Dobby."

"Good night Master Harry Sir."

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Harry lay awake holding Susan. She was sleeping, her breathing slow and rhythmic. He savored the taste of her still on his lips. It was odd just how comforting a holding her could be. Still his mind would not slow down tonight.

What am I doing here? Am I making any real difference at all? This is not my original world with fewer than 500 Death Eaters. This world had hundreds of thousands, if not millions of the bastards. How am I supposed to make a significant dent in those kinds of numbers?

Even if I ignored the Death Eater problem, how am I to deal with Riddle? I have no clue if this Riddle has gone the Horocrux route. This Riddle is not the Snake faced lunatic of my world. Not having had his body destroyed by whatever ancient magic my mother used to protect me, he is still Tom Riddle. He's still human.

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I checked the Gaunt house. No ring. I checked the cave. No sign that the locket or the inferni had ever been there, no sign of magic at all. There was no Diary in the Malfoy home. I have been assuming that this universe and mine diverged when he killed me here, but what if it had nothing to do with me? What if the change was here, this Riddle never made a Horocrux? What if this Riddle is smart enough not to leave magical objects with fragments of his soul attached to them lying around with some kid would find them through dumb luck?

/What difference does it make? /Asked Hermione's voice in his head

/Oh, good. My psychosis is back./

Is that what I am? I thought I was the little voice that kept you from feeling too sorry for your self.

Like I said, my psychosis. I thought I left you in our world. You haven't spoken to me since I got here.

I've been speaking, you have not been listening. Honestly, Harry, does it matter if he has Horocruxes here? You are more or less equal in power. The secret is to not kill him, just make it so he cannot use his magic, then, even if he lives forever, he's helpless.

/And how am I supposed to do that 'mione?!

I don't know, you're the wizard, I'm just a manifestation of your guilt. Use your magic in ways he won't expect. You put that girl to sleep by manipulating her sleep center, why not do the same to Riddle's frontal lobes, except put the setting on puree? How about going to his speech, vision and hearing centers and disrupting them, rendering him blind, deaf and mute? He'll be expecting any mental attacks to be Legimanic, not your physical manipulation. Hell, you could even focus your magic on his core and disrupt it!

The way to deal with an immortal isn't to try and kill him. Let the bastard live forever, just make him do it in a powerless state. That way you can hire a corporation that will send someone over to kick him in the balls every day forever.

Not very ladylike 'mione. However, I do like the way you think.

This is the way YOU think you clod. Do you honestly think anything so disorganized originated in the mind of Hermione Granger in any universe? Honestly.

/So, you're going to stay around and help?!

I've never gone anywhere. I'm your imagination, as long as you want me, I'm here.

/Thank you 'mione./

Speaking of wanting me, you know that poor girl in the next room isn't me don't you? I mean she isn't the Hermione you based me on. You know that right?

/I know it, but I don't think I believe it./

LEARN to believe it dummy. Think about the girl in your arms right now. She loves you. Either give her a chance or drop her, but don't string her along. Be a man, or be a boy, but don't be a bastard.

/Thank you 'mione./

Oh, shut up and go to sleep. You still have to deal with Mandy in the morning.

/Goodnight 'mione. You're my favorite psychosis./

Goodnight Harry.

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Slowly the world came back. The girl lay curled into a tight ball. She was in a bed. An actual bed with clean sheets, and no one was doing anything to her. In a bed. Still pretending to be asleep, she listened carefully. No one was in the room. She carefully cracked one eye, and then the other and looked around the room. It was large and bright. The morning sun shone in through a window. The door! It locks from the inside.

What had happened last night? She had been with the man in the dark cloak carrying some kind of farm

tool, and then she was here. She inspected her body. Some one had cleaned her. Her hair was clean and brushed out. She now wore a blue cotton nightshirt when before she had been naked. A moment of panic struck her, and she rushed to the mirror over a chest of drawers. There was the face she expected, no new marks, no new scars. She returned to the bed, weeping from happiness.

Her stomach rumbled. It had been two days since her last meal. She would be all right for another day, maybe two. Hopefully who ever provided the room would also provide food.

As if on cue there was a quiet 'pop' and Dobby the House Elf appeared in front of her.

"Good Morning young Miss. Dobby bring chicken broth and tea for young Miss. Dobby know you very hungry."

"Thank you Mr. Elf." She took the bowl of broth and brought it to her lips.

"Dobby is not Mr. Elf. Dobby is Dobby young Miss. The Master of this House be coming to speak to young Miss. He wait until young Miss finish eating."

"Thank you Dobby" she said, putting the empty bowl down and picking up the mug.

"Who is the Master of this House?"

"The Master is very powerful Wizard, very good Wizard. Dobby not tell his name. If Master want young Miss to know, he will tell."

She put the now empty mug on the tray. "Thank you again Dobby. Please tell our Master that I am ready to serve him. Tell him my body is for him."

Tears filled the elf's eyes. He lay his hand atop the girls. "Young Miss, the Master not do that to you.

The Master Kill Wizards that do that. The Master is great Wizard. Is Good Man."

"Our Master doesn't use women for sex?"

"The Master does not take from women. The Master shares with women who want him."

The elf and his tray vanished with a pop.

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There was a knock at the door. She threw herself onto the floor and knelt with her forehead pressed to the floor, arms stretched out in supplication.

The door opened.

"Please get up. You are a person, not property. You aren't aslave anymore."

She hesitantly raised her head. A man and two women stood at the door. The man came to her and knelt down in front of her.

"No one is going to hurt you here. Please, get up."

"Yes Master."

"My name is Harry. I'm no ones master. This is Susan." He gestured to the blonde. "and this is Hermione." He indicated the Brunette. "There are two other men and another woman living here, you'll meet them later. Your name is Mandy, right?"

"Yes."

"Do you have any relatives Mandy? Any one we could take you to?"

"No Mas... No. I don't. I'm all that's left."

"Hermione and I are in the same boat, Mandy. Susan only has her Aunt left. We know something of how you are feeling. You can stay with us as long as you want. We'll ask Dobby to get you some clothes. Are you still hungry?"

She nodded. "A little."

He took her hand. "Come on then."

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The day was spent making Mandy feel welcome on their little compound. She seemed intimidated by the Twins, but not at all by Fleur or the other women. Harry didn't think he should have found that odd, but did for some reason he couldn't put his finger on. The 'Hermione in his Head' was silent on the subject, but it just seemed ... odd.

She knew of her magic, but was terrified of using it. No amount of coaxing could get her to try

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Later that afternoon Harry was in the sitting room reading. It sometimes took him several days between missions to feel up to another strike. Mandy entered the room, smiling at him. She was heading to one of the plush chairs facing the fire when she caught her toe on the coffee table and fell ass over teakettle to the floor, cursing as she did so. Harry laughed and helped her up.

"Remind me some time to tell you about an Auror friend of mine."

"You know Aurors? I thought they were looking for you."

"She's an Auror in another place. For the most part, they're good people there."

She sat quietly in the chair staring at the flames for awhile, Harry returned to his book

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Dinner was a quiet affair, with discussion following making the evening's entertainment. When the evening finally wound down, Susan and Harry went upstairs to the room they were now sharing.

Mandy was at the door, waiting.

"Mas... I'm sorry. Harry, I have come to thank you for what you have done for me, I can only offer what I have." She pulled the belt on the robe she wore and it fell open displaying her naked body underneath.

"Mandy, thank you, no. Susan and I are together."

"I can please you both, I was taught."

"Mandy, no. You don't need to do this anymore."

"But I want to, I need"

"Mandy, I said no. Please let it go."

Susan had stood silent watching the exchange. She noticed what Harry missed, the flash of anger from the younger girl.

"I'm sorry Harry. I won't bother you again."

"Good night Mandy."

When Harry and Susan closed the door behind them Harry said, "That was awkward."

"There's something off about that girl."

"She's probably just still traumatized."

"She worries me."

"She shouldn't. You and I are together. I'm not one to wander. Besides," He drew her into a hug and kissed her, "Why would I want cold cereal when I've got a gourmet dinner?"

"So I'm food?"

"You feed my soul... and taste pretty good too..."

"Merlin, you're a goof."

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Chapter Twenty-one - Oddities

Susan lay cuddled to Harry listening to his heartbeat in his sleep. Her joys of having Harry declare their relationship publicly was tempered by a general feeling of unease at the reactions of this new girl Mandy.

There was just something about that girl that put her teeth on edge. She was honest enough to wonder if her reaction to the girl was Mandy's pursuit of Harry. But the girl's reaction to Harry's rejection, well that was just creepy.

She cuddled closer to the man lying next to her. For now, he was hers. Her life so far had taught her not to believe that anything lasts, but for now, he was hers.

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Hermione Granger lay on her bed wearing a black silk nightgown. She had a candle burning on her side table, filling the air with a hint of cinnamon. A knock at the door.

"Come in."

Harry Potter entered and closed the door behind him. Dressed in dark slacks and a black shirt open to the third button, he looked at her with those blazing green eyes.

"I can't do this anymore Hermione. This isn't fair to Susan."

"What does fairness have to do with anything Harry? If she isn't meeting your needs, then you need

someone who can."

She stood and gestured for him to approach. He came to her, taking her left hand in his raising it to his lips. A soft kiss on the palm of her hand, he then breathed deep of the scent on her wrist.

"Oh, what you do to me." The look he gave her was one of worship, of love.

"Shh my love. Let me take care of you, let me give you what you need." She unbuttoned his shirt and ran her hands over his chest, she pushed the shirt off his shoulders, and it fell to the floor. She raised her hands to his face and guided him to her mouth; the kiss was sweet, all consuming, and intense. She felt his body shudder, her nightgown was gone, as were his trousers. She reclined onto the bed, pulling him along, never breaking the kiss. When he entered her, slowly, gently, her back arched in orgasm.

She sat up with a gasp, her body covered in a cold sweat. She was panting as if she had run a mile. *That god damned dream again. Why is this happening to me? Why him? Why not any other man in the world?*

The dreams had started a week before. Was it possible that on some level she was attracted to Harry Potter, or was it that he was the only man around who was not a Weasley?

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Luna Lovegood cast hexes with a wand in each hand. This op had gone to hell. What was supposed to be a raid on a small potions facility in the highlands of Scotland found a dozen Aurors, waiting for them. She lost three of her eight teammates in the first volley, two more in the second when they had not had the presence of mind to run. The survivors of her team scattered per protocol. They would apparate to one of five rally points to regroup before making the jump to the consolidation rally point.

Of course, in order to apparate, one first had to lose her pursuers. The four chasing her were both

tenacious and skilled. So far, they had not given her time to think much less concentrate on apparating.

Her luck ran out when a cutting hex clipped her left shoulder, the pain caused her to stumble, the next step pitched her to the ground, her right leg snapping, her wand lost in the foliage.

"You made for a good hunt Rebel. Maybe we'll have a little fun before we kill you."

"All four of you? That would almost add up to one man. Go ahead, I could use the laughs."

"Laugh at this Bitch. Crucio!"

Luna screamed as the curse hit her, the pain faded seconds later when the caster's head exploded in a bloody mist. The other three were instantly on guard, before they also fell coinciding with loud noises from the surrounding woods. Ten men in green outfits seemingly appeared from nowhere. Luna was reasonably sure they had not been disillusioned, nor was there any indication of invisibility cloaks or any other magic. One of these men pointed one of the staffs they all carried at her.

"You just be stayin' still missy." He knelt and picked up her wand. "He called you a rebel. That might make you a wand user we let live."

"I've broken my leg. Either you will have to carry me, or let me have my wand back to heal myself."

"Nice try missy. You aren't our first wand waver. Chauncey, pick her up. The major will want to talk to this one." He signaled the rest of his team. Clean this up, not a sign they or we were here."

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Susan had found the records of a Potter Property on the firth of Clyde near the small uninhabited village of Toward. The descriptions were vague, but it sounded like it had the room they needed, with plenty of

room to expand as needed. Harry and Fleur (being the pair who could apparate the entire distance in a single jump) were going to check it out with Dobby along to see if he could maintain it by himself or if he needed to acquire help.

The property was supposedly unplotable, and under Muggle concealment charms. Hopefully they still held. According to the records Susan had found the property hadn't been lived in since his grand parent's honeymoon in the 1930s. That was a long time to go unattended, even for a magical structure.

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They appeared at the gate of the property. According to the deed, the house its self would be a quarter mile down the lane from the gate.

"Shall we?"

"I believe we shall." She took his arm, giving the appearance of a couple out for a walk with an elf.

As they crossed the property line Harry shuddered. "Did you feel that?"

"I felt nothing."

"We just passed through some serious wards."

"They is family wards. Master Harry. They is for letting elves know family home and turn off fight wards"

There was a pop and a house elf appeared in front of them. "Master Potter?"

"I am Harry Potter."

"We was told you died Master Potter. We was told all Potters died."

"What is your name little friend?" asked Fleur

"My name is Bleen. I is head elf here until Master Potter send me away for failing him."

"You didn't fail me Bleen. This lady is Fleur. And this, "he indicated Dobby. "Is my friend Dobby. My name is Harry. Could you call me that please?"

"Of course Master Harry." The little elf bowed. "Your house is ready for you Master Harry, and for your guests." He pointed toward the house that was only now becoming visible.

Following the humans to the house, Bleen turned to Dobby "You is Master Harry's friend? Not servant?"

"Dobby proud to be friend of powerful wizard like Master Harry."

"Potters always powerful, and good. Never hear of Potter with Elf friend before. You no work?"

"Dobby work HARD! Dobby good elf. Master Harry care about Dobby, ask if need sleep."

"You tell?"

"Of course. Dobby very ashamed. Dobby sleep hour every night."

"Every night? You IS old. Is true what said about old elf?"

Dobby smiled and nodded. "Work more fun than ever!"

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The deeds described this as a 'house', it was a mansion. Just touring the damned place took over an hour. More room than they would need for a long time, even at the rate their group had been growing so far. The final stop on the tour was the kitchen where Harry was introduced to the staff. 3 elves in addition to Bleen. Looking out the window he spotted some smoke rising from among some outbuildings.

"What's that?"

"Oh, that group of Muggles. They come 2 month ago. They play hide in woods."

That might complicate things. "I'll go take a look. Fleur, if you would keep an eye on things here?"

"Of course Harry, be safe."

He disillusioned himself and exited the door.

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He entered the camp, disillusioned and silenced. Fortunately there had yet to be snow this year, he left no tracks. Dozens of tents were scattered about, with tired looking men, women, and children about

them. The largest of the outbuildings was avoided by the general population of the camp, so that became his target. The door opened so that someone could leave, he quickly entered before the door could close.

He paused for a second so that his disillusion field could settle down following his rapid movement, then he pressed on. In the largest space of the building, he found a makeshift office. And there, sitting bound in front of the desk was Luna Lovegood.

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"Why were you in the part of the forest where my men found you?"

"As I've already said, I was running from the Aurors. We were attempting to rob a potions facility, it was a trap. They hit us hard, we ran, I fell down, your men caught me. We have been through this twice already. Don't you have a stake to burn me at?"

The guard on her right kicked her in her broken leg, she doubled over screaming.

The girl's leg glowed in a golden light, and it straightened, her bruising vanished and the look of pain on her face faded.

"What did you just do?"

"Actually Major, that was me." Harry removed the disillusioning, conjured a chair for himself, and sat down. He looked up to see every rifle in the room pointed at him. "Oh please gentlemen, if I wanted you dead, you'd be dead. I'm here to talk." He gestured at Luna and her bindings fell to the ground. "You, the brave man who kicks wounded prisoners while they're safely tied up. Do anything like that again and I will flay the skin from your body, and then rub you in salt. If there's one thing I hate it's a bully." He turned to the Major. "Is it now common for Her Majesty's Army to mistreat wounded prisoners?"

"His Majesty's Army."

Harry turned his attention to the new speaker, his eyes widened and he stood. "Prince William?"

"King William the IV actually, though at this time my dominion is somewhat limited. Sit down Wizard. It is unusual for me to meet anyone more or less my own age, and here I have two such individuals. I find myself wondering why like most people Miss Lovegood has no idea who I am, yet you identify me in a single glance though with a title I haven't had since I was a toddler."

Harry sat. Honest to God Royalty. "Your majesty, my name is Harry Potter. As she's told you the young lady is Luna Lovegood. She is a leader of a Wizarding Resistance to the pretender on your throne, Voldemort."

"To replace him with?"

"To tell the truth, I have no idea. I never thought to ask."

"I can answer that." Interjected Luna. "It is the intention of the Resistance to return to the separation that existed prior to the Rise of Voldemort."

"So Wizard Potter, she is your leader?"

'Just Harry, Your Majesty. No, the Resistance and I have had a falling out over their problems with Muggle born magic users."

"Muggle born?"

"Sorry, Muggle is a slang term for nonmagical people. Don't know where it came from, it just sort of crept into my vocabulary without my thinking about it. There are three classes of Human Magic Users,

Pure Bloods, basically someone with all four grand parents were magic users, the Muggle born, spontaneous magic users, and half bloods, whose ancestry is some mix of the above groups. I am a half blood, my father pure for a thousand years, my mother Muggle born."

"And what was the falling out?"

"The resistance wouldn't accept a Muggle born friend. They blame the Muggle born for Voldemort's actions."

"Might they be correct?"

"The only in the way that he Jews were responsible for Hitler's actions during World War 2. They were just the readily available scapegoats for a lunatic with followers."

"If you aren't part of the resistance, why are you here?"

Harry smiled. "This is just one of the annoyingly frequent coincidences that make my life such an interesting one. I had no idea she was here, I was just interested to see who it was camping on my family's land." He smiled when the idea occurred to him. "If you don't have other plans, could I invite you and your people to stay at the Manor house? The elves could have awing available in a few hours."

"What Manor house? That pile of rubble?"

"The rubble is an illusion Major. The Manor is huge, should be more than enough room to get your people out of the weather. Hot food, Hot water. Showers for anyone who wants them..."

"You've room for 53 people? How long could we stay Mr. Potter?"

"As long as you like Your Majesty."

"That sounds like an offer we cannot refuse."

"As a plus we can discuss an alliance to destroy our common enemies."

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Chapter Twenty-three - The Stranger Among Us

On reflection, introducing the King and his officers to Fleur might have been a mistake. The four of them were staring at the quarter Veela in open-mouthed awe. She appeared to be enjoying it just a little too much.

The Major and his staff shook off the thrall after a few moments, William however did not. **/He IS only 15 after all** /thought Harry, feeling every second of his oh so mature 17 years.

"Miss Delacour is a special person. She is one-quarter Veela. Veela are magical beings who are renowned for their sexual magic."

"Sexual Magic?"

"Believe me, you don't want to know." Fleur smacked his arm. "She about killed me last time. Let me get you started on getting moved in. Bleen?"

The little being popped into existence in front of Harry. "Yes Master Harry?"

There were gasps from the Muggles. "Bleen, these gentlemen and their friends will be staying with us for a while. Could you get them moved into the Far Wing?"

"Of course Master Harry." Bleen turned to the goggling Muggles. "Could you follow Bleen please?" The small elf saw the look on William's face. "There no need to fear Bleen. Bleen is good elf. Bleen take care of yous."

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Riddle was again pacing in his conference room, at the table his Elite Death Eaters nervously waited for his next question. Standing at the far end of the conference room was Auror Shackbolt. Shackbolt's string of very bad days was continuing, but at least this time he had news..

"What news do you bring me about this 'Reaper'?"

"My Lord. We may have an agent in place in his harem. Our agent disappeared from one of his attacks two months ago. We have no proof, but we believe the terrorist has accepted her. At first opportunity she will attack and kill him."

"Using a woman to kill a man who steals women. Excellent Auror Shackbolt. How long until you know?"

"I do not know My Lord; it depends on how he makes use of his women. If she is free to move about, she will attack at her first opportunity. If he uses them in a rotation, she will kill him when he takes her to his bed."

"Tell me of your agent. Is she capable of doing this?"

"My Lord, she is a half blood seeking to earn her place among your Aurors. A pointless attempt on her part, but she doesn't know this. If you are asking, can she kill? Most certainly. She has done it before. I have been using her to eliminate dangerous men for the last 4 years. She is a consummate actor, almost completely immune to discovery by mind magics because when in character, she believes her own legend. She has special talents that brought her to my attention. Special talents that I advise you not to make known, even in this room."

"Indeed? How interesting. The rest of you leave us. Now."

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Hermione sat in the library, a book in her hands, pages turning, but she was not reading. Harry had been gone too long. It was supposed to be a quick evaluation of the property, no more than an hour. He had been gone for five. What if he was...?

She shook her head to clear it of that thought. She was worried about Dobby and Fleur too. Or instead. She did not worry about Harry Bloody Potter. They probably found a bedroom and she had done that Veela thing again, they would show up later, her all pleased with herself, he all wobbly legged and exhausted.

When he was supposed to be finding them a safe place to stay. Typical man, thinking with his testicles instead of protecting those he ...

Where had that come from?

Harry had never been anything but a gentleman to her. Those dreams were a product of her mind. He had never done any of the things she thought about in her dreams. No matter how much she wanted...

Damn it. She sighed. She would have to speak with him when he returned. She needed to clear the air about her feelings.

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Harry and Fleur appeared on the steps of the cottage with a soft pop. The twins were waiting.

"Get packed mates. We've found a new home. There are some people there who have some nasty ideas that your talents can turn into something truly horrifying."

"Is it time?"

"Really Time?"

"To blow things up?"

"If by things you mean death eaters and their belongings, yes."

"Hot Damn!"

"Time for payback"

"For all those detentions"

"The Rack."

"The Thumbscrews"

"The Lash."

"They thought they could break us."

"They were wrong"

"Nobody does that to Gred and Forge. Now it's time for them to pay." Harry said. The twins shot him a quick look, to see if he was mocking them. When they saw he was serious, they smiled.

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When they entered the cottage, the three men found Fleur telling her fellow ladies of the discovery of Royalty and the Muggle army. Susan ran to Harry and enveloped him in a hug.

"The house is perfect. We could house a two hundred people without crowding too much. Four elves have been running the place since my... I guess his grand parents honeymooned there in 1937."

"What do we need to take?"

"Just your personal things, the Elves will empty the library and transport it to the house in Scotland."

The room cleared as everyone scurried away to gather their things. Harry relaxed for a moment. Then he felt a pair of arms encircle his waist from behind, and a pair of breasts push into his back.

"Hermione?"

"This new house. We could have a new start there, you and I. I would like us to be together."

"You don't mean that Hermione. You know I'm with Susan now. I don't want to hurt her, I'm happy."

"You would put her over me? Why would you choose her over me?"

"I'm not going to do this Hermione. Please let me go."

Her right hand came away; her left remained wrapped around him. "I can't change your mind?"

"No Hermione, I'm sorry."

"Not as much as you will be."

It felt like a bee sting that plunged in to the core of his being. His body stopped paying any attention to him, leaving him alone in a sea of pain. He collapsed like a puppet whose strings were cut. The wild-eyed brown haired girl stood over him with wild eyes and blood covering her from the waist down.

"No one rejects Hermione Granger!"

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Chapter Twenty-three - The Granger Among Us

Susan had been packing her belongings when she heard Hermione yell. She abandoned her chore and went to see what had happened, she was joined on the stairs by the Twins and Fleur.

Her heart stopped. Harry! How could there be so much blood? Why had Hermione done this? She flew down the stairs, throwing Hermione out of the way to get to Harry.

"Why? Why did you do this?"

"He rejected me! He didn't want me! He thought you were good enough!" she raised the knife to slash at Susan.

"Reducto!" A red beam of force struck Hermione between the breasts, and punched through to exit out her back Susan turned to see the source of the curse, and saw... Hermione.

"That is not me! If I ever kill him, it will be looking him in the face. Quit staring at me, get him to your healer before he bleeds out."

Susan shut her mouth, gathered Harry in her arms and disappeared.

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Fleur and the twins joined Hermione to stare at the dying girl going through her death spasms. Her features twisted and changed, from Hermione's to those of Mandy, to a woman in her mid 20s, with strawberry blonde hair, and a somewhat heart shaped face.

"Metamorphagus" spat Fleur.

"We're going to need"

"Better monitoring."

"If Harry dies."

"We're blowing up the Ministry tonight"

"Good Job"

"Hermione, we were too shocked"

"To even think of killing her."

"Will you two stop doing that? It gives me a headache."

"Hermione, it's what they are, you might as well ask them to stop being red heads."

"I know Fleur. I know. I'm sorry guys. It's was weird seeing her, seeing me, covered with blood like that. I hope he's ok."

The Tall blonde nodded. "The best thing we can do is continue with the plan. Harry has found a new house, with a large number of Muggles invited to join us there. Come, we must go."

"You told us where it is,"

"We'll be along in a bit."

"Got us a project"

"To take care of first."

"Could you ask Dobby to come?"

"And help us with it?"

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Five minutes after the girls left, Dobby popped into existence in front of George and Fred. He greeted them and turned to the dead woman.

"This is girl who looked like Mandygirl and wore Miss's face to hurt Harry Potter, sir?"

"Yes it is Dobby. We would like to ask you a favor."

"Would you be liking Dobby bury this girl Weezytwo?"

"No Dobby."

"We would like you to deliver her"

"Deliver her back to the one who sent her."

"We know that the Auror Headquarters in the Ministry Building cannot be apparated into, but we've seen elves popping in and out. Can you go there?"

"Oh yes WeezyOne, Wizards cannot stop elves."

Fred, 'WeezyTwo', had a sly grin. "Dobby, could you put her remains on the desk of Senior Auror Shackbolt?"

"Of course. Dobby do good job."

"Thank you Dobby. Just be careful, don't touch the note."

"Dobby be very careful WeezyOne."

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Poppy came out of her tiny surgery wiping her hands. Susan looked up at her pleadingly.

"I've repaired the physical damage. Managed to save the kidney. He's lost a lot of blood, I've given him as much blood restorative potion as his body can handle. I had to restart his heart twice. He's in a coma now. Hopefully he'll wake up tomorrow or the next day." She stroked the young witch's hair. "Let me get a look at you."

She waved her wand around Susan, a cleansing spell cleaned the blood from her body. Poppy then cast a diagnostic spell.

"You need to rest. You won't do him or your baby any good wearing yourself out."

"Baby?"

"You didn't know?"

"I'd hoped, but hadn't confirmed it."

"Go see your aunt. She'll love to see you."

"Is the baby ..."

"Healthy as a horse. You're due in July."

"Don't tell Harry. I want to."

"Telling him isn't my job. It's yours."

"Thank you Poppy" she hugged the older woman, and left to find her Aunt."

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Shacklebolt arrived at work spot on 8 am. He went over the shift turn over with the off going and oncoming shift supervisors. The turnovers were perfunctory. The morning admin finished he left for his 3rd floor office. No sign of the Reaper for a month. No sign of Dora either. He was getting worried. The Dark Lord would not be tolerating not finding the bastard too much longer. Greeting his secretary, he entered his private office.

There lying on his desk was Dora. His half blood plant. Her metamorphagus talents evidently had not saved her life.

"Merlin Dora, what happened to you?" He found a note affixed to her chest by means of a small dagger. He removed it.

The Note read, "Naughty Auror, you can't fool the Reaper."

It was then he felt the anti apparition and anti portkey wards bloom. Inscribed into the flesh of Dora Tonks were dozens of runes, glowing in sequence as they activated. Every door in the building slammed shut and sealed themselves, crushing a few unlucky Ministry employees who happened to be in the door ways. Every window in the building closed and sealed. The next to last set of runes in the sequence transmuted Nymphadora Tonk's body to 134 pounds of high explosive. The last set of runes detonated her body. Every person on the third floor died instantly in the explosion. 90 percent of everyone else in the building died when the upper 26 floors of the Ministry building pancaked to the ground level.

When the dust and smoke cleared, a spectra Grim Reaper and aphosphorescent glowing sign remained:

When you care to kill the Very Worst

Very Dead

Use

Weasley's Wizarding Weapons

By Special Appointment to

The Grim Reaper

...====ooo000ooo====...

Chapter Twenty-four - Vive le difference

When you care to kill the Very Worst

Very Dead

Use

Weasley's Wizarding Weapons

By Special Appointment to

The Grim Reaper

Riddle stared at the glowing words floating over the remains of his ministry building, and below the mark of the Reaper. This was a major change in the Reaper's operations. It was also a crushingly effective change. In this single attack he had lost almost half of his aurors, and 90 percent of his administrative staff. This was an attack that actually hurt his empire. Not for the first time Riddle thought longingly for the days when he was the insurgent, capable of striking at will. He personally lacked the skills needed to find this terrorist. He had to depend on his administration and investigators to find and stop this. Now he had lost almost the entire team fighting him. Who were these 'Weasleys'? Relations to the Weasleys murdered by this Reaper? Why would they align themselves with someone who killed their family members? So many questions, so few answers....---====ooo000ooo====---...

This was the twentieth diagnostic scan Poppy Pomfrey had made on her patient. For the twentieth time she got the same result. But the result made no sense. She was a little peeved at herself for missing it the first time she had had him under her care, but things had been rushed that night, and well, what was done was done.

Her diagnostics on Harry Potter showed that he was a powerful wizard. It also went a long way in explaining some of the impossible things he was routinely doing in his role as the Reaper. The boy, only 17 years old was a Merlin class mage. Rare, but not unheard of, in the recorded history of magic there were rare times when more than one or two Merlin class mages co existed. The highest concentration recorded was the Founders of Hogwarts, when four of the titans not only co existed, but cooperated in life. In her life, she had personally known 3 of them. Albus Dumbledore, Tom Riddle and now this Harry Potter. Neither Dumbledore nor Riddle had been this powerful at such a young age, but his level of power still was not the oddity.

His magical polarity was reversed.

She had not noticed. It was not something you looked for; there were no instances in the literature for someone with a negative magical index, she had not even noticed the sign until she had done the postoperative diagnostics. This was unprecedented, but it explained quite a bit about the 'impossible' things Harry routinely did, penetrating wards, shielding crucios, the magic wasn't tuned to him. Still, the question remained, what did this mean?

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Fred and George had found a soul mate in Corporal Geoff Miles. All three enjoyed the precision of their chosen vocation; all three had evil senses of humor and all three truly enjoyed blowing things up. Geoff had introduced them to new and horrible uses for their talents. Anti personnel mines, smart bombs and Fuel Air explosives were just a few of the new toys they toiled on endlessly. It became markedly dangerous to walk out the front door of your home if you were marked; the floating spectral Reapers that accompanied each attack had been modified to include the sound track of laughter, and of course had an ad for Weasley's Wizarding Weapons...

Dobby was recruited to the cause, and he found displaced and mistreated elves more than willing to bond to the Reaper (despite his laying unconscious in a hospital ward) and take the attack inside the wards of the Death Eaters.

News of the attacks spread among Wizards and Muggles alike. Copycats began attacking world wide.

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Hermione turned the page, and made another note. She was on track of digging another spell out of these ancient texts. A few times out with the twins had taught her she had no aptitude for the operations side of their work. She was far too likely to hesitate than react, and that hesitation could get someone killed. The only time she had ever been the one to react immediately had been that one instance when she exited the library of the Cottage and saw that ... thing wearing her face with Harry's blood all over her.

"Miss Granger?"

She turned to see the king staring at her with those intense eyes.

"Your Majesty?" She rose from the chair, her mind searching memories of proper behavior toward royalty. The only thing she could recall were the general good feelings her parents had expressed toward Elizabeth II and Diana.

"Please sit, Miss Granger. Making the sort of fuss made in the past does not make much sense any longer." William picked up one of the books in her pile for research. "So, you are researching new toys for the Weasleys and Corporal Miles?"

"Yes Your Majesty. They have me researching some obscure rune clusters that are said to generate an impenetrable shield."

"Unfortunately I have no idea what is involved in that. Have you heard any news of Mr. Potter?"

"Still in the coma, though the Healer says he is showing signs of waking." She cocked her head. "What did you really want to talk about Your Majesty?"

"That transparent am I?"

"Paying attention to what men mean when they say things kept me alive before Harry saved me."

"He does that doesn't he? I was hoping for a chance to speak with someone more or less my own age. For the bulk of my life my companions have been either adults more than 15 years older than I, or their children the oldest being 5 years younger. Coming together with your group has been refreshing in that. Miss Lovegood is a bit frightening though quite alluring, the Twins are fun but I suspect a bit insane, Miss Delacour has an affect on me that I cannot describe, and you. You, I have not interacted with. Just the fact that you haven't shown the slightest interest in me is intriguing." He smiled. "It is a very different reaction compared to what I am used to. Most people hear 'royalty' and flock around. Is it odd that I find a young woman ignoring me to be attractive?"

Hermione felt herself blush. "I just don't deal well with people."

"I believe we are all somewhat damaged by this life, I find myself wondering what we would be like in a world where the wizards hadn't destroyed us."

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/Harry wake up. You've got to wake up/. said Hermione's voice in his head

/Go away 'mione. Sleepy. Back hurts./

Wake your lazy ass up. You've been laying her for weeks. Suck it up and stop feeling so sorry for your self.

Nice dreams. Susan doing nice things. Sorry 'mione, you aren't there. Do you like girls?

Sweet Merlin you perv. If you wake up, Susan will probably be more than happy to do nice things to you in real life. And I am so in your dreams, it's just that now I sit on the sidelines and make comments instead of being under you.

Susan... I love Susan. She's just so... I don't know, she's Susan. Do you mind that I don't think about you anymore 'mione?

I love Susan too you moron. I am you. Your sick mind just uses Hermione's voice in your thoughts. Wake up, she needs you.

Just because you out scored me on every test we ever took doesn't make me a moron 'mione. It makes you a genius.

So listen to the genius and wake the hell up. Honestly, what are you going to do if she actually finds someone worth while because you lay here like a lump?

/Ok, ok, waking up now./

Good. Kiss her for me.

/I will, thank you 'mione/

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For the 15th day, Susan kept her vigil at Harry's bedside. Poppy had been telling her for the last couple of days that he was showing signs of waking. Holding his hand, she was dozing at his side.

She woke to see him looking at her.

"Hey sexy."

"Harry? Oh sweet Merlin, you've been out for two weeks."

"You ok?"

"I'm fine you goof. You were the one stabbed."

"Is Hermione...?"

"It wasn't Hermione. It was Mandy, she was a shape changer. A Meta something."

"Metamorphamagus? Oh god. Tonks." He squeezed his eyes shut. "How is she?"

"Dead. Hermione hit her with a reducto to the chest."

"Crap. I wish we could have saved her."

"She tried to kill you Harry."

"I know..." he smiled. "I'm just being stupid. He reached out and pulled her face to him for a kiss. "I'll do better than that after I brush my teeth."

"Harry, you are such a..."

"Susan, I've been dreaming of you. Would you consider marrying me?"

"We are married Harry."

"We are? Fantastic. Uh, did I miss something?"

"There haven't been ceremonies for years Harry. Our magic bound us to each other. I wasn't sure you had accepted me until they asked me to stand in for you in performing the Fidelius on your manor house in Scotland. The Estate accepted me as the owner. That means you're stuck with me."

"We're married? Wow. So much for my proposal."

"I appreciate the offer husband..." she took his hand and placed it against her stomach. "Feel anything?"

"You're pregnant?"

"Yes. He's due in July."

Harry passed out.

Story 5

Chapter Twenty-five - The Hand of the Other

Susan guided Harry to the room she was using at her Aunt's manor. Still not completely recovered from his injuries he leaned on her slightly.

This was his first long walk since the attack. Susan could hardly believe how happy she was. When she had discovered she was carrying his child she had worried that Harry would hate her for it, would chastise her for risking so much at such a dangerous time. Instead, he had waken from his injuries and told her he had dreamt of her, asking her to marry him, when she told him about their child, he fainted. Only to wake a few moments later laughing at himself and crying joyful tears with her. Harry had tried to pull her into the bed with him to 'celebrate' when Poppy had pitched a small fit, and threatened him with a series of particularly unpleasant potions if he did not get his libido under control.

Two days later Poppy had finally declared him healthy enough to leave her infirmary. There was no way he was up to apparating to the mansion in Scotland, but he was well enough to transfer his care to Susan. Arriving at her room, they were greeted by the sight of the small stuffed dragon, patrolling their bed, puffing smoke.

They had two wonderful hours alone before there was a knock at the door. Amelia Bones, Minerva McGonagall and Filius Flitwick entered.

The diminutive wizard spoke first. "Harry, we were wrong. Your team has done more damage to Voldemort in the last two weeks than we have in the last ten years. You have inspired people around the world; there are more attacks on Death Eaters holding power every day. We were wrong to doubt you and your choice of friends. If you'll have us, we want to join you."

Harry stood from the chair by the fire. "How could I say no to my favorite teachers and my aunt in law? Lets kill some Death Eaters."

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Sergeant Evans had arrived at the meeting site 24 hours early. His backup was Cooper, one of the few remaining original members of his squad. Coop had many talents, but his primary job since the fall was acting as a sniper. Even after all this time, the wand wavers were clueless about snipers, and Coop had wracked up the highest kill numbers of the entire unit. Coop was in a tree stand most of a click away. Evans felt all kinds of naked out here, but that was nothing new.

His watch clicked over to 15:00, he knew his wait was over as three men appeared in the clearing. Appeared as in magic. He hated magic. He knew that other units of the resistance had tame wand wavers (to his mind they would never be friendly) He also knew that the warm room his woman now slept in came from a wizard. He personally would never trust anyone who used magic, but that did not stop him from being grateful for what that Potter lad had done. Bitter experience had taught him that wizards were the enemy. If this was a trap, he was about to die, but the Major had sent Coop along to ensure he had side boys when he got to hell.

The trio in the clearing was waiting. Evans stood up, a wand and two firearms were trained on him instantly. They were frightened as well. Good.

"Chu are Evins?"

Great, a frenchy At least he would be human since he was using a pistol. Not for the first time, Evans wondered just what this op was all about. "Aye, I am. And you?"

"Cern" The man gestured to himself. "Frank" the other man with a pistol. "Delecour." He indicated the man with the wand. "We need to speak with your superiors."

Well, the names were right anyway. "I bet you do. Not going to happen without a good reason."

"Ve may have weapon to kill wizard," 'Frank' said.

"That's nice." Evans gestured with his assault weapon. "This does that. What's special about yours?"

"Non!" spat the one called Delecour. A French wand waver. Fantastic. "Our weapon destroy ALL Wizard." The man's face clouded, struggling with the language barrier. "Non, not destroy Wizard. Destroy MAGIC!"

"Destroy magic? Wouldn't that kill you too Frenchy?"

"Maybe. Bastards kill my family. If I must die for vengeance, is good death."

Evans could see the logic in that. It was what kept him going. He decided. "All right gentlemen. We'll go see the Major." The group moved off at a trot, on a circuitous route that would take them on a three-day march to reach the meeting point. Coop would have seen his signal to get the major to the meeting point. Coop would be there in six hours.

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Dobby watched carefully as WheezyOne and WheezyTwo explained what their new toy did. Their words were often meaningless and confusing to elves, but elves learned from seeing and doing. Dobby would learn, and then Dobby would teach. This toy would hurt bad Wizards. Maybe kill. It made doors and windows seal, wards against Wizard jump and Wizard port-toy, and then started fire in building. Elves could jump out, but not Wizards.

House elves were not supposed to hurt wizards, it was not **The Way**. House elves were not supposed to be tortured and killed. House elves were not supposed to breed like animals with no love for mate. The bad Wizards were forcing elves to breed without love. The bad Wizards were killing and torturing elves. Elves with bad Wizards not allowed loving. Bad Wizards say love not for House elves, but Bad Wizards wrong. Love for mate was as vital to an elf as service to master. If the bad Wizards were going to take away the one pure joy of life, then some elves, the young elves would rebel. Young elves needed leader. Young elves brave and strong, but needed the telling what to do and the teaching of how to do it. Master Harry could not lead elves when he was hurt. Dobby did not think that Master Harry would lead elves anyway; he would try to protect elves. That was his way. Dobby would lead young elves, as long as he was needed. This was against **The Way**, but elves no longer allowed knowing **The**

Way. The bad Wizards were not going to like the elves they were making.

Master Harry was good Wizard, powerful Wizard. Master Harry like House elves, want House elves to be happy, to know love. Master Harry good Man. Sometimes Dobby wish he not bound to Miss so he could serve Master Harry. Dobby feel disloyal when he think that way. Miss needs Dobby. Miss and Dobby not bound in normal way. When Dobby first see Miss she sad for lost Sire and Dame, Dobby help Miss learn to be elf. Is sad when Human must be elf. Humans not make good elves. Miss learn to be good elf, but Bad Master and Young Master still hurt Miss for no reason, Dobby very sad.

Then Master Harry save them. Master Harry come for Dobby, like he know him, but find Miss and bring them both to new house giving Dobby place to work. Dobby happy there until Mandy girl hurt Master Harry while wearing Miss' face.

Master Harry better now, and would return to his home with Potter elves. Potter elves good elves, Potter elves follow The Way. Potter elves not know how to deal with Dobby. Master Harry tell them Dobby Master Harry's Friend. Potter elves not know that elf could be friend of Wizard. They want to treat Dobby like guest, not let work. This why Dobby work with Weezys, why Dobby lead young elves. Dobby must be useful.

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Hermione read through another page of her notes, organizing them for use by the Twins. It constantly amazed her that those two could possibly be related to Ron Weasley, where he was arrogant and unpleasant, they were unassuming and funny. There was pain and more than a little madness behind their humor, but they were, she now knew, good men. They loved Fleur deeply, and the French girl seemed to be bubbling over with happiness since they had returned to her life

She was on track of digging another obscure charm with possible offensive capabilities. The records suggest that it was originally intended to relight a fireplace in the morning before anyone was up. It had fallen out of use when house elves became common. The Twins were planning to use the charm to set time-delayed fires wherever they may wreck the most havoc. The charm itself had been isolated three days previous, the Twins (with Fleur's help) were testing it. Hermione was researching for variants that might be more powerful, or have a longer delay, or hopefully one that could be triggered by some specific action around it. That would make for a perfect booby-trap.

Hermione was finding it harder to concentrate by the day. William was taking over her dreams. Two quiet dinners, a few evening walks on the grounds, was that what it took this quiet young man to become interesting? He was two years her junior. Was that enough to preclude him from becoming more than a dinner companion?

Her observations of William had driven home his importance to his people, but she knew little of royalty beyond dimly recalled comments her parents had made concerning William's parents and Grandmother. Hermione did not think she was swayed by his status, but how could she truly know? She did know that he was in her dreams. She was very aware that there were worst things.

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Riddle was in yet another rage. The casualty figures were worse now than they had been during the actual subjugation of the world. Fifty-three dead in Britain, nine thousand four hundred and six world

wide, and that was only in the last twelve days. This Reaper was inspiring copy cats all over the world. Marked Purebloods were dying from everything from explosive traps to knives. Entire families had been found dead. Government officials from provincial Governors to the Janitorial staff were targeted. A whole squad of Aurors was lost to a pit trap with spikes lining the floor, like something from a Muggle motion picture he had seen in his youth.

Another report said that House Elves were rising up against their masters. That was insane, those beings had been slaves since before memory, yet now small groups of them were in rebellion. Elves captured and tortured until their resistance was broken routinely died, but before they did, a few (very few) had spoken of a rising 'Dark Elf' named Dobby who was to lead them to salvation.

A. {Dark.] Elf.

This was madness. House elves did not revolt. House elves did not attack wizards. This was all coming from this Reaper. He and his influence had to be stopped, no matter what the cost.

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"You wanted to see me Major?"

Stephen Llewellyn looked up from his desk, and then rose for his sovereign. "Good morning Your Majesty. Yes sir, I thought it wise to inform you of a current operation with a European branch of the resistance."

William gestured for his officer to sit, and sat himself. "You don't normally come to me with operational details Major. How can I help?"

"Our European cousins sent a message to us saying that they have a possible weapon to be used against the wand wavers. They feel that it is far too important to be trusted even to the messaging system, so are sending three representatives with a sample of the weapon. I've dispatched Sergeant Evans to meet them with Corporal Cooper keeping watch on him. Evans will make contact and then take them on a guided tour of the countryside while Cooper reports in and we can prepare for the meeting."

"The Two day Tour or the Three day Tour?"

"Three. I want to make sure they aren't being followed and that we are prepared for whatever they've brought."

"Did they offer any hints as to what the weapon might be?"

"No sir. The only hint given is that it must be used on the strongest available wizard. It evidently uses the Wizards magic to spread, and a stronger wizard will fight off the effect if it comes from a weaker wizard."

"The strongest available. That would mean that Voldemort character, or possibly..."

Llewellyn nodded. "Or possibly Potter."

"Our survival might mean killing an ally?"

"Yes Sir, it might. Unfortunate, but the needs of the many."

"Out way the needs of the few, or the one. I'm hopping one day that we regain what we have lost in the way of technology that I might see this 'Movie' thing that you constantly quote to me Major." The young king frowned. "Potter is supposed to return tomorrow. We will need to have him available for the interview."

"It might be a good idea to ask him to bring his French witch as well, the Europeans are supposed be have at least one French speaker with them, perhaps two. Her English is better than mine, she will be invaluable."

"An excellent suggestion Major. I will speak to them about it."

Story 6

Chapter Twenty-six – Doing What is Right or What is Easy

“Are you sure you’re up to this Harry?”

“I could do without the forced march Your Majesty, but yes, I’m all right.”

“Major Llewellyn firmly believes in leading from the front, while leaving me in the rear I’m afraid. This meeting is important, so we need to be well away from Headquarters.” The young King moved along the game trail of the Scottish hills in a manner that suggested a lifetime of moving over hill and dale quietly.

“So they have a weapon? The Major seemed very interested that I come along. I’m not sure what for; I’ve never been one for weapons other than wands and staffs. The Weasley Twins are the Weaponers.”

The King kept his pace steady, catching sight of Fleur and her Red Headed slightly mad body guards a few paces ahead of the two young men. It was odd, William realized, he was still aware that Fleur was an attractive woman, but she no longer absorbed his entire attention. Odd indeed. “The Major doesn’t think that I should tell you much about the weapon.”

“The Major’s a smart man.” Harry grinned at his king. “You should probably listen to him.”

“The Major IS a smart man, he was one of my many tutors that formed what is laughingly called my education. Sometimes however, I find myself disagreeing with him. Like now.”

Harry did not say anything. He had no real idea as to the command dynamics of the Kings Army of Resistance. His memory of how government worked back in his original universe, the elected government was in command of the military, that government was gone. This army had rescued the infant king and gone to ground with him. What was William’s real position in the command structure? A few more moments of thought told Harry that he did not really care. Harry was not in the Army, as far as he was concerned this 15 year old was his king. Whatever failings Vernon Dursley had as a man, he had instilled into Harry at a young age that he was first and foremost an Englishman. To Harry, William represented the government of this island.

“We’ve been in contact with resistance cells in Europe. The people we’re going to meet are based out of Switzerland. The underground there has managed to keep their science. They believe they’ve developed a weapon that will destroy magic.”

“And the magic users?”

“From the information they have forwarded to us in preparation for this meeting, there is an 80 percent survival rate for those exposed to the weapon.”

“80 Percent.”

“Yes. The ones likely to die are those being kept alive by their magic. Those over 100 years of age for the most part.”

“So it’s a disease then?”

“I don’t know.” William looked thoughtful. “Probably. That makes sense.”

“So they need something from me. Something the Major doesn’t think I’d give up willingly.”

There was the metallic click of a pistol’s safety being taken off.

“Hello Major” Harry said, not breaking step or turning to face the man. “Ever think of asking?”

“Major, Stand Down! This is no way to treat an ally.”

“Your Majesty, this man is an ally, but if his death will win the war then so be it. We have to think about more than one man. Mr. Potter if you as much as think about pulling your wand...”

“No worries Major.” Harry’s hands drifted upward, finger spread in the traditional sign of surrender. “Of course, I don’t use a wand.” The Major’s weapon disassembled its self in his hand. “I can do that to any of your weapons you choose to point at me Major. I know you have been fighting this war almost as long as I’ve been alive, but that does not mean I’m an idiot. I’ve always been aware that what we are doing could result in my death, and if my death will return this world to something more like what was, then kill me now.”

Llewellyn was a little ashamed of himself. “I’m sorry Mr. Potter. As you’ve said, it’s been a long war, and I’m afraid that I haven’t quite acquired the ability to trust a wizard quite yet.”

“I’d say it was alright Major, but lying to you isn’t a very good way of cementing an alliance...”

They reached the clearing in the woods where the meeting was to take place, the party spreading out to concealed places to await the arrival of the Europeans. Each settled into their blinds and kept focused on their own thoughts. An hour of waiting passed slowly.

William focused inward. He was more than a little ashamed of his actions with Potter and ashamed for the actions of his men. How had the world come to this? Damn Voldemort anyway. Damn him to hell.

“Your Majesty?”

The King started. Somehow, Potter had gotten close enough to touch him without his noticing. “Yes Harry?”

“I need your word Your Majesty. I need your word, that if this weapon kills me, you will see to my people’s protection. There will be those who will be looking for revenge against anyone who ever held a wand. Protect my people. Protect Susan and our child.”

“You have my word Harry. Your people will be protected. Anyone who wants to hurt your wife or child will have to go through me.”

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Sergeant Evans and his party of visitors arrived at the meeting site 45 minutes after the King's army had established its presence. Evans made it to the center of the clearing and made the 'all clear' sign unobtrusively. A score of men rose from their blinds.

There were a few moments of conversation in the clearing before Evans and his charges were led under the canopy. The Major approached and returned Evans' salute.

"I am Llewellyn. I'm told you bring us weapons."

"I am Cern, we do. We need strong Wizard. Voldemort No?"

"Perhaps. Is French better for your people than English?"

"Oui, Much better."

Llewellyn nodded. "Miss Delacour, if you would."

Fleur rose from her hiding place, flanked by the twins, she made her way to the Major when there was a sudden movement from the Wizard among the envoys. He rushed to the startled woman and pulled her into a bone-crushing hug ignoring the wands of her escorts.

"Fleur! Fleur!" was all Harry could make out before the man holding Fleur began a flood of French.

"Jean Paul?" the startled witch gasped.

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"And I say it's damned suspicious that one of their number 'just happens' to be the uncle of one of your people Potter."

"As I said the day we met, this is just one of the annoyingly frequent coincidences that make my life so very interesting. Your people have had their own wars you know Major. Did the actions of the Nazis make every German a bastard? Of course not. Fleur's uncle is part of the European resistance, not terribly surprising really. The bastards cull entire families, my people, as well as your own."

"Oui! " The Swiss named Cern agreed. "I know Delacour forty year. Good man."

Fleur returned to the circle and was handed a cup of tea. "Thank you for waiting."

Cern unleashed a torrent of rapid fire French. Fleur nodded. "They have a biological weapon; it uses the Wizarding Flu as a vector. That virus uses magic to reproduce."

The Swiss added more to the discussion.

"Uses magic to reproduce and spread. It needs to be introduced to the Strongest Wizard in the area, that Wizard's magic will spread the disease. A Wizard with stronger magic will fight off the infection."

"What does the disease do?" William asked.

Cern spoke to Fleur again. When he finished, she continued. "It attacks gene sequences that control access to magic. The magic users injected with the weapon always die within minutes and spread the infection. Once infected, the witch or wizard becomes a squib. If their magic is sustaining their lives, they die. Some of the test subjects died for no discernable reason."

"What about unborn children?" Harry asked. "Or other magical species?"

Cern shrugged, she spoke a few words.

"They do not know, they didn't have all the test subjects or resources they needed to find out."

"So, the strongest Wizard? Voldemort then."

"Or me Major."

"Or you Mr. Potter."

Harry looked pensive. He then looked up at the resistance members "How many doses do you have?"

"Trois... Three."

"Then it looks like you should dose us both. Can the weapon be delivered by a dart gun?" Harry got blank looks from Fleur and the Europeans. "Dart gun, like they used to tranquilize large wild animals so that vets could examine them."

The Europeans exchanged looks. "Oui"

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Susan stood in the window staring out in the direction that Harry and the others had left. They had had their first fight this morning. He had forbidden her to accompany him wherever he was going. She, of course, would not be told. He was adamant. She had a responsibility to their child to be safe he said. She had been fighting this war long before he had even found this world she responded. He said that he had lost too many people that he loved already and he was NOT going to risk her. She began to cry. He locked her in their room.

Despite her worry, she smiled. He cared enough to worry about her. He told her he loved her. He spoke her name in his sleep. That first night together, he had spoken to Hermione. Not the angry damaged girl who shared their home, but the one he knew and loved from afar. Oh, he was going to pay for locking her into their bedroom and leaving without her, but he was going to know he was loved as well.

"Any sign of them?"

Susan was startled; she had been so deep into her musings that Hermione had managed to stand beside her without Susan noticing.

"No, nothing yet. It could be hours."

“How do you do it?”

“Do what?”

“Love him? I want to feel that for someone, but...”

“He’s a good man. He protected us when we needed it. He still does, and makes room for others.” Susan took Hermione’s hand and placed it on her stomach. “He’s given me this.”

“You’re pregnant? You are so brave. I could never bring a new life into this fucked up world.”

“Hermione, trust Harry. If anyone can unfuck the world, it’s him.”

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The King’s Army and their European visitors returned to the Manor just before the evening meal, the elves were ecstatic to have even more people to care for. With full bellies (something of a rarity on the continent) and a few drinks everyone became rather talkative. Susan played her role as hostess and made sure everyone was comfortable.

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Harry came to their bedroom and found Susan in tears. He sat on the bed and took her into his arms. She sobbed for another five minutes before she calmed down enough to be able to speak.

“Why does it have to be you?”

“I don’t know what you mean Susan, why does what have to be me?”

“I heard them talking down stairs. I know you’re going to let them kill you to stop Voldemort.”

Harry stroked her hair. “It’s not like that Susan. They are going to hit Voldemort first, then hit me only if it is necessary. I’m just bait to lure him out into the open. They have to use their weapon on the strongest Wizard in the area for it to be effective. If that is what it costs to keep you and our baby safe, then it’s cheap.

“We don’t need safe, we need you, you egotistical moron.”

“You grew up always on the run Susan. We don’t want our baby to only learn fear do we?”

She pulled at his clothing, hungry for him. With the knowledge that she could lose him so soon after getting him back, she was going to make every second they spent together memorable.

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William made his way upstairs to his room. Other than the men on patrol, almost the entire Kings Army was in the manor’s ballroom partying like there was no tomorrow, and indeed they might be right. Somehow, he doubted that the ending of the rule of the Wizards would be as easy as the Europeans were predicting.

He entered his room to find the linens turned down and the room lit by candles and a hint of cinnamon in the air.

“Your Majesty.”

From the shadows stepped Hermione Granger. She was dressed in an old-fashioned long sleeved white cotton man’s shirt, her legs and feet were bare. The 16-year-old king found his mouth had gone dry.

“You know my past William. You know what I’ve done to survive.” She approached him, coming close enough that he could feel her breath. “It’s been 7 months since Harry rescued me, and I’ve been stupidly angry for most of that time. I have been used, but I have never been loved. I would like a lover at least once in my life William, and I would like him to be you. I don’t want anything from you, I don’t expect you to stay with someone like me, but for tonight, would you love me?”

He could not breathe. His heart was pounding so hard, so loudly, he was surprised when she did not seem to hear it.

He hesitantly lifted a trembling left hand to her face and leaned in to her kiss...

Story 7

Chapter Twenty-seven – Bait

The Dark Lord Voldemort snagged a drink off the tray carried by a passing Muggle slave. Why was he at this party? It seemed that this was all his life was anymore. Paperwork that he did not care about, briefings that he did not want to hear and parties with people he did not want to know. Was this what he had spent his life struggling to achieve?

This endless treadmill of mediocrity was not what he had expected when he began his pursuit of power. It was all so damned boring. Even that thrice-damned Reaper had been quiet for most of three months. Throughout the rest of the world, the actions of terrorists caused reports to flood into his in box, but here at home... nothing.

This ‘nothing’ made the man born Tom Riddle nervous. He fully recalled that when he had been the terrorist, the periods of time when he had done ‘nothing’ was when he was his most dangerous. Something was coming. Something was...

The huge window in the ballroom shattered as two score round... somethings shot through it before bouncing off the far wall scattering as they did so. Riddle flinched slightly as one of the round objects came to rest at his feet, and he recognized the severed head of the chief of his security detail. The others must be the rest of that detail. The Reaper was evidently no longer doing ‘nothing’. Was it wrong that he was looking forward to what ever the upstart attempted?

An amplified voice Riddle recognized so very well echoed in a singsong timbre throughout the ballroom.

“Tommy-Boy, come out and play-ay! Tommy-boy, come out and play-ay!”

Riddle felt Anti-Apparation and Anti-Portkey wards bloom over the property. He was evidently the only one to notice, he watched several in the crowd splinch themselves horribly in an attempt to escape. He silently cursed the cowardice of his followers, and began searching for an escape route that did not involve going through the shattered window, which was obviously the way the attackers wanted everyone to attempt to leave. It was then he noticed a few dozen House Elves pop into the room. Each of the elves was dressed in robes reminiscent of those of the Reaper and carried miniature scythes, as well as a glowing vial. As soon as they arrived, the elves flung the vials to the floor and popped way. The crystal vials shattered upon impacting the floor and out spilled...

Riddle’s eyes widened. Fiendfyre! The cursed flames burst forth and spread, creature shapes were beginning to form and pursuit the scrambling panicking crowd of partygoers. The choice of finding another way out taken away from him, Riddle vaulted through the shattered window.

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The master of the world hit the ground outside the window in a roll, coming immediately to his feet. He watched in amazement as the window he had just exited though repaired its self, trapping the rest of his

fellow party guests inside with the fiendfyre.

“Oh, well done Tommy. That was very athletic for a man of your advanced age.”

Riddle whirled casting a cutting curse toward the voice. His eyes widened when he saw the ease that the hooded speaker batted the curse away with a wave of his scythe.

“Reaper!” Riddle hissed. “What do you want?”

“I told you the first time we met Tom, I want you and all your followers dead. Weren’t you paying attention?”

“Show yourself. I want to see your face when I kill you.”

The man in the robes started to laugh. “If seeing my face means that much to you Tommy, why not?” With a wave of his hand, the Reaper’s robes dissolved away to nothing revealing simple clothing, trousers, boots, and a leather jerkin. The man’s glammers fell away as well revealing...

“I... I don’t know you.” The Dark Lord admitted.

“I’m crushed, I really am. I’m told I resemble my father.” The younger man smiled. “Think Halloween 1981.”

Riddle’s eyes widened. “Potter? I killed you. After you were dead, I burned your body to ash!”

“I guess I must have gotten better Tommy, though as I recall it, I killed you. Twice. Have you ever heard of a Dimensional Traveler Tommy? I enjoyed ending your pathetic life so much; I came looking for another Tommy to kill. Happy birthday to me.”

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Sergeants Evans and Cooper were in position. Acquiring dart weapons had been something of an adventure unto its self, until someone thought to ask the elf people if they had any ideas. The elves held a conference and found that one of their former owners had something of a collection of ‘Muggle’ weapons. A raid found hundreds of weapons, most unusable due to extreme age and lack of maintenance, but three functioning air rifles were found, complete with darts and cartridges, pilfered from a zoo or large animal vet no doubt.

The problem was they only had three doses of the weapon. How should they be distributed?

The tame wand waver Potter had the best suggestion. “Tag us both. If either of us gets up from that, hit him with the third dose.”

It had been hard not to start to like the Potter kid. He had worked closely with the snipers to prepare for this day. He had even had them shoot him with darts full of saline so that he would know what it felt like so that he could fight through the hits.

The Snipers were to wait until the pair of wizards began their fight. Potter had already removed his robes to allow the best shot on his body. He was supposed to talk this ‘Riddle’ out of his robes to display any armor he might be wearing, then start the fight. They were to wait for at least five minutes

so that both of the intended target's heart rates would be elevated, then hit them with their doses.

Three weeks of practice with these air rifles had both of the snipers well versed in their capabilities. The Weasley Twins had done something magical to render the air within what they called 'wards' dead calm. All Evans and Cooper had to do was wait for their targets to present themselves.

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"Are you ready to die old man?"

The boy's mocking tone infuriated Riddle. No one had spoken to him in such a manner since his second year at Hogwarts. He made to remove the formal dress robe he wore, and then paused.

"Oh, by all means Tommy, make yourself comfortable. I wouldn't be so rude as to kill you when you weren't looking... I leave that to ineffectual cowards like you."

Riddle knew what the boy was doing, and it annoyed him to no end that it was working. That this boy could make him so angry with so little effort grated. Riddle was seventy-two, not yet gone to seed, but no longer at his physical peak either. This boy was under twenty, young and strong. Riddle hated him for his youth and strength, both physical and magical. Riddle dropped the outer portion of his formal robes leaving himself clad in a long sleeve white shirt and black trousers. Riddle clasp his wand in his right hand and decided to open this battle with a mental attack. Twirling his wand, giving no indication that he was casting anything, he sub vocalized "legimens!"

He was in the boy's mind, falling, falling. He suddenly came face to face with a... version of himself, a somewhat reptilian version of Tom Riddle being slowly dismembered joint by joint, the wound being cauterized, then the next joint, fingers, toes, wrists, ankles. And the screaming. This version of himself was screaming, always screaming as it took him hours to die. Riddle clawed his way out of that vision, back into himself and stood panting eyeing the young man that was smiling at him.

"Come on Tommy, did you think I wouldn't expect that? Now you know what I did to you last time... I hate repeating myself; I guess I'll have to be creative."

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Major Llewellyn lowered his binoculars "Potter has made contact Your Majesty." The commander of the King's Army raised the binoculars back to his eyes. "That fiendfyre is a horrible thing. That manor house is fully involved. A single wizard has escaped the manor, from Potter's body language I believe it to be the pretender to your throne."

"What is Potter doing? Have they started fighting yet?" William asked.

"He appears to be speaking to the Dark Wizard." Llewellyn said. "He did say what when Voldemort was angry, he tended to make mistakes. In the planning stages he said that he would mock Voldemort until the Dark Wizard attacked."

The king nodded, wishing he had been born one of the warrior kings of old, leading his men into battle rather than sitting in the relative safety of this blind more than a mile away.

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The killing curse ripped the air between the Dark Lord and Harry, who dodged the green spell returning a bone breaker that hit the older man's left hand.

"Is that all you've got Tommy? I admit your normal opening gambit is normally the Cruciatus Curse, but moving directly to the Killing Curse is a sure sign that I'm scaring you. Poor Tommy, is big nasty Harry being mean to you?"

Riddle had no response beyond a rapid spell chain of curses, few of which Harry actually recognized. Not trusting any shield he knew to stop those spells, he dodged instead, rippling off a series of spells in response. A Reducto caught Harry in the shoulder and spun him around twice; simultaneously one of Harry's arrow spells pierced Riddle through the thigh.

"Not bad Tommy, you're pretty good for an old man, you tagged me pretty good."

"Damn you Potter." Riddle spat as he vanished the arrow and slapped a healing charm on his thigh. "I will find your loved ones and kill them slowly."

"You'd have to master both time travel and dimensional transfer Tommy. No one I love here. The only thing I live for is to kill you and your followers." Harry summoned a fist sized stone from the garden behind Riddle, and laughed as the stone impacted on Riddle's head. Enraged, the Dark Lord the most powerful cutting curse he knew.

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Evans lined up on his target, Potter. "Got the evil bastard Coop?" he breathed.

"Aye." Cooper said with Voldemort's abdomen in his sights. He was Thirty-five feet from the wizard, an easy shot. The fool was so focused on Potter he had no idea that danger was coming from an oblique angle rather than the man in front of him.

"Take your shot."

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Harry dodged Riddle's cutting curse when he heard the dart gun cough and looked up to see the Dark Lord reacting to the dart that was suddenly protruding from his belly. Riddle dropped his wand and grasped at the body of the dart with both hands, falling on to his back.

Harry stopped and raised both of his arms to offer Evans a free shot. The impact was just above his navel, with the cold rush of the fluid that the dart contained being pushed into his body.

"SON OF A BITCH!" Harry screamed. "That really hurts." Harry managed to stay on his feet, and pulled the dart from his flesh. "How you doing Tom? Got a migraine yet? It will be followed by a fever, then a tingling in your hands and feet."

Harry leaned on his staff as the headache hit.

“What have you done to me Potter?” Riddle ground out through clenched teeth.

“Killed you of course. A surviving pocket of Muggle scientists came up with this.” Harry fell to his knees. “It’s a variant of Wizarding Flu, engineered to attack the parts of your cells that tap into magic, and turns those parts off. It has to be targeted into the most powerful wizards around, but cause it uses magic to propagate and the strength of the hosts magic. Someone more powerful than the host would be able to fight off the infection... So it had to be you or me. I had my allies dose us both.”

“You’ll kill all the magic users?”

“No Tommy, I’ve killed you and me. Most people will catch the flu, and get better. Once they do, they will have lost their magic. The only ones that will die are those who need their magic to survive. You proved to me that we don’t deserve our magic. Billions of people were killed in your name. The survivors tortured, raped, and enslaved. For that I’m killing you and I’m helping the Muggles kill the magic.”

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Susan sat staring into the hearth. The sofa shifted as someone sat next to her on the sofa. Susan never shifted her attention to whoever it was. Out there, somewhere, Harry was dying. Their son would never know his father. She would never hold him again. She could feel their son moving in her belly. She would not cry. Not anymore. She and Harry had been together for almost a year. That was more than so many people managed. No, she would not cry.

It was only when a hand wrapped around her own that Susan looked over to the person sitting next to her.

“Are you ok?”

“I don’t know if I’ll ever be ok again Fleur.”

The French witch placed the palm of her right hand on Susan’s abdomen. “You must, for your son, if for no other reason.”

“I know.” The pregnant woman returned her attention to the flames.

“It’s typical you know.” Hermione’s voice came from the other side of the room. “The men rush off to fight and leave us here with no way to know what’s going on.”

Fleur and Hermione exchanged a look; they had agreed that they would do what they needed to do to pull Susan out of her funk. They felt they owed it to her for the months they had spent together with only Harry and Dobby for company.

“It’s dangerous for all of the men. George and Fred are there, The King is there.”

“I know all that Hermione.” The tears started despite her promise to herself that she would not cry. “They are all in danger, and the selfish bastards left us here alone with the other women, despite the fact that we can all fight. But Harry is there intending to die. The others might die, but they will fight like hell to stay alive. Harry is there expressly to...”

Fleur wrapped the sobbing woman into a hug. "We all owe Harry our freedom and our lives. His son will want for nothing Susan. I promise you this."

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Harry was on his knees, eyes clenched in pain from the migraine, the fever burned through his body, his hands and feet masses of pins and needles.

And suddenly, the pain was gone. He blinked in confusion. That was not in the description. The fever was gone as well, normal sensation returned to his extremities. His strength returned.

What was going on? Harry felt his magic pulse.

He felt his magic pulse? He wasn't supposed to have magic anymore.

"You failed Potter! I survived!"

Harry looked to Riddle who was struggling to his knees. Harry could feel the magic pouring off the Dark Lord. They both had their magic? Oh hell. One of the dart guns coughed again, Riddle gestured with his wand and the dart crumpled in midair before falling to the ground.

Using his staff, Harry heaved himself to his feet. "DOBBY!" he called. "EVAC!"

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Evans and Cooper never had a chance to wonder what was happening. A crying elf suddenly appeared next to each of them, and then the two soldiers were suddenly somewhere else.

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"What is happening?" Major Llewellyn barked when the two sergeants and the elves appeared in between himself and his King.

"Dobby is sorry Master Major." The tiny person said. "Master Harry asked Dobby to move youse Muggles mans if he called. Master Harry called for Dobby he did."

"But why?" William asked. "What has happened?"

"The evil bastard still has his magic Major." Evans ground out. "He was telling Potter that he had won. It looked to me like Potter still had his magic as well."

"Master Harry say that he would call 'Dobby Evac' if Muggle Magic didn't work. Master Harry say he breech cores if he need."

"Breech cores? What does that mean?" Llewellyn demanded.

Dobby concentrated to find the words that these Muggles would understand. A pair of cracks announced the arrival of the Weasley Twins.

“Weezy One.” Dobby said, grasping George’s hand. “Dobby not have words. Master Harry breeching cores.”

“NO!” The twins rushed to the blind to see if it had started.

“What the hell does this mean?” Llewellyn shouted.

“The magic a Witch or Wizard generates is stored inside his body.” Fred said. “Stored in what we call a ‘magical core’ The more powerful the wizard, the larger his core is and the quicker it refills after use.”

“When really powerful wizards fight if they’re too evenly matched, they can’t really hurt each other.” George added. “Three hundred years ago a Dark Wizard found out how to disrupt the core of his opponent, but that usually causes both cores to breach. The last time it happened was in 1908 in Siberia. I’ve never seen it but the history books say it was spectacular. Even Muggles noticed it.”

Llewellyn paled. “What is it Major?” William asked.

“I think they’re describing the Tunguska Event. That was thought to be a meteor impact with a 15 Megaton yield.” He looked toward the remains of the manor house. “We are much too close.

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As soon as Harry heard the pop of the elves leaving with the snipers, he raised his staff above his head and channeled all of his magic into it. Riddle’s eyes widened as he realized what Harry was attempting to do, and unable to rise to his feet, attempted to crabwalk away.

“Good bye Tom.” Harry gasped through clinched teeth. “I’ll see you in hell!”

Harry drove the butt of his staff through his Riddle’s chest and discharged his magic in a single bolt. No spell, no incantation, just pure raw magic.

Riddle’s core ruptured almost instantly, the resulting pulse of magic fed back into the staff, and into Harry and his core, filling it to overflowing.

This is where things started to go differently than what passed for a ‘normal’ breach of cores. As Healer Pomfrey discovered, Harry’s magical polarity was the opposite of what was normal for this world. Rather than rupturing, his core rejected the magic that it contained, contaminated as it was by Riddle’s magic, and the magic was expelled.

A roiling golden fog erupted from the body of Harry Potter and spread over the countryside in every direction.

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“What the hell is that?” George Weasley asked as what appeared to be a solid wall of golden mist came at them at more than fifty miles an hour.

“That’s not what is supposed to happen when cores are breached.” Fred Weasley said unnecessarily.

“Should we run?” Cooper asked.

Then it was too late as the mist swept over them. Reactions to the mist differed greatly. The Muggles felt nothing. They could see the mist, but it had no taste, no smell, and no sensation as it passed over them.

Fred and George Weasley felt pins and needles all over their bodies.

The elves just seemed to fade away.

As quickly as it had arrived the golden mist it passed on, moving away at speed, a solid mass.

“What the hell just happened?” demanded William.

“I don’t know. I’ve never seen or heard of anything like that.” George answered.

“I’m going to check on Harry.” Fred said. Then he fell down.

“Quit joking around Gred.” George grunted.

“I tried to apparate, but nothing happened.”

George pulled out his wand. “Lumos!”

Nothing happened.

The two wizards looked into the faces of the Muggles. “Our magic is gone.” Fred said.

“But I thought that the weapon didn’t work?” George asked.

“It didn’t.” Evans insisted. “They both got up. We saw them.”

“Evans.” William stood from where he had been sitting. “Take a couple of men and check on Potter. If he’s still alive we owe it to him to keep him that way.”

Story 8

Chapter Twenty-eight – The Conclusion

Much has been written about those final dark days that culminated in the Fall of the Wizards. Everyone who was alive at that time recalls precisely what they were doing when the Golden Mist rolled over us.

The Golden Mist was perhaps the most unifying event in human history. Nothing before it or since has ever affected every living soul so profoundly, and it is unlikely that anything ever will again. Moreover, what is odd about this unifying event is that no one seems to have the slightest idea what it was. Theories abound, everything from a neurochemical cascade setup in the atmosphere by some unknown genius working in solitude to a literal act of God to punish the Wizards for their presumption.

As ridiculous as it may sound, there are even stories of the Golden Mist being the product of a final battle to the death between a 'good' Wizard and the Emperor of the World.

What we do know about the Golden Mist is irrefutable. It originated somewhere in England in the early evening hours of July 31st 1998, and propagated outward in every direction taking a total of seventeen days to cover the entire world. Wherever the Golden Mist passed, magic stopped working. Magical creatures, such as the slave race known as 'House Elves', literally disappeared and haven't been seen since. Magical devices stopped working. Wizard's brooms simply fell from the sky for example.

The passing of the Golden Mist allowed a bloody revolution to take place as the enslaved mass of humanity rose up against their former masters and took their revenge.

As the nations of the world slowly rebuild in the memories of what existed before the Rise of the Wizards, many people wish to ignore what happened in the almost fifteen years that magic users ruled us all. With our populations depleted, our industries destroyed, and much of our knowledge lost, we face a long uphill slog toward civilization.

Rueben Vogel, the author of this carefully researched book disagrees, and I, for one am on his side.

Without the knowledge of where we came from and how we got to this point, we are threatened with the possibility of it all happening again.

Vogel spent most of the last decade carefully documenting the fall of the Wizards and the aftermath of that fall. From the emergence of hidden 'Shadow Governments' starting with the revelation that the grandson of Elizabeth the Second had survived and had been fighting as a 'Warrior King' in Wizard control Britain from childhood and ending with the rise of the feudal warlords of Eastern Europe, Vogel details mankind's return to the rule of law.

This scholarly work also springs a few surprises on us, detailing the existence of 'rebel' groups of Wizards fighting the forces of the Emperor of the World wanting nothing more than a return to the way things were prior to 1983, when Magic users lived lives separate and hidden from the population at large. These groups were spread out worldwide and accounted for a sizable percentage of the Wizard population. Vogel interviewed survivors of these groups and gained a keen insight into their goals as a

people.

Vogel even found his way into a Bio-medical research facility hidden in the Swiss Alps where a dedicated group of scientists and rebel Wizards gathered to try and find a weapon to use against the magic users. It is entirely possible that the Golden Mist was a product of this facility, though no one at the hidden laboratory would admit to producing it.

The Wizards are gone, from all indications, never to return. Future generations will thank Vogel for his work toward explaining this dark time, as I thank him now. A decade has past since the Fall of the Wizards, and we are a decade closer to understanding just what happened and what we must do to prevent it from ever happening again.

- Michael St. John
- Chairman History Department
- New Yale University
- May 2007

Preface from the book *The Day the Magic Died*

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“Hello, the house!”

Twenty nine year old Susan Potter looked up from her washing to find a pair of riders approaching her home. At first, she was on guard, but her apprehension diminished when she recognized the uniform of the King’s own Regiment. Then the ornate carriage came into view. The young woman rose from her work, wiping her hand on her apron.

The lead rider nodded to the young woman respectfully. He was a young man, far too young to have been involved in the fall of the Wizards, but the Regiment’s histories told stories of this young woman and her husband. Stories that were almost unbelievable.

The carriage came to a stop before the stone walkway that led to the house, the footman dismounting before the horses had come to a complete stop. The uniformed man opened the Carriage’s door and lowered the steps. Jeffrey Llewellyn disembarked from the carriage and paused as he reached the ground before offering his hand to the woman in the doorway.

“Welcome to our home,” Susan said with a small curtsy.

“Hello Susan.” The well dressed woman said with a smile. “Since when do you curtsy to me?”

“Since you became the consort Hermione.” Susan laughed leading her friend and her escort into the house.

“Please sit.” Susan said gesturing toward the sofa in the great room. She moved to the range on the far side of the room. “I’ll put the kettle on.”

“Yes, do that, but first, a little present for you.” Hermione took a small metal box from Llewellyn and presented it to Susan.

Susan carefully opened the container, her face lighting up in amazement when she saw what it contained. "Tea?"

"We still don't have a reliable source of fuel, but a few sailing ships have been repaired to the point that a few trade routes have opened up." Hermione explained. "This came from the first shipment. William insisted that you and Harry get a fair share of it."

"Oh, please thank him for me." Susan emptied and cleaned the pot she had been using for her herbal brew and began the very English ritual for making tea.

"Where are your children?" Jeffrey Llewellyn asked.

"Gabby and James are at the Weasley's for lessons." Susan answered as she set the kettle to boil. "Edgar is in the fields with Harry."

"Ah, we saw your husband working in the fields on our way here."

"William stopped to speak with him, while he sent us on to you." Hermione added.

"Those two always seem to wander off alone whenever they meet." Susan said as she settled down to wait for the water to boil.

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"How can I help you Your Majesty?"

"To the point as always." William smiled. It was good to get out into the countryside again. The constant meetings and documents that required his signature made life so needlessly dull... Dull to the point that he sometimes looked back to his youth on the run with a certain fondness. "We are simply here to thank you once again for everything you do."

"I'm just a farmer Your Majesty."

William sighed. "Must we do this dance every time we meet Harry?" The two crested the hill to look out upon the land tilled by the sweat of Harry's brow and the pair of horses he owned. William's escorts were busy answering eleven-year-old Edgar Potter's questions about life in London. "Too many very odd unexplained things happen where ever you happen to be Harry. A poorly constructed building remains standing just long enough for everyone to get clear. Highwaymen find themselves stripped naked and tied to a tree in front of the local sheriff's office. Just last week a fire broke out in the East wing of my home. We were busy with Parliament and were not home for the event, but Hermione swore that the wing appeared to be fully involved, but suddenly the fire was out and when people finally entered the area that was burning they found absolutely no damage. My wife suggested that it looked quite like someone had repaired the damage with magic."

"There is no more magic Your Majesty." Harry said with a grin.

"Of course there isn't. That is why We will not be naming you the King's Wizard. Have you found anyone else?"

“No.”

“Good.” William gestured at the tilled land. “How goes your farming?”

“Good. Enough to feed us all and enough to trade for what is available.”

“Excellent. You will be happy to know that the first of the old trade routes have reopened. A shipment of tea from India arrived just before we left for this tour of our Kingdom.”

“Tea? That will make a lot of people happy. What do you hear of the outside world?”

“The Americans and Canadians have reformed their old governments, reportedly. They are calling for a conference of world leaders.”

“Really?”

“Yes. They do not seem to understand that it is not a matter of just climbing aboard an airplane anymore. Of course the fact that they want to hold the meeting in New York, so it is not much of a trip for them. China is all for a meeting, but they want it held in Beijing, their position being that they are the bulk of the world population so the meeting should come to them. India is making similar claims of importance.” William frowned for a moment. “We do not believe that such a meeting will actually take place for several years yet.”

“Probably just as well.” Harry turned to watch his son with the uniformed guards. “How are you and Hermione?”

“Well, speaking for myself, happier than I’ve ever been.” William said, dropping his formal speech pattern as he usually did when with Harry. “As far as Hermione goes, she tells me she loves me. Beyond that, who knows the mind of a woman?”

Harry smiled remembering some of the things that had caused conflict between Susan and himself over the years. “It’s good to know that some things are universal I suppose.”

William joined Harry in looking down at the three uniformed men and the barefoot boy. “I’ve never asked before, but I think I’d best. Has Edgar shown any... talents?”

“Yes,” Harry admitted. “Very strong talents. He and I have been working on them together. He knows his responsibilities and that he needs to maintain our secrets.”

William nodded. “Perhaps we should arrange for Edgar to get to know Charles. I think perhaps it would be a good thing for our sons to know and trust one another.”

Harry smiled. “A very good idea Your Majesty. Perhaps taking the long view is the best thing we could possibly do.”

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“Why do you request an audience Myrddin?”

“Lord Chaos, I have a report on the Agent of Chaos transferred to a reality overrun by violent order has successfully completed his mission, though in a most unexpected manner.”

The aspect of Chaos seemed to ponder that for a moment. “I am unused to be surprised Myrddin. Explain.”

“He engaged in a physical contest with the leader of the sect of Violent Order in that reality, the conflict between the two of them caused almost all the chaotic energy in that reality to be pushed to another realm. This energy was harvested and is of sufficient quantity to double our energy budget for the next minor cycle.

“This is the servant who had already neutralized the violent order of his original reality?”

“Indeed he is Lady Order.” Myrddin answered.

“You said ‘almost all’ of that reality’s chaotic energy was harvested. What of the remainder?” Chaos interrupted.

“Our Agent has seeded the reality with his own Chaos. His power will breed true.”

“I see,” the Aspect of Chaos said thoughtfully. “Excellent initiative on the harvesting of the Chaos Energy Myrddin. Good job.”

“You will monitor this Agent carefully Myrddin,” the Aspect of Order instructed. “If he becomes an agent of Violent Order, he will need to be dealt with.”

“Of course Lady Order.” Recognizing his dismissal Myrddin backed away.

The boy had done well. Very well. The being who had been the Man called Merlin carefully set the monitoring on the newly purged reality, and then turned his attention to another trouble spot. There he shook his head. Oh, dear, he thought. Time travel, that never ends well.